

SOUTHWESTERN UNION

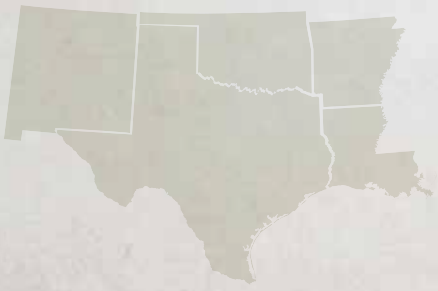
# Record

MAY 2014

*Come craft your  
skills in ministry*



MINISTRIES CONVENTION, AUG. 28-31, 2014



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**On the cover**

Southwestern Union's upcoming ministries training event for lay members, better known as Equipped for Ministries, will take place in Frisco, Texas, from August 28-31, 2014. This grand event provides a unique opportunity for you to hone your skills in a variety of areas and is designed to equip you with the tools you need to do Spirit-led, effective ministry for Jesus Christ. We hope you'll accept our formal invitation to "come craft your skills in ministry."

# Equipped for Ministries

8

MINISTRIES CONVENTION  
AUG. 28-31, 2014 | FRISCO, TX

## COME SHARPEN YOUR TOOLS!

How one church went from passionless to flourishing with a radical idea to restructure it's ministries.

12

# Point of View»



BY MINNER LABRADOR, JR. » SOUTHWESTERN UNION CONFERENCE VICE-PRESIDENT

## See You in August!

The Southwestern Union's Equipped for Ministries convention will take place August 28-31. This assembly is a time for all involved in church ministry, from across the Southwestern territory, to come together. Over the past few years, ministries training and equipping has been taking place in each conference. This event is a celebration and continuation of that training.

The Equipped for Ministries conference will focus on ministries training and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. The empowerment of the Holy Spirit is the greatest need among us. Author David Wolkwitz in *A Mighty Rushing Wind* says it this way,

“The most important ingredient in the formula, the divine power, will come in full measure when the church invests priority effort into praying for the Holy Spirit. We could not have come as far as we have without His aid, but the potential is unlimited!”

*Patriarchs and Prophets* (p. 509) reads, “The secret of success is the union of divine power with human effort.”

Register now at [www.equippedforministries.org](http://www.equippedforministries.org). I'll see you in Frisco, Texas, this August!

Minner Labrador, Jr., Southwestern Union vice-president for ministries



## Stepping Stone to Success

**Larry Moore:** It's wonderful to learn how alums of Southwestern have retained strong friendships and mentorships created while at the university, and how they have used the skills they learned to follow God's path for them.

**NS:** As I remember my years at Southwestern, I recall that several faculty members really stood out. I appreciated my business advisor, who pushed me toward excellence but also knew how to help me balance my class load. His door was always open, even if it wasn't about his classes. My dean was very supportive too. We were very involved in our home church in Oklahoma and he supported that. I also took several of his religion courses and they helped me clarify my beliefs. We had some good discussions!

I worked with the maintenance team on campus. Several of those guys really made an impact. Learning how to balance work, pay my school bill, complete homework, and still have time for recreation made a big difference for me later in life. It's important to learn at that age how to balance your responsibilities because pretty soon you'll have a family, a job, and other demands. Those skills really helped me later when I went back to school for a nursing degree and had to balance work, family, and a full class load. Now I'm the clinical manager for surgical oncology at OU Medical Center, my wife is a teacher at Parkview Adventist School, and my boys go to school there. I'm still using the skills I learned at Southwestern.



Nicholas Shepherd, 2003, Business Administration



Lauren Them Swoopes, 2006, Elementary Education

**LTS:** Southwestern Adventist University wasn't even a thought in my mind until my best friend, Rachel Blackburn, convinced me that it was a great place to earn my degree. After unpacking my bags from California I was determined to “do my time” and move back home as soon as possible. But Southwestern had something else in store for me. I graduated in 2006 with a degree in elementary education, a fiancé, a full-time job, professional connections, and strong friendships. It's been seven years and I have yet to move back home. While at Southwestern I had the opportunity to recruit, work grounds (I learned to appreciate those weed-free flower beds!), and, on the strong suggestion from a friend, I applied and became a student dean. To be perfectly honest, each job experience, friendship, and mentorship from professors and deans helped mold me. I became a confident person who knew that the career path ahead of me was not a random choice, but led by God. After graduating, if I needed advice, furniture (yes, furniture), or simply someone to talk to I would reach out to the staff at Southwestern. They took a vested interest in me and propelled me into my career with the right tools. I'm currently working at Katy Adventist Christian School where I teach Pre-K and Kindergarten as well as sixth- and seventh-grade science. As for those friendships made, well, they are still going strong today! We are like family and whenever possible, we rally together in Houston and have our own version of a Southwestern reunion.





# CREATION Health

BY LYNELL LAMOUNTAIN » SOUTHERN UNION HEALTH MINISTRIES DIRECTOR

## CREATION Health: Home Again

**One of our deepest fears is the fear of rejection.** We feel unworthy of being loved, either because we feel we are not good enough, or because we believe we have not performed adequately to earn the approval of others. Many times (if not most of the time), what we feel, perceive, and believe regarding this matter does not reflect reality, and as a result, we carry needless pain and scars throughout our lives. Our story this month is about a little boy who experienced his greatest fears regarding rejection and abandonment. His name is Johnny.

He was born into a very poor family, the youngest of 12 kids. His father was never home, always working, trying to earn enough money to put food on the table. Then one day he met another

woman and never came home again, leaving Johnny's mother to care for all 12 children alone.

She did her best to provide, but it was not enough. When Johnny was six, she broke the news that she was putting him up for adoption along with three of his sisters. She wept and was deeply upset. But there was nothing she could do to keep her family from starving.

The day came for Johnny to leave. He was at the train station with his mom, and they were saying their last goodbyes. "When the conductor reached down to take me from my mother's arms," he said, "I felt something die inside of me."

Although his new family was kind and loving, it wasn't the same. And he feared that one day they would give him away, too.

Childhood passed and he grew into an industrious young man. Even though he was an adult now, his soul still ached from those final moments at the train station. So he absorbed himself

in work to numb the hurt.

Then one day, during a moment of severe discouragement, something beautiful happened. Searching for hope—something, anything to lift his spirits—he visited a church. The minister spoke about how God loves to adopt people, and asked if anyone wanted to join God's family. Johnny slowly rose from his seat and walked down the aisle to the altar at the front of the church. His heart, after all these years, was finally home.

In that moment, he sensed Jesus assuring him that He would never abandon him, never send him away, and never allow anything or anyone to take him from His arms. "I felt," he said, "as if God was saying to me, 'Johnny, I know about that day at the train station. I know how you felt, and I've been waiting all these years to adopt you into my family.'" His pain was replaced by great peace as Christ's healing grace filled his heart with hope and joy.

We are keenly aware that we cannot always control what happens to us. But by God's grace we do not have to be controlled by what happens to us, either. Everyone, *everyone* is born with faith—even if it is just the size of a mustard seed. So we are free to exercise it and trust God with our hurts, for He is a loving Father who has adopted us into His eternal family.

"This resurrection life you received from God is not a timid, grave-tending life. It's adventurously expectant, greeting God with a childlike 'What's next, Papa?' God's Spirit touches our spirits and confirms who we really are. We know who He is, and we know who we are: Father and children. And we know we are going to get what's coming to us—an unbelievable inheritance! We go through exactly what Christ goes through. If we go through the hard times with Him, then we're certainly going to go through the good times with Him!" (Romans 8:15-17, Message Paraphrase).

Enrich every facet of your life today through trust in God—your Forever Father.

*That's CREATION Health!*

Lynell LaMountain, Southern Union health ministries director

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

## Blessed!

**BLESSED! THAT'S HOW EDITH AND I FELT** on our drive back home from the Southwestern Union's young adult ski trip to Taos, New Mexico, where we had the opportunity to worship and grow together with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

It was an amazing place! The beautiful mountains, the experience of skiing for the first time, the praise, the worship, and the sense of community—all made for a wonderful experience. While we skied (or attempted to ski—we spent more time on the ground than standing up!) we met friendly people who gave us tips on how to keep our balance, how to fall, and some even provided encouragement on our little moments of progress. Later in the day, we came to find out that these new friends were also part of the union's ski retreat! It made us smile as if we were seeing distant relatives we hadn't seen in a long time. We had the pleasure of befriending a pastor and his wife from the Texas Conference as well as the youth directors from the Arkansas-Louisiana's FESJA (Federacion de Sociedad de Jovenes Adventistas—Spanish Youth Rally), and many others.

While I can gush on and on about how we really enjoyed the singing, food, and slopes, the part that impacted us the most was the forum provided by the retreat. Young adults came together to hear the Word of God, messages of encouragement and love, messages that were prepared to uplift us in our spiritual walk. We discussed many topics, such as leadership and how to lead, how to take a greater role within the church and community, and how to reach out and minister to others in the same age group. The church leaders and pastors listened attentively, accepting suggestions and recommendations on how to best reach this group.

In March it was time for ministries training in Albuquerque! During this ministry-focused Sabbath, many ministry department leaders were invited to come receive or give training. We also received spiritual bread. Several pastors and officers from the South-

western Union shared the word of the Lord with us throughout the weekend. On Sabbath evening, one of the sermons really hit my heart with conviction. We hold back from God that which we are or have in hand for fear it is not much. Yet when we give God all that we have, He will bless it and work mightily through it

for His glory. Don't hold anything back from Him. Remember, all David had was a sling.

During the training sessions, I joined up with the Pathfinder leadership group. Within the last few years I have been adopted into the Pathfinder family (or Pathfinder Mafia, as our area coordinator jokes!). Growing up, I had heard of Pathfinders but had never really participated as part of a club. Now at times I feel as if I'm drinking from a fire hydrant when I'm taking it all in. I also enjoyed the discussion with our fellow directors and staff members when we shared ideas about things that have worked (or not worked!) in their clubs.

One of the presenters we had the great privilege to learn from was a woman who has been ministering to kids in Pathfinders for more than thirty years! Her enthusiasm and love for children was electric! She had so much to share on how to engage kids in learning, and how to make the information dynamic. It was no wonder I couldn't help but stay and sit behind with the children to hear

and enjoy her class on "catching fish"!

Like the events mentioned above, the Southwestern Union provides events to prepare its members for ministry. The Equipped for Ministries convention is intended to prepare you fully for your ministry—it will be held in Frisco, Texas, August 28-31. Let's take advantage of this opportunity to learn to serve others through our ministry. Don't miss it!



**Raquel Astorga is a member of the Las Cruces, New Mexico, Spanish church, where she is the Pathfinder director. She also serves as associate area coordinator for Pathfinders in the southwest area of the Texico Conference.**



# Pass it On...

A Monthly Focus on Evangelism in the Southwest

BY CLEVELAND HOUSER

## Prison Ministry: Try It, You Will Like It

Every year, more than 650,000 offenders return to society. If they have not been introduced to the good news of the saving gospel of Jesus Christ, the likelihood of them properly reintegrating back into society is uncertain. Offenders who fail to have an encounter with Christ are usually void of that “new creature in Christ” life change. This is shown by the statistic that seven out of ten offenders reoffend within a three-year period. Offenders who experience and seriously embrace the life-changing message of Christ have less than one percent chance of reoffending.

The clarion call to engage in the Great Commission to share the good news of the gospel to the incarcerated and marginalized is magnified in Matthew 25:35-45, when Jesus said: “When I was in prison you visited me.” Jesus has an affinity toward those who are shackled in the concrete jungles of our correctional facilities. Jesus died a criminal’s death on Calvary, between two true offenders. Hanging on that cruel tree, Jesus performed his last ministry on the earth, which was ministry to offenders in prison. It was on Calvary that He proclaimed the intentionality of the importance of ministering to offenders. He gave each offender an opportunity to be saved into the Kingdom of God. Each offender was afforded the privilege of eternal life. One offender accepted the everlasting gospel and received a commuted sentence, and the other offender rejected the invitation and chose his own destiny.

The idea of going into our prisons can be very challenging and intimidating for some. Clashing doors and clinking iron doesn’t portray the best atmosphere for participation in this ministry. However, the chance of something happening to you behind the prison’s walls is minuscule. Prison ministry volunteers are ambassadors sent by God to give hope to the downtrodden. Volunteers represent hope and connection, not only to Jesus but to society. There is an intriguing phenomenon among offenders called the “Eleventh Commandment.” The “Eleventh Commandment” simply says, “Thou shall not hurt a free-world visitor.”

If going behind the walls is not your “cup of tea,” there are so many ways prison ministry can be initiated without entering the prison. The diversification of prison ministry provides an opportunity for every church and every church member to participate in ministering to offenders. Diversification eliminates every



excuse for not being involved in prison ministry. In order to find out how to do prison ministry without going behind those prison walls, you must attend the prison ministry seminar as part of the Equipped for Ministries convention, August 28-31 in Frisco, Texas. Come and experience the blessings of God as you learn how to work with both the offender and the offender’s family. How exciting will it be when you walk down Hallelujah Boulevard in heaven and someone walks up to you, touches you on the shoulder, and says, “If it had not been for you, I would not be here.”



Cleveland Houser, prison ministry consultant and trainer for the North American Division, will conduct prison ministry training at the Equipped for Ministries Convention in Frisco, Texas, this August.



## Equipando para Ministerios

Como muchos de ustedes, a veces me gustaría tener un poco más de fuerza para poder hacer un poco más. Hay días en que sentimos la monotonía de la vida y el trabajo parece nunca terminar. Los promotores de las bebidas energéticas prometen ayudarte a llegar más lejos. Uno de estos anunciantes afirma que su bebida energética te dará alas para volar. Sabemos que estas declaraciones están lejos de la verdad. Pero nos espera energía y eficiencia sobrenatural como pueblo de Dios.

En Lucas 24:49 Jesús dijo a sus discípulos: “Yo voy a enviar sobre ustedes la promesa de mi Padre; pero ustedes, quédense en la ciudad de Jerusalén hasta que desde lo alto sean investidos” (Reina Valera Contemporánea). Una vez más, al ascender, Jesús dijo: “Pero cuando venga sobre ustedes el Espíritu Santo recibirán poder, y serán mis testigos” (Hechos 1:8). El libro *Hechos de los Apóstoles*, declara: “El Salvador sabía que ningún argumento, por muy lógico, derretiría corazonas o rompería a la corteza de la mundanidad y egoísmo. Él sabía que Sus Discípulos debían recibir la investidura celestial” (página 31).

“Deja que haya más dependencia en la eficiencia del Espíritu Santo, y mucho menos a los organismos humanos,” (*Testimonios para los Ministros*, página 215). Acompáñame a reclamar este don del Espíritu Santo para equipar y capacitar a nuestra iglesia. “El enemigo de la causa de Dios hará lo posible para retener la eficiencia del Espíritu fuera de la obra de la iglesia. De hecho, él nos dará toda la ayuda que necesitamos para correr de aquí para allá, haciendo girar nuestras ruedas sin llegar a ningún lugar, soñando e implementando programas de bajo rendimiento y que desaparecen en poco tiempo. “Mantenlos ocupados trabajando,” dice a sus ángeles confederados. No les des tiempo para orar por la eficacia del Espíritu Santo,” (*A Might Rushing Wind*, David Wolkwitz, página 106).

Aquí hay cinco razones por las que la eficacia del Espíritu Santo se ve obstaculizada:

1. Autosuficiencia: “El tratar de manejar y controlar nuestra propia vida automáticamente excluye el manejo de la vida de otro. No podemos servir a dos señores al mismo tiempo,” (*Testimonios para los Ministros*, páginas 174-175).

2. Represalia y un espíritu crítico: “el cabeciduro y la renuencia a ceder al punto de vista a los demás, demuestra una vida plena de sí mismo y no del Espíritu,” (*Servicio Cristiano*, página 115).

3. Preocupaciones Secundarias: “Asuntos insignificantes ocupan el lugar adecuado de las prioridades, neutralizando la vida espiritual del creyente. La promesa del Espíritu se ignora porque “las cosas pequeñas ocupan el lugar de las grandes” (*Testimonios para la*

*Iglesia*, vol. 8, página 21).

4. Extrema Diversión: “Hoy, las “invenciones humanas” que nos cautivan son fáciles de reconocer. Tales dilemas mantienen el Espíritu fuera del templo que Él desea ocupar,” (*TC*, página 281).

5. Despreciar el crecimiento: “La falta de voluntad para obtener la victoria en cada etapa de crecimiento significa seguir acariciando a nuestros ídolos y mantener a Dios en la distancia,” (*Mensajes Seleccionados*, vol. 3, páginas 46-47).

Sé que muchos de ustedes anhelan esta eficiencia refrescante de Dios. Aquí hay varios pasos que podemos pedir a Dios que haga por nosotros, ya que no podemos hacerlo por nosotros mismos:

1. Arrepentimiento: “Arrepiéntanse, y bautícense todos ustedes en el nombre de Jesucristo para que sus pecados les sean perdonados. Entonces recibirán el don del Espíritu Santo,” (Hechos 2:38).

2. Pide y busca: “Cuando ustedes me busquen, me hallarán, si me buscan de todo corazón,” (Jeremías 29:13).

3. Eleva el nombre de Jesús: “Pero cuando venga el Consolador, el Espíritu de verdad, el cual procede del Padre y a quien yo les enviaré de parte del Padre, Él dará testimonio acerca de mí,” (Juan 15:26).

4. Obediencia: “De esto somos testigos nosotros, y también el Espíritu Santo, que Dios ha dado a quienes lo obedecen,” (Hechos 5:32).

Dwight L. Moody fue un evangelista estadounidense que trabajó arduamente, pero un día recibió el bautismo del Espíritu Santo y su vida cambió para siempre. El Espíritu Santo le dio una gran eficacia en su trabajo. Él escribió: “Yo imploraba constantemente a Dios que me llenara de Su Espíritu. Y un día, en la ciudad de Nueva York—Oh, ¡qué día! No puedo describirlo, rara vez me refiero a él; es casi una experiencia sagrada para nombrar. Sólo puedo decir que Dios se reveló a mí y tuve tal experiencia de Su amor que tuve que pedirle detuviera Su mano. Yo no podría ahora volver a donde estaba antes de esa bendita experiencia aun si me ofrecieras todo el mundo. Sería como minúsculo polvo en la balanza,” (*They Found the Secret*, V. Raymond Edman, página 75). Esa experiencia podría ser tuya y mía.

Durante la Convención de la Unión del Suroeste “Equipando para Ministerios” este próximo mes de agosto, el tema será “Capacitando y Equipando.” Ya hemos recibido la capacitación, contamos con la tecnología, y tenemos los recursos. Ahora tenemos que reclamar el poder del Espíritu Santo mientras ¡nos preparamos para la venida del Señor!

**Minervino Labrador**, Vicepresidente de la Unión del Suroeste

# EQUIPPED FOR MINISTRIES

Minner Labrador, Jr., Southwestern Union vice president for ministries

Like many of you, I sometimes wish I had a little more strength to get a little more done. There are days that life seems rote and the work seems to never end. Advertisers promote energy drinks that can help you go farther. One of these advertisers claims that their energy drink will give you wings to fly. We know these declarations are far from true. But there is energy and supernatural efficiency awaiting the people of God.

In Luke 24:49 Jesus said to His disciples, “Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” Again, as He ascended, Jesus said, “You shall receive power to be my witnesses,” (Acts 1:8). *Acts of the Apostles* (p. 31) declares, “The Savior knew that no argument, however logical, would melt hearts or break through the crust of worldliness and selfishness. He knew that His Disciples must receive The Heavenly Endowment.”

“Let there be more dependence upon the efficiency of the Holy Spirit, and far less upon human agencies” (*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 215). Join me in claiming this gift of the Holy



Spirit to equip and empower our church. “The enemy of God’s cause will do anything to keep the efficiency of the Spirit out of the work of the church. In fact he will give us all the help we need to run here and there, to spin our wheels as we stand in the same place, and dream up and implement programs that accomplish little and fade away in a short time. ‘Keep them busy doing the work,’ he tells his confederate angels. Do not give them time

to pray for the efficiency of the Holy Spirit” (*A Might Rushing Wind*, David Wolkwitz, p. 106).

Here are five reasons that the efficiency of the Holy Spirit is hindered:

1. Self reliance: “Trying to manage and control one’s life automatically excludes the management of another in that life. We cannot serve two masters at the same time,” (*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 174-175).

2. Retaliation and a critical spirit: “Peevishness and an unwillingness to yield to the view of others demonstrates a life full of self and not the Spirit” *Christian Service*, p. 115).

3. Secondary concerns: “Minor matters take the place of adequate priorities and believers’ spiritual life backpedals. The promise of the Spirit is mostly ignored because “minor things occupy the place of major ones,” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8. p. 21).

4. Intense amusements: “Today, ‘human inventions’ that become intensely absorbing are easy to recognize. Such interests keep the Spirit outside the temple He desires to occupy” (*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students* p. 281).

5. Failure to grow: “Unwillingness to gain victory at each stage of growth will mean keeping our cherished idols and God at bay” (*Selected Messages*, book three, p. 46, 47).

I know many of you long for this efficiency and refreshing of God. Here are several steps we may take as we ask God to do for us what we can’t do ourselves:

1. Repentance: “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).

2. Ask and seek: “You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13).

3. Lift up the name of Jesus: “But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me” (John 15:26).







## Equipped for Ministries Conference Highlights

4. Obedience: “We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him” (Acts 5:32).

Dwight L. Moody was an American evangelist who worked hard, but one day he received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and his life was forever changed. The Holy Spirit gave great efficiency to his work. He wrote, “I was crying all the time that God would fill me with His Spirit. Well, one day, in the city of New York—Oh what a day! I cannot describe it, I seldom refer to it; it is almost too sacred an experience to name. I can only say that God revealed Himself to me and I had such an experience of His love that I had to ask Him to stay His hand. I would not now be placed back where I was before that blessed experience if you should give me all the world. It would be as the small dust of the balance,” (*They Found the Secret*, V. Raymond Edman, p. 75). That experience could be yours and mine.

During the Southwestern Union’s Equipped for Ministries convention this August, our theme will be “Equipped and Empowered.” We have received training, we have the technology, and we have the resources. Now we need to claim the power of the Holy Spirit as we prepare for the coming of the Lord!



### Keynote Speakers:

**Barry Black**, U.S. Senate Chaplain  
**Derek J. Morris**, General Conference Associate Secretary  
**Ernie Castillo**, North American Division Vice President

### Sample of Seminars to be Presented:



#### The Prophetic Role of Men’s Ministries in the Last Days

**Speaker: Sergio Rodriguez**, Texas Conference Men’s Ministries

Discover why God has called men to come together in prayer for the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.



#### Education: Recruiting and Retaining

**Speakers: Randy Gilliam**, Southwestern Union Education; **Mike Furr**, Southwestern Union Education; and **Raul Aguilar**, Texas Conference Education

Learn about the Cognitive Genesis studies, which provide statistical data in favor of Adventist education, and how to use this information in marketing and retention strategies.



#### Seven Steps for a Successful Small Group Ministry

**Speaker: Eudardo Canales**, Southwestern Union Personal Ministries and Hispanic Ministries

Learn the basic principles of creating and maintaining successful small groups in your church.



#### Creating a Vibrant Health Ministry: A Comprehensive Model for Effective Health Ministry Leaders

**Speakers: Katia Reinert**, NAD Health Ministries; **Lilly Tryon**, Southern Adventist University; **Don Hall**, Wellspring, Inc.

Learn Adventist philosophy of health and health ministry, methods for effective health ministry, and basic health information.



#### Every Church a House of Prayer

**Speaker: Kathy McKey**, Southwestern Union Prayer Ministries and Ministerial Spouses

Hear exciting experiences of answered prayer and how prayer can come alive in your own life and in your own church.



#### Evangelism Changes Lives

**Speaker: Duane McKey**, Southwestern Union Evangelism and Ministerial

Learn how to prepare for evangelistic meetings. Topics: advertising, how to get and hold a crowd, evangelistic sermon resources, and more.

#### Evangelistic Sermons Made Easy

**Speaker: Duane McKey**, Southwestern Union Evangelism and Ministerial

If you can read, you can preach! You will be excited and delighted with a hands-on opportunity to preach in this seminar.

# HARVEST WORK BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Derek J. Morris, General Conference Ministerial Association associate secretary

I'm looking forward to the Equipped for Ministries convention in Frisco, Texas, August 28-31, because I am convinced that Jesus wants each one of us to join Him in His harvest work. In order to be effective harvest workers, we need practical training and empowerment from the Spirit of God.

Jesus performed His harvest work by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit anointed Jesus at the time of His baptism. Matthew records, "When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him" (Matthew 3:16). And John the Baptist gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God" (John 1:32-34).



Early in His ministry Jesus declared, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18-19).

These passages of Scripture are familiar to us. What is new

to many is the fact that Jesus prayed a radical prayer at the beginning of His ministry, and He invites us to pray the same radical prayer. He wants us to join Him in His harvest work by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Where is this radical prayer that Jesus prayed at the beginning of His ministry? A clue is found in Mark 1:12. There Mark records, "Immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness." What has just occurred? Jesus has just been baptized and anointed by the Holy Spirit. He has heard the voice of the Father declaring, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17).

Do you notice an unusual word in Mark 1:12? It's the verb "drove"—the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness. That's the key to discovering the radical prayer that Jesus prayed as He began His ministry by the power of the Holy Spirit. It's the Greek verb *ekballo*. It literally means "to throw out" or "to cast out". Now we know that the Holy Spirit never forces us to do anything. We are free to choose—either to respond or to resist. So if the Holy Spirit threw Jesus out into His ministry following His baptism, then Jesus must have given the Holy Spirit permission. And that is exactly what happened. Jesus prayed a radical prayer.

Jesus wants you to join Him in His harvest work by the power of the Holy Spirit. He wants you to pray the same radical prayer that He prayed as He began His ministry. We find that radical prayer in Luke 10:2. "Then He said to them, (that is to the Seventy), 'The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.'"

Jesus shares with His apostles, and also with us, that "the harvest truly is great." What does Jesus mean when He says that the harvest truly is great, plentiful, abundant, extensive?

Simply this: there are many people, men and women, boys and girls, who are ready and waiting to be gathered into His kingdom. They only need to hear the Good News and receive the invitation.





According to Jesus, there is a present harvest to be gathered in, and “the harvest truly is great.”

But that raises a second question: Why does Jesus emphasize that the harvest *truly is great*? You say, “Because it is!” And this response is partially correct. Jesus is just telling the truth when He says, “The harvest truly is great.”

You know what happened on the day of Pentecost, ten days after the Risen Jesus ascended to heaven. When the apostles witnessed the conversion of three thousand individuals, I’m sure that they said to each other, “*Jesus was right! The harvest truly is great!*” Similarly, when we see thousands receiving Christ as Savior and Lord, we also find it easy to say the same thing to one another. The words of Jesus are obviously true.

But I believe that Jesus emphasizes that the harvest truly is great, because there are times when it does not appear to us that the harvest is great. From a human perspective, there are times when it appears to us that there is no harvest at all. At those times, Jesus also urges us to remember that the harvest truly is great. He urges us to view reality from a radical perspective—His perspective. And when we see as He sees, we will discover that the harvest truly is great.

Do you remember the story of Jesus meeting with the Samaritan woman at the well of Sychar (John 4:3-42)? At first glance, there doesn’t seem to be much of a harvest of souls there. Only one person comes to the meeting—just one wayward woman. When the disciples arrive on the scene, they immediately evaluate the situation and conclude, “There’s not much of a harvest to be had.” And Jesus discerns the thoughts of the disciples. He reads their faces. He startles them with these words, recorded in John 4:35. “Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and then comes the harvest?’ Behold I say to you, ‘Lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for the harvest.’”

In spite of the bleak landscape, Jesus sees that the harvest truly is *great*. I’m so thankful that Jesus can see past the externals, aren’t you? That once wayward woman returns to Sychar and testifies about her life-changing encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ. As a result, many Samaritans believe in Jesus after hearing this woman’s testimony. The harvest is so plentiful that Jesus stays for two extra days and many more become believers because of His words.

Jesus Himself was willing to be thrown out into the harvest work by the power of the Holy Spirit, and He appeals to you to pray that same radical prayer! Perhaps you’re thinking, “What will happen to me if I give the Lord of the harvest permission to throw me out into His harvest field?” What happens is God’s responsibility—not yours. But He does give you this promise: “You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8). He will throw you out where He wants you to be. It may be to a distant land, or it may be right where you currently live. I can assure you that there will be radical results, and you will return with radical joy! Your assignment, my assignment, is to be willing, to be ready, to pray the radical prayer, and to earnestly plead: **“Lord of the harvest, I earnestly beg you to throw out laborers into your harvest, and you have my permission to begin with me.”**

I’ll be looking for you at the Equipped for Ministries convention in Frisco, Texas, on August 28-31. Let’s get all of the practical training that’s available for us, and then let’s go out in the power of the Holy Spirit as anointed harvest workers.

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# RADICAL RESTRUCTURING FOR CHURCH MINISTRIES

Ellie Green

## How one church went from passionless to flourishing with a radical idea to restructure its ministries.

It has been said that the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. By this definition, our church in Charlotte, North Carolina, might have been considered insane, because it seemed that we were doing the same things over and over and always hoping that something would change!

But then Minner Labrador accepted a call to pastor our church. And our church *did* begin to change! Through his leading, we began to catch glimpses of the power of the Holy Spirit. With each glimpse we wanted more. We prayed. We prayed *more*. We were impressed that the Holy Spirit could work more effectively in our church if we changed our organizational structure.

There were no job descriptions, no policies, no mission statement, and no clear-cut lines of authority. There were no plans for specific ministry growth. Every two years the nominating committee might (or might not) re-

elect a current church officer-holder so nobody really cared much about their “here today, gone tomorrow!” church positions.

Facing these facts seven years ago, Labrador invited me, the head elder, to join him in brainstorming how our church might be restructured to overcome these challenges. Having spent 18 years of my nursing career restructuring healthcare organizations, I was no stranger to this process. We

concluded that a radical restructuring was necessary if we wanted to live in the fullness of the Holy Spirit’s power as outlined in the book of Acts. Without the Holy Spirit *palpable* in our midst, church seemed nothing but empty religiosity.

We began by clearly defining what we were trying to achieve by “operating” the Sharon Seventh-day Adventist Church. A committee was formed to develop our mission, vision, and values. Without going into the details, let me just say that our mission became “To Know Jesus Christ and Share Him.” That mission began driving every decision.

Next, we brainstormed the vision for our church and agreed that based on our values of Bible study and evangelism, our vision should be “A passion to reach people and grow believers.” To accomplish this, all church activities were partitioned into ministries. We wanted these ministries to be directed by men and women possessing spiritual gifts and *passion* for the ministry of their choice. It quickly became obvious that without a radical restructuring this goal was unattainable!

Labrador was not to be deterred—he envisioned our elders in a management role as overseers of all the church’s ministries. These ideas were accepted and voted by the church board. The board further voted that elders would only be added when new ministries were formed and needed someone to manage them. This was based on the model Jethro suggested to Moses in Exodus 18, as well as the New Testament model in the book of Acts.

We talked it up, wrote it down, and here’s how it evolved: each elder was assigned to supervise one or two ministries. (We had nine elders at the time. We now have 16). The directors of the ministries were instructed to take all their ministry problems to their supervising elder rather than the pastor. A ministry flow chart was drawn to present a visual image of the new church structure.





But there was a problem! This vision would only be possible if elders and ministry directors maintained their church offices over a period of time. The traditional turnover of church officers every two years by the nominating committee would negate the desired continuity of ministry leadership. So we moved away from the traditional every-two-year nominating committee and, with the church's approval, made the Board of Elders our "standing" nominating committee. (Many Adventist churches now have adopted a standing nominating committee. See the Connections curriculum available at [AdventSource.com](http://AdventSource.com).)

By doing this we took a human resource approach to the election of officers in that every ministry selection would be gift-based and every member, insofar as possible, would be matched with an appropriate ministry as part of our overall strategy.

Not too many weeks into this program we saw a decided rise in church attendance. Suddenly everyone was interested in joining a ministry or starting a new one. We made a "spiritual gifts test" available and emphasized that those who had the spiritual gift for a particular office would be asked to serve. We also made a "rule" that nobody would be asked twice to fill a church office. We believed that if a person had a passionate call from God they would be eager to serve, and we could safely turn them loose to flourish in a ministry compatible with their personality and passion.

People became excited that they could join a ministry and invest their time and money without fear of being dropped by the nominating committee the following year! The church began to prosper and grow.

A quick glance at an early ministry flow chart compared to our present flow chart will demonstrate the enormous ministry growth over the past five years. This growth is 100 percent attributable to the Holy Spirit, who has moved among us like we'd never before experienced. We believe restructuring opened the way for the Holy Spirit's work.

Just one example: an announcement informed the church that, following each quarterly Communion service, *all elders* would be

anointing those who sought spiritual, mental, or physical healing or who desired a fuller measure of the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives. This had never been done before! Certainly *elders* anointing, while the pastor prayed for those coming forward, was a new concept.

We had no idea what to expect. We wondered if, at the end of the Communion service, the elders might be left standing alone, holding their little jugs of oil, while all the members left for home. But something amazing happened that brought tears to our eyes. Approximately 150 people attended that Communion service and about 125 remained to be anointed. Long lines of people patiently waited their turn. The anointing attendance has not lessened in the past two and a half years and, we believe, testifies to the hunger people have for the Holy Spirit's power in their lives.

Through this radical restructuring we are convinced that the Holy Spirit is anxious to come and work among God's people to prepare them for His coming—*especially* when they intentionally seek Him and provide an opportune setting.

And He most definitely is working! Our church went from 450 members to more than 900 in five years. But that's not the best part! The best part is that for the first time in our church's history, there is visible excitement and energy in our congregation and because of our 35-plus ministries, almost every Sabbath people walk in, uninvited, and say, "I've heard about your church and decided to visit."

I will be supporting Minner Labrador in conducting a seminar at the Equipped for Ministries convention this August 28-31 in Frisco, Texas. The seminar will be about our radical restructuring experience with special emphasis on the development of an expanded role for elders.

If you think that definition of insanity might fit your church, as I thought it fit mine, *pray!* Then *pray more!* I encourage you to make plans to attend this upcoming convention and our seminar!

Find more information at: [www.equippedforministries.com](http://www.equippedforministries.com).

# Church Ministry: A Form of Customer Service



ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

It has been said that church ministries come in a buffet of service-oriented ventures that bring blessings to others while building up the church as a whole. Regardless of the ministry—community services, family ministries, cooking classes—they are all designed to meet someone’s immediate need while establishing a positive relationship of friendship, appreciation, and trust. In a real sense, there is a “customer service” correlation between what happens in the business world and what happens in the church as we endeavor to meet the needs of others in a meaningful way. I was reminded of this a few weeks ago when flying home from an NAD Conference Presidents’ Council in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

My flight was delayed several times and then finally cancelled. I was booked on another flight with a destination to

Texarkana, since no other flight to Dallas would connect to Shreveport at that late hour. That flight was delayed several times so that when we finally arrived in Dallas, I missed my connecting flight to Texarkana. Before finding a hotel in Dallas for a short night of rest before flying out the next morning, I changed my destination back to Shreveport. However, I was told that I would need to go to the baggage office to get my checked luggage transferred to Shreveport as well. The person at the luggage office said, “Sorry, there is nothing we can do for you. Your luggage will go to Texarkana, and tomorrow you will need to call the luggage office there to have your bag brought to Shreveport.”

The next morning I arrived early at the luggage office and once again asked if my suitcase could be put on my flight to Shreveport. “Yes,” was the immedi-

ate reply, and the attendant filled out a small form with the information from my boarding pass and assured me that when I arrived in Shreveport my suitcase would be there, too! In about 90 seconds my whole attitude toward the airline had changed! Someone demonstrated a very caring attitude, took care of my need, and helped me appreciate customer service in a new way. My suitcase arrived with me on my plane in Shreveport!

Whatever ministry we may be involved with, it should always be done with the goals of demonstrating that we care, meeting a need, and showing by our witness that we love Jesus. Just look at Jesus—His life demonstrated the ultimate in “customer service.”

Steve Orian, president

## Lessons of Faith and Hope at the Slidell Church

SLIDELL, LA. » I couldn’t have been more foolish or careless. After church I had accidentally left my wallet on the trunk of my car and had driven off without realizing it. It was a good Sabbath day and being at my church with God and fellow believers had put me in the right mood for the rest of the day. I didn’t need my wallet, so I didn’t miss it until late in the evening. I was horrified when I realized what I had done. The thought of someone finding my wallet, with all my important cards and papers inside, made me sick to my stomach. I was too worried to pray, but I managed a simple, “Help me, God.” Then I stayed awake all night, worrying, praying, and praying some more.

After the church board meeting the next morning, my kind church family helped me hunt for my wallet, but except for a few discarded cards in the parking lot, our search was in vain. My wallet was gone! I felt completely blank, paralyzed with fear. My only prayer was for God to be with the

person who had my wallet. A few hours later, a young couple came to the door; the woman said that she had found a red wallet in a parking lot and had tracked down the name and address. When I said I was the owner, she smiled and handed me my wallet with everything in it. I thanked them profusely and I can’t stop thanking God enough. I also want to thank everyone who helped me search for my wallet along the highway. From this one weekend I learned several things. God cares for you—in big and small troubles. His eyes are on the sparrow and even on a wallet on the side of the road.

Think of the good in everyone. We are quick to condemn the world we live in; I assumed my wallet fell into the worst of hands and imagined all the horrible things that would happen. But there is good in people. I was blessed by the kindness of



Seema’s red wallet is home again! God is good!

friends and strangers who came to my side when we felt so discouraged and afraid. God sees the good in all of us all the time, and we must pray that others will always see God in us. And perhaps the most applicable lesson I learned from this experience is to be careful not to leave your wallet on the trunk of your car and drive off! But even if you do, God is good!

Seema Bethala

# Mena's Vegetarian Cooking School

**MENA, ARK. »** The Mena church's health and temperance department conducted a free, healthy, and cholesterol-free cooking school on October 20, 2013. During two hours of class time, author and chef Kyong Weathersby demonstrated how to prepare seven easy, delicious, and simple recipes—including walnut cookies, minestrone soup, chicken-like seasonings, breakfast sausage patties, scrambled tofu, vegetable fried rice, and sweet and sour noodle medley.

The presentation was loaded with many tips on how to have a healthy and delicious diet without using any animal products. New ideas were presented for using whole wheat, brown rice, legumes, and tofu as substitutes while making chicken-like seasonings to flavor these healthy dishes. The participants enjoyed learning how a healthy diet can lower cholesterol levels, stabilize blood sugar, prevent high blood pressure, heart disease, and cancer, and help with weight loss.

Many of the attendees were suffering from diseases that related to their lifestyles and diets and were excited to hear how they could reverse some of their problems. Ninety-four percent of the attendees were from the community and were very interested to learn healthy new ways of cooking and eating. One couple said they went out and bought all the ingredients, and they have enjoyed eating their healthy meals. Praise the Lord!


At the close of the class, the table was loaded with the prepared foods and everyone was invited to go through line and sample each food. Many of the participants were amazed at how delicious the food looked and tasted.


Kyong Weathersby has written seven volumes of her vegan vegetarian cookbooks, *A Taste of Heaven Cookbooks*. The books and recipes can be found at [www.kyongcw.com](http://www.kyongcw.com).


**Kyong Weathersby**




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**ARE YOU HUNGRY FOR A CLOSER WALK WITH GOD?**  
**DO YOU WANT TOOLS FOR DEEPER BIBLE STUDY AND EFFECTIVE PRAYER?**  
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 GENTRY SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH  
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# Shreveport South Helps with Homeless Ministry

**SHREVEPORT, LA. »** The Shreveport South church, with the help of member Dora Henning, has teamed up with Intent 2 Distribute (I2D), a local homeless ministry. Every third Sunday for the past several months



homeless. On November 17, 2013, Shreveport South was the main host and provided a Thanksgiving meal. Several members, including a group of Pathfinders, helped to serve the food. Both those that served and those that received were truly blessed and thankful. It is a great ministry for the church

▲ Members from Shreveport South church serve with a local ministry for the homeless once a month.

◀ Staff helping to distribute supplies.



church members have participated in providing food, clothing, and other necessities to the

to be involved in—reminding us of all our blessings and that we are asked to share them with others.

**Janelle Grant**

# Arkansas-Louisiana Bible Bowl Final

**SHREVEPORT, LA. »** In February, 17 of our Pathfinder clubs participated in the annual Bible Bowl, which encourages the young people to study their Bibles. Teams from all over gather to answer questions about the Bible. Nine of our teams received a 90 percent score or better, received a first place ranking, and were invited to compete in the Confer-

ence-level Pathfinder Bible Bowl Final.

On Sabbath afternoon, February 22, the Pathfinder Bible Bowl Final was held at the Shreveport South church in Shreveport. Louisiana teams from New Orleans and Shreveport, and Arkansas teams from Bonnerdale, Conway, Hot Springs, Harrison, and Gentry were finalists in

the Bowl. Steve Orian, president of the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference, was the “quiz master” for the event. When all 100 multiple-choice questions were answered and scored, five teams received a first-place ranking, three teams received a second-place ranking, and one team received a third-place ranking.

Each year, Arkansas-Louisiana Pathfinder clubs study six NKJV Bible studies about Adventist doctrine. Thirty Bible Bowl lessons and Bible-marking instructions are online for the public to access on the Arkansas-Louisiana Youth Ministries Web site: [www.arklayouthministries.org/bible-study-bowl.html](http://www.arklayouthministries.org/bible-study-bowl.html).

Congratulations to all the teams that participated. We also want to express our appreciation to all club leaders who work so hard with these young people. Remember—we all are winners when we study the Word of God!

**Lloyd Clapp**, Pathfinder/Adventurer director



Arkansas-Louisiana Pathfinder Bible Bowl participants.



# Let's Define "Church Ministries" in Oklahoma



When we use the words "church ministries," we are talking about a subject that can be as wide as the Mississippi River and as different as apple pie and sauerkraut. Obviously, it includes things like Sabbath School with all the variety of approaches creative leaders can apply. It would include personal Bible studies and small group ministries, which help prepare the church for evangelistic meetings (such as Revelation seminars), or help young people like Rachel Flerchinger to do ShareHim meetings locally or in the mission field. It also includes preaching prophecy, which might be held in the church, public hall, tent, or even in an all-you-can-eat restaurant like Harvey Gil, pastor, and Jack Dubosque, evangelist, held in a fruitful event in Okmulgee last year. What about feeding the hungry and operating a community services ministry? One of our most important

church ministries is our children's Christian education. That's why our schools are called "church schools." Let's not forget how we visit Jesus through prison ministries and ministering to the sick (Matthew 25:35-36). And then there are women's and men's ministries, and the list could go on and on, because every church and city has its unique needs and opportunities.

Consider what is happening in one of Oklahoma Conference's special mission fields. Guymon is located in our panhandle where the weather changes dramatically from hot to cold almost every other day. Shortly after Damon Snead, pastor, arrived in town he went to visit the mayor. In the conversation he asked if the city had any special needs. The mayor sent him to visit a lady responsible for meeting those needs. It turned out she was thrilled to learn that Snead's wife, Mary, had recently taken training at Amazing Facts Center of

Evangelism (AFCO) and would be pleased to provide health talks and cooking classes. The city provided the venue and helped advertise the event. They even arranged for some of the classes to be reported on local television. This was a wonderful way to break down prejudice and make friends for Christ. Meanwhile, Snead has his hands full ministering to three active groups: English-speaking members, a Spanish speaking group, and a very rapidly-growing Burmese refugee group. In the midst of all this need is a wonderful church school with two very dedicated teachers ministering day after day and trying to figure out how to make room for all the students who would like to attend, even when there is no money to pay the bill. Please pray for them!

**Leighton Holley**, ministerial/  
evangelism director

## "God's Love Song" Oklahoma Women's Ministry Retreat

**WEWOKA** » On Friday, March 28, Wewoka Woods Adventist Center welcomed women from all over the state. At the entrance to the center, we anticipated the relaxing weekend ahead of us—among the rolling hills, grazing horses, fresh air, and full, sparkling lake. Linda Francisco and her team provided a spiritual and prayerful retreat for each woman's refreshment and renewal. Ginny Allen, of Vancouver, Washington, inspired us with her gentle, loving demeanor and lifetime lessons. Carla Baker, NAD Women's Ministry director, gave us practical tips on serving one another. Paula Reiter, director of the Nedley Depression and Anxiety Recovery Program in Ardmore, Oklahoma, shared practical tools for dealing with depression. Ysis España from Texas regaled us with special music and a concert. Justina Lyn, from Wisconsin, along with her mother, Laura Ruf, from Yukon, Oklahoma, brought us enthusiastic praise songs and music.

Saturday evening we were entertained and educated by Johnny Flores, who brought us "True Colors: Understanding Our Differences." We were fascinated to learn how our various personalities either contribute to or distract from our communication skills or our productivity in groups. Throughout the weekend we were well fed by Lisa and Robin East. Sunday morning the auditorium tables and chairs were set up in the shape of a cross and we shared an amazing Communion service together. All participants went home changed after sharing space and blessings together at Wewoka Woods.

**Susan Castillo**



Ginny Allen shared inspiring lifetime lessons and spoke to the women during the Communion service.

# Just Claim It 2014

**MIAMI, FLA. »** While the country shivered and struggled with the last gasps of winter, hundreds of youth and young adults made their way to Miami, Florida, to take part in Just Claim It 2014. Just Claim It is a national youth prayer conference where youth and leaders gather for inspiration built to energize our youth and inspire our leaders as we move closer and closer to the day the Lord returns. Around 20 youth and leaders from Oklahoma traveled to take part. A group of youth from the Oklahoma Spanish churches traveled 24 hours to attend the meetings, hoping for a spiritual boost and inspiration as they make plans for reaching out to the youth of Oklahoma. The group fundraised and saved up for months to have a chance to praise God in the warm Miami environment. North East Youth Federation president Ernesto Hernandez drove the overnight leg of the trip. "We're on a mission to be involved and take back as much enthusiasm and inspiration as we can to Oklahoma," he said as he stood outside the hotel with his youth unpacking their trailer.

Oklahoma's own "Two Guys and the Word" were on hand to be presenters. Pastors Stephen Carlile and Kevin Bruce talked to youth about dating and being pure in a modern culture. Carlile brought youth from Tulsa, hoping to give them a grand experience and a chance to see how our church leaders want to take part in their lives.

During the week youth from all over the country took part in prayer, praise, and outreach. Busses loaded with youth traveled all over South Florida—accomplishing projects to bring the love of Christ to the area. A bus pulled up to the Rescue Mission near downtown Miami and helped

sort goods and serve meals to the homeless. Other youth traveled to churches in the area to help make much-needed repairs. A large effort was made to clean up the beaches of Miami. Attendees spent an entire afternoon walking and combing the Miami sands to make sure they left the city better than they found it.

A prayer area, aptly named "the Garden of Gethsemane" provided a quiet place for

can be delivered to the local youth to help finish God's mission to take his children home.

Milton Coronado, an urban pastor from the Chicago area, took youth to help him re-graffiti a wall in urban Miami. The wall they re-decorated was located in the middle of an old church courtyard. The pastor of the church was happy to provide paint and resources to help give his church a new



Attendees spent time on the sand of South Beach to pick up trash during Just Claim It 2014 in Miami, Florida.

reflection and prayer. Intense worship and music praise lifted attendees as God made His presence felt under the wide Miami Convention Center ceiling. NAD president Dan Jackson and his youth leadership team were all on hand to provide love and spiritual inspiration to the attendees. Musicians, singers, spoken word artists, and drama enthusiasts took to the stage to share their God-given talent with the crowd. Powerful speakers from around the nation evoked images of how God's power

creative outlook.

Apple Park, Oklahoma Conference Youth director, was on hand to network with other leaders and look for new resources in reaching out to our Oklahoma youth and young adults. Park said, "I'm praying that we all experience a connection to Jesus so that we can return to Oklahoma and share our experience."

**Richard Castillo**, communication director

# First Tulsa's Unique Multilingual Ministry

**TULSA** » If you attend the First Tulsa church on Sabbath morning you will find a unique situation. You will discover that there are three services going on simultaneously within the same building. Under the umbrella of one church and the leadership of one pastor, these three groups are able to coexist with minimal challenges. As a matter of fact, each group essentially imparts something unique that makes the church a better place overall.

Our biggest area of growth has been our Burmese membership. The great majority has arrived to this country as political refugees from Myanmar (formerly Burma), escaping persecution in their own country. Having minimal financial resources, and not being able to rent a location as a place of worship, the church was glad to take them in and make them part of the family. Due to their recent arrival to the US, most of the Burmese adults do not speak sufficient English and requested the opportunity to hold services in their own language (Zomi dialect). They were given a spacious room to hold their worship service just across the hallway from the main sanctuary—and just to the left and other side of the chapel is where the Spanish congregation holds its services.

Though the main services all take place separately and in a different language, our children all come together for Sabbath School. In this melting pot environment,



The First Tulsa church enjoys a picture of heaven each Sabbath as their diverse congregation meets to worship the Lord in English, Spanish, and Burmese (Zomi dialect) services.



our children have overcome language barriers and have connected with each other as they engage in class and various activities. This cohesiveness has developed even more as our children's programs, such as Adventurers and Pathfinders, have grown.

Additionally, the three groups will occasionally come together during the main service for special programs, such as Communion, academy programs, and con-

certs. When those times come around, it's a reminder and a small picture of what heaven has in store for us when we shall all come together to worship the Lord. So if you visit our church, you might not just be greeted with "Happy Sabbath," but also, "Feliz Sabado" and "Sabbath Thupha!"

Daniel Ortega

## Membership vs. Discipleship



SOUTHWEST REGION CONFERENCE

The command of Christ to His disciples was for them to make disciples of those with whom they came in contact, because true disciples penetrate their own world (Matthew 28:18-20). Being One who believes in building and preserving relationships, God admonished disciples then, and admonishes disciples now, to “love the Lord your God with all your heart . . . soul, and . . . mind. And . . . love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:37-40). Christ expects His disciples to reflect His character, replicate His method of outreach, and thereby draw others to Himself for the glory of God (John 15:16).

All too often, disciples (the church) give disciple-making mere lip service, but do not actively exercise the practice of disciple making. Disciples reproduce themselves. If

each disciple replicates his commission to duplicate, then multiplication takes place. Multiplication is the key to reaching the world and to fulfilling the Great Commission. Jesus expects His disciples to reproduce. When Jesus said, “I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit” (John 15:16), He surely meant for each disciple to spread the Word of God throughout the world.

The crisis at the heart of the church is a crisis of production. God’s plan for the church is that the members be disciples and bear fruit, not simply be members of His fellowship. Far too many people call themselves disciples but do not share their faith story with someone else. Far too many people call themselves disciples but do not actively engage in outreach ministries within their church structure. Their

behavior and their ability to penetrate their world for Christ reflect their relationship with Christ. We are reminded that “all who engage in ministry are God’s helping hand. They are co-workers with the angels; rather, they are the human agencies through whom the angels accomplish their mission” (*Education*, p. 271).

Our work has been marked out for us. We are to be channels through which God’s love flows to the perishing world. Each member who is convicted within his heart to be an active disciple will seek the Father for the area of ministry that will best serve His purposes. I encourage you to involve yourself in the ministry that will make you a conduit of evangelism for God’s glory.

**Durandel Ford, Sr.**, community services director

## A New Member at 93!

**BATON ROUGE, LA.** » It’s official! At 93, Lionel Milton is the oldest member of the Berean church. It was in 2005 that Hurricane Katrina drove Lionel Milton and soon-to-be wife, Margaret, from their New Orleans homes. Like so many survivors of that storm, both found their way to Baton Rouge. They were then married, and subsequently attended the Berean church where they have worshipped for the past seven years. Of course, it was common knowledge that Margaret was a baptized Seventh-day Adventist; so it was only natural that the average member assumed Lionel was also. After all, along with Margaret, he faithfully attended church each Sabbath; supporting and participating in all church activities and functions. Imagine our surprise when recently, Robert Davis,

pastor, invited Milton to join him and his first elder Robert Landry up front where Davis shared Milton’s decision to become a member of the church. Davis shared the following: “Brother Milton approached me

a while back and told me he wanted to become a bona fide member of Berean. And so, Brother Milton, on profession of your faith coupled with the blessings of heaven and the approval of this congregation, we welcome you into the Berean church.”

Shortly thereafter, we would learn that his wife, Margaret, was just as surprised as we were about his decision. “He doesn’t usually keep secrets from me, but this is one he got away with. And I don’t mind at all,” chuckled wife Margaret. “Welcome to Berean, Brother Milton. You have always been one of us!”

**Evelyn M. Edwards**



Lionel Milton, 93, posing with Robert Davis, pastor, upon receiving a certificate of membership.



Members of Dallas Fellowship feed community members at the Oasis Apartments in Dallas.

# Thanksgiving at the Oasis

**DALLAS, TEXAS** » I wonder what it was like when Jesus served the 12 disciples at the last supper. We all have gifts and talents that God has given us. Take a moment and think of yours. Now, the question is, are you using the gifts and talents

that the Lord has given you? Are they glorifying the Lord?

Jesus tells us in Matthew 6:33: “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” What does

this mean? All we are and have belong to God. As we seek Him He opens our gifts and talents up to us and then we see how He can use us to build His kingdom. The Lord loves us and wants us to be a part of building His kingdom.

Thanksgiving is a glorious time for my family and me. Dallas Community Fellowship Inc. (DCFI) is a small organization in the second-highest crime area in Dallas County. The Oasis Apartments has allowed Pat Ford, a member of Dallas Fellowship church, to use its clubhouse to give back to a sin-darkened area. There, we served seniors, veterans, and the disabled a Thanksgiving lunch, sponsored by Dallas Fellowship. We were able to give away 12 Thanksgiving baskets, and now feed approximately 20-25 families each month.

Marlene Harris, Roscoe Harris, Annie Rhodes, Gwen Norwood, and Pat Ford are all members of Dallas Fellowship church. Patricia Shaw, Angela Bailey, and Alesha Smith are residents of the Oasis Apartments and are always there to lend a helping hand.

Our small organization, DCFI, is working in this community by providing workshops. This is a group of young people, ages 18 to 24, being educated about AIDS prevention. This community is the third-highest affected with HIV and AIDS in our area. We are thankful that the owners of the Oasis Apartments have allowed us to minister there. We can't help everyone, but we encourage you to use the gifts and talents God has given you to help someone.

**Pat Ford**

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# Mark Bunney Performs for Berean Concert

**BATON ROUGE, LA. »** As has been its practice, the Berean church celebrated the Lord's birth with a worship-hour Christmas concert last December. However, unlike past concerts, this one did not feature guest choirs or even Berean's choirs. Instead, thanks to elder and minister of music Henry Jones and Berean's pastor, Robert L. Davis, we were treated to a concert by renowned recording saxophonist Mark Bunney, who was raised in the church where he developed his passion for using music to praise God and minister to others.

Without Berean realizing it, the Berean church's relationship with Bunney would begin in 2004 in Bermuda where Davis met Bunney during that conference's camp meeting. Some years later, the two were reunited in Charlotte, North Carolina—Davis' previous pastorate. According to Davis, "As blessing would have it," the two would have a third encounter in Texas where the Leicester, England, native was on tour. It was then that Bunney accepted his

first invitation to bring his music ministry to Berean. "We were blessed with a morning performance followed by an afternoon concert," reports Davis. Two years later, Bunney would be back at Berean—this time as a guest saxophonist.

As Berean's minister of music, it is Jones' responsibility to coordinate the church's annual Christmas program. "But I wanted this Christmas program to be different. Our Lord and the church deserved more than just a traditional program. The Holy Spirit directed me to Bunney's last visit, and immediately, I knew he was the answer."

The Sabbath of the concert arrived and

with it Bunney's much-anticipated presentation. His repertoire included songs from his three-CD collection beginning with "God and God Alone," "A Brand New Day," "Here I Am to Worship," and "Quiet Place." The performance lived up to our anticipation as the attentive audience sat in awe at Bunney's God-given ability to make his instrument come alive with praise. Harpist Asenath Leah Francis, soloist Leah Davis, and an instrumental combo from the Hammond church contributed to the concert, as well.

Evelyn M. Edwards

► Mark Bunney, a renowned recording saxophonist, performs at the Berean church's worship-hour Christmas concert.

▼ Henry Jones, the Berean church's minister of music, and renowned saxophonist Mark Bunney pose together after the concert.



# Because We Don't Deserve, We Serve



Romans 12:1 reads, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service" (NKJV).

A Sabbath School teacher was teaching her class about the benefits of unselfish service to God and our fellow man. She finished up by saying, "The reason you are in this world, children, is to serve others!" After several seconds of silence, a little girl piped up, "Well then, what are the *others* here for?"

God never intended for the church to function inwardly like the Marine Corps whose slogan is "The few. The proud. The Marines." All who have been redeemed by the magnanimous love and grace of God are bound by duty to be strengthened and equipped to serve others in ways that correspond to the gifts that God has placed in them. You and I need to be submerged in the pointed counsel of the servant of the Lord found in *Christian Service* (pp. 43, 44). Notice these words: "The professed followers of Christ are on trial before the heavenly uni-

verse, yet the coldness of their zeal and the feebleness of their efforts in God's service classify them as unfaithful. . . Many there are, against whose names will be found written in the books of heaven, not producers, but consumers." . Look closely at the words of the apostle Paul in Romans 12:5, "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another" (NKJV).

We belong to each other. We are responsible for each other. We owe benevolence to each other, in and out of the church, because Christ has been good to us! Because we don't deserve, we serve! If what full-time ministers are doing drains, wanes, swells, or entitles us so severely that we have nothing left when we interact with society, then something is critically wrong with our spirituality. Certainly, there are moments when we need to withdraw from the fray of this world to regroup and recharge spiritually. Yet, our duty must compel us to work feverishly for a perishing world around us. Once again, read the words of the apostle Paul in Hebrews 10:23-25 (NIV), "Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we possess, for He Who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may

spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching." As *that day* approaches, we need to be increasingly committed to our God, so that we can become increasingly committed to the preaching of the gospel in every way, shape, and form. Recently, I heard of a large congregation that was receiving praise and affirmation from an individual. The person mentioned that one of the things they were so impressed with was their custom of having the Communion service on Wednesday night. When asked why they had opted to have Communion on Wednesday evenings as opposed to Sabbath mornings, the individual replied: "Oh, if they had it on Sabbath morning, it would interfere with and disrupt the flow of the praise and worship." That individual failed to understand that worship and service aren't about us, they are about a God we revere and respect, and a world that desperately needs Him.

Carlos J. Craig, president

## SAIL Pathfinders Help Restore Bastrop State Park

**AUSTIN** » Clouds of smoke billowed into the sky for miles across the horizon. The worst forest fire to ever hit Texas devoured homes, businesses, and 98 percent of Bastrop State Park on Labor Day in 2011. The following January, the South Austin Inner Lights (SAIL) Pathfinders went to Bastrop State Park to help replant the loblolly pine trees for which the park is famous. It was a very cold morning when Pathfinders, staff, and parents donned gloves, grabbed bags of tree slips and digging tools, and headed out to plant trees.



South Austin Inner Lights Pathfinders helped plant thousands of trees in Bastrop State Park.

It wasn't hard to find a place to plant as the area was barren of the precious pines. Working quickly, we planted more than 2,000 tree slips, setting the record for the

highest number of trees planted in one day. The Pathfinders found this to be such a rewarding and fun experience that we returned on December 15, 2013, for round

two of planting. The second time was a little more difficult as we had to climb over fallen trees and find the empty spaces between the new trees. Pathfinders, staff, and parents worked alongside other community volunteers to plant over 1,400 loblolly tree slips. The SAIL Pathfinders are now recognized by some of the rangers

at the park and we hope to help our community in this way for years to come.

Connie Cepeda

# Mission Trip 2013: Guatemala

**BEAUMONT** » God has an awesome sense of humor. Last summer, my boyfriend, Tony, and I were welcoming the Sabbath while listening to a fantastic sermon by Gary Blanchard, pastor. After the sermon, Blanchard told us about a mission trip to Guatemala that was coming up in November. After hearing this, I remember Tony saying, "It would be pretty cool to go to Guatemala." Blanchard and Ben Guerrero, pastor, overheard us, and the next Sabbath an announcement was made at church. God really had a plan for us. Someone was so generous, and they decided to make a donation to cover our down payments!

So the big day came. We arrived at the airport and boarded the airplane. It was my very first plane ride. After the plane ride came my very first 10-hour bus ride to where we would be ministering. The next day, Tony and I were getting ready for Vacation Bible School, but God did not have that in the plan for us. Instead, He decided that Tony and I were going to do outreach. God knew that we both could make a bigger difference that way. He was right, as He always is. He was also right that outreach not only would have a bigger impact in the lives of others, but it would also change both of us forever. We completely fell in love with God.

Our typical day would start with a daily devotional followed by a big breakfast. We would then hop on the bus and ride it for

about 30 minutes down an eight-mile road to Poptun. The ride was bumpy and rough, and when our hopes would go south, God would remind us of His presence in the form of a beautiful clear blue pond. God always captured our attention at the right time.

During the day, we would set out with God's Bible workers to reach out to those who wanted to be reached and those who did not know about God. Each day was a new blessing and at every home that we visited we were always welcomed with huge smiles. We visited big homes and small homes, homes made of sticks and homes made of bricks. It did not matter what the house was like, or how rich or poor the person was, we were always welcomed. Every day we would reach out to the people there and every day God would remind us that He is always with us.

Guatemala is considered a third-world country and all the people, except for the high government officials, live in extreme poverty. They are usually very grateful for the few things that they have and are overwhelmingly thankful for what they receive. They are a very humble and faithful people. But there are those who are in need of God's loving message and those who have yet to hear the Word of God.

On our first day of outreach, Tony was singing the tithes and offerings song in Spanish. Beverly and Brenda were also part

of our outreach team. They both speak Spanish and reminded Tony that this was a Bible study, and that a song dealing with tithes had nothing to do with what we were doing at the moment. I remember Tony saying that the hymn was just stuck in his head and he felt like singing it. Before we knew it, the focus of the Bible study turned to the topic of tithes and offerings. Brenda and Beverly both looked at him with disbelief. This particular family was having problems with their tithes and offerings for a very long time, therefore, causing them to drift away from God. That day we also found out that the couple had yet to be married, preventing the woman from being baptized. We did not realize that the man was paying very close attention to the Bible study. God truly was working through us, and on that day, the man decided to marry her so that she could finally receive God's blessing. The following day they got married and she got baptized with her son.

On the fifth day of outreach, we met Herman, the mechanic. I remember seeing in his face the need of a push toward the Word of God. We told him that every moment spent waiting to come to God is a moment lost. You could see the struggle in this mechanic's face. Keith, our outreach leader, told him how Jesus is also a mechanic; only He repairs broken hearts rather than broken cars. Later that night, we witnessed him smile as he took the plunge into the baptismal waters.

We set out to be a blessing in the lives of others, yet we left with a greater blessing. Although we didn't have any doubts about God's love for us, going on this trip led to a personal revival and the experience was completely life-changing. We completely fell in love with the Lord. This was our first mission trip and we have been blessed far beyond our expectations, and today we continue to be blessed from this experience.



Katie Zoch and a group of young people from Texas visited Guatemala last summer on a mission trip. Zoch says the trip changed her life and that it was in Guatemala when she truly fell in love with God.

**Katie Zoch**



# Tell Your People What God Has Done for You

**HOUSTON/GULFHAVEN** » The following is an interview with Victor Amankwah (VA), first elder of the Gulfhaven church in Houston, Texas. Amankwah, born and reared in Ghana, West Africa, has an overwhelming passion for giving others the opportunity to learn about our Savior, Jesus Christ. Victor has been an inspiration to many people because of his overwhelming passion for mission work.

**Jean Hagen (JH):** When and where did you first become a Seventh-day Adventist?

**VA:** It was in 1990 in Toronto, Canada. Someone invited me to church and I attended every other Sabbath for one year. Then, through an evangelistic crusade, I gave my life to the Lord.

**JH:** What has inspired you to go back to Ghana and preach?

**VA:** One day a pastor by the name of Ledford Morris preached a sermon about the demoniac in Luke 8:26-40. This story reflected my own life of how I was before I knew the Lord. After the demon-possessed man was healed by Jesus, he wanted to go with Him, but Jesus told him, "No, return to your own house and tell what great things God has done for you." When Jesus came back to that place, there was a large multitude of people waiting to welcome Him. The healed man

had done what Jesus commanded him to do.

**JH:** When did you first begin taking missionary trips to Ghana?

**VA:** I began in 1992. It was on my trip in 1995 when I fully realized that God was leading me



Victor Amankwah, Gulfhaven church first elder, was born in Ghana and has a passion for sharing Christ with the people who live there.

to do this work for Him. I felt compelled to go and tell my people what God had done in my life.

**JH:** I know that the financial aspect of such an endeavor must be quite enormous. How have you been able to finance such a project?

**VA:** I work extra hours at the hospital where I am employed as an RN. I work after hours in other hospitals when I can. I put in many long hours to make the extra money, which I put in savings for the trips. I also



receive monetary means from church members and friends. I try to take a trip every three years.

**JH:** Would you tell our readers some of the wonderful and exciting stories that have happened as a result of this ministry?

**VA:** On my trip in 2005, we worked in six cities and baptized more than 300 people. All these cities are small, un-entered territories. On my trip in 2010, we raised up four church

structures. Several pastors, lay members, and myself helped to baptize 400 people.

**JH:** Thank you, Victor for this beautiful testimony. May God be glorified for your faithfulness in following the Lord's command to go and teach others about the love of Jesus and His soon coming. We hear Jesus' miraculous words echoing down through the centuries of time: "Lo, I am with you always even until the end of the age." Amen!

Jean Hagen

## Lewisville Goes "All In" on Healthy Cooking

**LEWISVILLE** » In an effort to educate church members and the community about healthy cooking, the women's ministries department at the Lewisville church presented a cooking class. On October 26, 2013, Hailey, Troy, and Faye demonstrated quick and easy meal preparation. Troy

demonstrated how to make southern biscuits, which his grandmother had taught him to make when he was a child. Hailey prepared a quinoa salad with avocados, tomatoes, and other delicious ingredients. Faye showed the group how to make a squash/zucchini salad with red and green

bell peppers, that was then marinated in coconut oil, sea salt, and pepper. Church members and invited visitors were educated on the nutritional value of the food items that were used. Handouts with the recipes and directions were given to all attendees. Participants were invited to taste each of the delicious foods at the end of class. The class lasted one hour and it is one of the many women's outreach activities organized by Susan Pena, the women's ministries leader.

Faye Hunte



**Far left:** The Lewisville church's women's ministries department recently presented a healthy cooking class for members and the community.

◀ The cooks, from left: Faye, Troy, and Hailey.

## A Serving Church



Some years ago, the Adventist Church developed a broad strategy to help refocus our members on the importance of continuing the ministry activities that Jesus modeled while here on earth. We called it "The Caring Church." Materials were produced and seminars were conducted to define, train, and empower us all to be "salt and light" in our communities.

Most of us probably support such a concept. After all, if we are to "love our neighbor as ourselves," we don't need to look far before finding someone in need of help, hope, or a caring heart. However, like our current culture, we seem to suffer from a serious case of busyness. When we sense such a need, we let ourselves off the hook with a quick prayer for the person and the hope that someone else will help them.

Even though praying for someone from a distance is not an inappropriate response, I believe that we are called to actually engage with people in ways that may be an answer to their prayers. If the "salt" stays in the saltshaker, it is of little value. Just knowing that it is there is not enough, since there are people in your life and mine who are desperately in need of the savor that it provides. And light that is hidden under a bushel? Well, you get the picture.

Jesus commands His disciples to first love God and then He calls us to love each other, and all others as He does. At the very heart of such love is a call to action.

"The Caring Church" is perfectly positioned to offer ourselves in service to those around us. As we minister to our fellow members we *nurture* one another in our efforts to serve, encourage, teach, provide various types of assistance, and foster worship opportunities for all ages.

And then one of the most exciting ministry activities is experienced when we share the Good News of the Gospel with someone in search of hope. This *outreach* function is the responsibility of all members as we each have a personal relationship with Jesus and a personal testimony of His blessings to us through the power of transforming love. There is no greater

thrill than witnessing someone come to know and accept Jesus as the Lord of their lives and knowing that He used us to introduce them to Him.

As Jesus began His earthly ministry He shared His mission statement by referring to the words of the prophet Isaiah. He told those listening that He had come to preach Good News to the poor, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives, to comfort all who mourn, and to give them the oil of gladness instead of mourning and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair (Isaiah 61).

In reflecting on those words describing the ministry of Jesus, it seems we would be hard pressed to come up with any better description of ministry than He has called us to just now. May we as individual members of the "body of Christ" choose to commit ourselves to continuing this special ministry as we allow Him to pour us out into our communities in service and love.

**Phil Robertson**, executive secretary/treasurer

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# Typhoon Haiyan Mission Trip

**PHILIPPINES** » Last November, I was horrified and heartbroken as I watched the news over the Internet and saw the havoc and devastation brought about by Typhoon Haiyan, the strongest typhoon (equivalent to a category 5 hurricane) ever to land on the Philippines. I could not imagine the catastrophic damage it created in the lives of my fellow Filipinos. Upon learning that it first landed in my home province of Guiuan, Samar, where most of my cousins are still living, and hearing

reports of the tsunami-like storm surge in Tacloban City, where I had undertaken my medical education, I immediately decided to go to the Philippines to help. However, it took my husband, Rodel, and I two weeks to be able to join a relief team due to some difficulties in disaster relief logistics.

Initially, we planned to be working with a local medical team who would be traveling by land from North to Central Philippines as the Tacloban airport was open only for military relief operations

at that time. With lots of medical supplies, food for volunteers, and time limitations, not to mention the rumors that relief goods were being ambushed by typhoon victims along the way, it was decided that traveling by land was not the best option either. We would have to rely on the Lord to get us there.

A few days before going to the Philippines, Kathy Mckey from the Southwestern Union introduced us to the president of Living Waters International (LWI) who was also planning to go to the Philippines to install water purification systems. We arranged to ship some of their supplies and to bring some with us. We arrived in Manila two days ahead of their team, but were in constant communication regarding the logistics of reaching the disaster-stricken area. While waiting for their team, we tried to work with local Seventh-day Adventist officials for our immediate transport to Tacloban, but there was no way they could help us. We praised the Lord when the LWI team arrived in Manila, because they were able to communicate with their American contacts

in Cebu, who arranged for the five of us (three members of LWI, Rodel, and I) and our cargo to board a British C-130 bound for Cebu the next day. From Cebu, God provided a ferry boat whose owner gave us free boarding and cargo transport for Ormoc City. We reached Ormoc City early the following day and were met by local Adventist brethren who were happy to see us, for according to them, other medical aid and relief operations had bypassed them to go to the worst typhoon-stricken area of Tacloban City. Although Ormoc had fewer casualties, it had also suffered widespread devastation and people feared that relief and medical aid would not come.

The team decided to make Ormoc City our base since it was perceived that the roads going to Tacloban and Samar province were not passable. We then pro-



▲ Rodel, pastor, and Prospil Liwang (middle left and right) joined Living Waters International to bring relief in the Philippines after Typhoon Haiyan.

vided free medical services, medicine, and supplies to our church brethren in Ormoc City, but my mind was set to see my family members in Samar regardless of the road condition. LWI also installed two water-purifying systems at two Adventist churches that would supply clean water not only to the church people, but also to the surrounding communities.

From Ormoc to Tacloban, total destruction could be seen everywhere. Uprooted coconut trees and piles of rubble were a common sight. But the most gut-wrenching view was bags of corpses along the streets of Tacloban. Bodies were still being found among piles of wreckage in the third week

after Haiyan's landfall. Victims and volunteers were helping one another.

With no news from family members, my heart was downcast with fears that the same scenario awaited us as we made our way through the broken roads on our way to Salcedo and Guiuan, Samar, one of the hardest hit areas. What a relief and joy it was to see some of the people there picking up the remnants of their wrecked homes, although some of them had no home to return to. We hugged and prayed and thanked God for sparing their lives. We were able to leave them our tent, food, and monetary donations, which we had received to help repair their homes. We were also able to

share some of the funds to help repair the roof of their church and school.

Please continue to pray for the survivors as they pick themselves up from the rubble and rebuild their lives from ground zero. Sad stories of survivors and their families continue, and we uplift each of them to our Heavenly Father.

Rodel and I are grateful for the Texico Conference and its churches for lending their support and donations, which made it possible for us to see our family members and take medical relief and monetary aid to the surviving victims of Typhoon Haiyan.

Prospil Liwanag

## The Reason for the Season

**ALBUQUERQUE, N. MEX. »** On December 21, 2013, church members from various churches came together under one roof at Three Angels church to experience a unique night of praise, fellowship, fun, and of course, holiday food! A bilingual Christmas concert entitled, "Glory to God in the Highest" marked the official beginning of the festivities, but the fellowship among the churches began much earlier.

Prior to the start of the concert, laughter and the heartfelt phrase, "It's so good to see you!" could be heard throughout the

church foyer as friends and family from the various churches caught up with their visiting loved ones. Midway through the program there was a silent reverence as Manuel Rodriguez, pastor, could be seen motioning to Isabel Garcia, Abed Charles, Christina Espinoza, Brian Nogar, and Silvia Espinoza, to step into the waters with him to complete their decision to be born again in Christ through baptism. "I really enjoyed the baptisms in the middle of the concert," commented Michael Vasquez, Sr. "For me, the baptisms enhanced the meaning of the

phrase, "The Reason for the Season."

The Christmas Concert concluded with Rodriguez thanking the various churches and their members for their contributions to the program, but other festivities continued on into the night as he then invited everyone to stay for the "Tamalada." What is a "Tamalada"? It's a tamale-making festivity. Members from the Valencia Spanish and Three Angels churches manned different stations in the Three Angels gym, ready to share their "tamale-making skills" with anyone interested in learning how to

make them, ranging in variety from vegetarian to sweet tamales. Many of the visitors could be seen nodding in approval as they sampled the finished products.

Rodriguez thanks everyone for their hard work and invites them back for "Tamalada" to enjoy more fun and fellowship again this year.

Michael and Margaret Vasquez



Left: Ashley Wafford sings "I Believe."

Top right: Midway through the Christmas concert, a baptismal ceremony with five candidates took place.

◀ The Albuquerque Three Angels church choir shared messages of the season through music.

# Why Southwestern?

## Two Students Share Their Reasons

Alex Loewen's decision to pursue physical therapy came about in a strange and painful way. Loewen was playing basketball when he landed on someone's foot, causing Loewen's ankle to twist, tearing three ligaments on the side. Loewen's doctor referred him to the Michael Johnson Performance-Athletic Training Center for physical therapy.

"Going through physical therapy there made me interested in it," says Loewen. "I watched them work. I saw what they were doing, how they were doing it, and it looked interesting."

Loewen applied to different schools but in the end, Southwestern won out. "My parents had both gone to Southwestern so I'd come to Keene to visit ever since I was little," says Loewen. "I've always liked it. Southwestern just seemed to be the right fit for me."

Now, as a student, Loewen appreciates all the different facets of what it is to be a Southwestern student. "Back at my old church, my

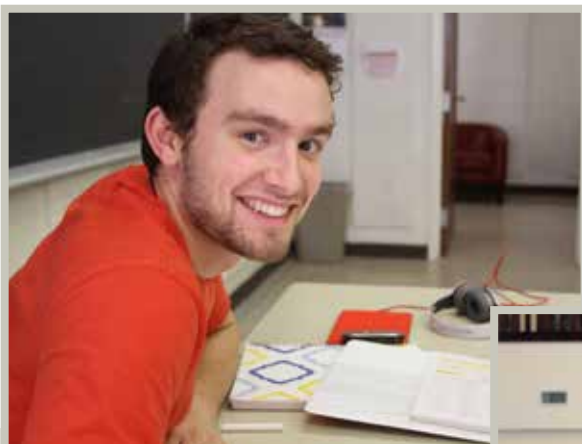
youth group was pretty small—four to be exact—so we never really did vespers," says Loewen. "Here, there are so many things you can do. I've been on praise teams, I've gone on outreach outings, and done in-reach. It's all readily available. Southwestern has definitely helped me grow both spiritually and mentally."

Loewen thinks that his professors have helped make quite a difference. "My professors have a big impact in my spiritual life, too, because they have devotionals at the beginning of class," says Loewen. "It's awesome. They bring out different aspects and perspectives of God that I hadn't thought of before—they help me think about God differently."

As part of the pre-physical therapy program, Loewen will spend one more year at Southwestern and then complete his education at either Loma Linda University or Andrews University. "I feel like my teachers are preparing me for the physical therapy pro-

gram," says Loewen. "My classes are hard, but the professors make sure I understand the material. It's great preparation for all the classes in the program."

From the spiritual and mental aspect to the residence hall life, Loewen enjoys everything Southwestern has to offer. "I'm definitely glad I came here," says Loewen. "I've visited other schools, but there's just something about Southwestern that I really like. Whether it is because of the family atmo-



▲ Alex Loewen is a pre-physical therapy student.

▶ Tiffany Falcon is a nursing student.

sphere, the caring professors, or different activities offered on campus, I don't know. But I do know I wouldn't go anywhere else."

A native of Keene, Tiffany Falcon had plans to go to another Adventist college, but she felt something was not quite right. "I prayed about it and I ended up coming to Southwestern," says Falcon. "It felt right. I know I'm going to go other places eventually, so why rush out of the house? Home is a good place to be."

Falcon is now a sophomore nursing major and a student ambassador for the enrollment office. Her job and major both give Falcon lots of opportunities to experience life outside of Keene. On a recent recruiting trip to Auburn Adventist Academy, Falcon met up with a girl she had counseled at summer camp. They had many spiritual chats and Falcon learned she had since been baptized.

"Working for the enrollment department, we get asked the question, What does Southwestern do for you spiritually? Here's what it did for me," says Falcon. "At Southwestern, I got to this point where I started making Jesus personal. My relationship with God transitioned from being my parents' beliefs to become my own beliefs. I know what I believe and why I believe it and I make decisions based on what I think, not because of someone else."

Falcon feels that part of what makes her good at her job is being familiar with the campus, but at the same time, she continues to learn more about Southwestern every day.

"Some people who have lived here all their lives say that they already know everyone on campus and everything about the school," says Falcon. "But that's not true. I



didn't know half the people here or what went on. It's really different as a student on campus. You've got to try it before you can judge it."

After graduating, Falcon intends to go on to study to be a physician's assistant. "I'm pumped to be a nurse. It's my stepping stone for now. I know I'll be able to help people a lot and go on different trips and serve," says Falcon. "I'm not really cut out for preaching, but I like to show through example. So if I can help a person feel better and show Christ while doing it, that's what I'm going to do."

**Emily Nolasco**, sophomore communication major

# Asian/Pacific Ministries Comes to the Southwestern Union

**HOUSTON, TEXAS** » The Asian/Pacific ministry is in its infancy in the Southwestern Union. What is the Asian/Pacific ministry? It is the work done among immigrants from Southeast Asia (Asians), and those that came from the Marshall Islands of the Pacific (Pacific Islanders). To further inform us about the terminologies, "Asian" refers to those having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, but not limited to, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Pacific Islander refers to those having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific islands.

The Asian and Pacific Islander population is not a homogeneous group; rather, it comprises many groups who differ in language, culture, and length of residence in the United States. Relatively few Pacific Islanders are foreign-born.

Some of the Asian groups, such as the Chinese and Japanese, have been in the United States for several generations. Others, such as the Hmong, Vietnamese, Laotians, and Cambodians, are comparatively recent immigrants.

This information gives us a picture of the varieties of cultures and the vastness of nationalities represented by the Asian/Pacific ministry, which has recently widened its scope to include all of the North American Division, under the direction of VicLouis Arreola III, director of Asian/Pacific Ministries for the NAD.

Christ said, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field," (Matthew 9:37-38, NIV). That's what the Asian/Pacific ministry is all about.

And now, the Asian/Pacific ministry has



been welcomed by the Southwestern Union, after Arreola presented it to the union's officers. At that time, Arreola also introduced the new appointee for this ministry in our Union, Rolando A. Baysa, who is currently pastoring two churches in Houston, Texas, for the Southwest Region Conference. Baysa, in conjunction with

Through the efforts of Pastor Rolando Baysa and other dedicated people, the work among people of Asian-Pacific descent is growing in the Southwestern Union. Pictured are Burmese-Karen groups meeting in Houston and Port Lavaca.

Arreola, and others, developed the following working objectives to guide him as he embarked in this new ministry. The Asian/ Pacific ministry's general objective is to initiate the work on behalf of the union's Asian/ Pacific constituents and coordinate a unity of purpose for all the language groups in implementing the mission and vision statements as each ethnic group proclaims the gospel of salvation in the Southwestern Union Conference territory till Christ's second coming.

In the first stage of this work, Baysa has been creating awareness about the ministry, alerting pastors with Asian/Pacific members that the ministry has been established. To date, groups of Myanmar (formerly Burma) immigrants have begun worshipping every Sabbath in Houston and in Port Lavaca, with the help of the



Metropolitan church. Baysa has conducted Communion Service for those in Port Lavaca, while those in Houston have been able to join with the Metropolitan church. Baysa and his wife were also able to conduct one meeting with a group in Dallas-Fort Worth. All of these believers in these three locations are being encouraged that a Filipino pastor is ready to minister to

them and conduct Bible studies with them. Thus far, three individuals have been baptized as a result of these Bible studies. Baysa also conducts an adult English class in Houston as part of the ministry.

Baysa is praying to our almighty God that, through the Spirit, a success in the evangelism program of all language groups will happen as each language group takes part in the proclamation of the gospel in the context of the three angels' messages of Revelation 14. In this regard, he solicits your prayers on behalf of this new ministry in our union.

**Rolando A. Baysa**, Asian/Pacific ministries assistant coordinator

## Texas Conference Takes Over Operations of Texas ABC

**KEENE, TEXAS** » For nearly two decades, Pacific Press Publishing Association had operated the Texas Adventist Book Center. However in September 2013, the Pacific Press board voted to cease operation of their more than 20 stores in the United States and Canada.

After careful study and consideration, which included forming a Business Acquisition Committee and receiving full reports, the Texas Conference opted to take on the management of the operation of the Texas Adventist Book Center. The transaction requires non-tithe funds. The Texas Conference officially began operating the Texas Adventist Book Center on Monday, March 17,

2014. The Texas ABC will remain the only Adventist Book Center open in the Southwestern Union, serving the Arkansas-Louisiana, Oklahoma, Southwest Region, and Texico Conferences, in addition to the Texas Conference.

Reconfigurations to the existing layout of the physical store are underway in order to bring the food center and book center under one roof. The Texas Conference would like to thank everyone who has played a role in the success of the Texas ABC in the past and wishes them the best in their future endeavors.

The Texas ABC expresses gratitude to its customers and asks for patience and prayer during the transition. It is their mission to transition through this process as seamlessly as possibly with little interruption to the customer, and they will strive to meet their ultimate goal of providing the best products and customer service as possible.



The Texas ABC is located in Keene, Texas.

## ASI Southwest Chapter Meets in San Antonio

**SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS** » The beautiful Scenic Hills church in San Antonio was the sight of the 2014 ASI Southwest Chapter Convention. From March 27 to 29, approximately 40 members and many visitors gathered for networking and inspiration. Meals and free time on Friday afternoon and Sabbath evening were especially beneficial for networking. Inspiration came from both music and the spoken word.

G. Edward Reid shared evidence that the Lord's return will be soon, including experiences from Adventist World Radio of how angels are doing work we cannot do and going where we cannot go. Grace Daley and Ann Burnett shared both life- and health-saving experiences with the children, then Grace shared with the adults her experience and reasons for leaving pro-

fessional basketball to engage in full-time ministry for the Lord. Reasons for evangelism and practical ways of doing it were presented by Duane McKey, along with his wife, Kathy McKey, and Jaime Espinal. McKey gave background and instructions on the use of the revised New Beginnings evangelistic tool for home and public evangelism. Espinal shared a new medical evangelism tool, a program called "I Want to Be Healthy" which his ministry, Centro Misionero de Salud in Galiana, Mexico, has developed in conjunction with the Northern Mexico Union.

North American Division president Dan Jackson spoke for the 11:00 a.m. Sabbath service, emphasizing the importance of unity and working together in spite of our differences in nationality, culture, educa-

tion, and background.

Many talented musicians used their musical gifts to prepare our hearts to focus on the spoken word. The music of Ron Woolsey and his marimba, piano numbers by Mary Grace Gellenkanao, and multiple special musical numbers by others were like setting beautiful floral arrangements around a sacred worship sanctuary.

The next ASI Southwest Chapter Convention is planned for the third weekend of March 2015 at the Joshua church, in Joshua, Texas, with Ty Gibson as the keynote speaker. Begin planning soon to be there for the blessing!

**Floyd Courtney**, president, ASI Southwest Chapter

► Grace Daley, a former professional basketball player, shares how the Lord led in her journey toward becoming a Sabbath keeper.

**Top right:** Dan Jackson, president of the North American Division, was the Sabbath-morning speaker at the ASI Southwest Chapter meeting in San Antonio.

**Bottom right:** Hope Montana was one of the featured musicians at this year's Southwest ASI Chapter meeting.

▼ Jaime Espinal and his wife, Marjorie, of Centro Misionero de Salud in Mexico, are active members of the Southwest Chapter of ASI.



Art Humphrey



Art Humphrey



Art Humphrey



Art Humphrey



# How Linda Found Church

Linda had a good life—a job, friends and more than 20 family members who loved her and lived very close to her. Yet, she was full of despair.

“I could not fill this void and sadness inside me,” she says, remembering those dark days when she wanted to end her life. Having run out of options to handle her deep depression, she turned to prayer and the Bible. In her search for spiritual encouragement, she found the Hope Channel on her television one day.

“The first truth Jesus brought to me through the Hope Channel was His seventh-day Sabbath. I was amazed because I did not know about it at all. I checked the Scriptures to find out more and then I knew it was true! I was so happy for this revelation,” she says, describing the first moment of joy she felt in years.

For weeks, every Sabbath, Linda had church in her living room with the Hope Channel. And every week, she wondered if there were people in her town who also worshipped on Sabbath. New in town and homebound by illness, she didn't know how to go about finding a church that opened on Saturdays. Then, one Sabbath, she noticed her neighbors pulling into their driveway. It looked like they had been somewhere together as a family. “I wonder if they are returning from Sabbath church,” she asked herself, and then quickly dismissed the thought. That would be too much of a coincidence.

The happier she felt in her new experience with Jesus, the more determined Linda was to find a Sabbath-keeping community. It had been 40 years since she stepped into a church, but that didn't stop her. Opening her phone book, she looked for churches that perhaps included their hours of operation. And

that's how she found an Adventist church. The following Sabbath, she convinced her sister to join her and the two of them stepped into a Seventh-day Adventist church for the very first time.

neighbors about church several weeks earlier; but when Linda hesitated, God simply found another way!

Staring at the photograph, Linda broke down in tears, overcome by how God had been watching over her from that very first moment she turned to Him in desperate prayer. In  
December 2013,



The people were friendly and the service was so similar to what was on the Hope Channel, yet it had the added warmth and connection of other worshippers. After church, they were invited for potluck.

As they walked down the hallway to the fellowship room, Linda noticed a photograph of familiar people on the bulletin board. She looked closer; it was her neighbors! God had nudged her to ask her

both Linda and her sister were baptized into that Seventh-day Adventist church. “I didn't know how real God was before,” is how Linda summarizes the amazing way in which her life turned around in less than a year. “The Lord is so good and I never want to be without Him in my life. There's nothing to go back to once you know the Truth.”

## Use the Hope Channel as your evangelistic tool. It's simple:

- Select someone to be your church's Hope Channel ambassador. Have the person complete this form: <http://www.hopetv.org/ambassadors/>
- Use the resources Hope Channel will send every quarter to strengthen your outreach ministry.
- Be prepared to welcome people who learn about Adventism from Hope Channel and come looking for a church family.

## Classified Ads

### REAL ESTATE/HOUSING

**Summit Ridge Retirement Village** is an Adventist community in a rural setting but close to Oklahoma City medical facilities and shopping. Made up of mostly individual homes, the village has fellowship you'll enjoy. On-site church, independent living, nursing home and transportation as needed. Web site: <http://www.summitridgevillage.org>, or call Bill Norman, 405.208.1289.

**Missouri Property:** 10 acres. Large home with 13 bedrooms, 7 bathrooms, 2 laundry rooms, 2 large kitchens with large dining areas. Plus apartment. Being used as residence, room and cottage rentals, and Lifestyle Education Center. (Built-in income.) 2 large garages, two 2-bedroom, log-sided cottages with matching tree house,

deck, steps, slide, sandbox/swing underneath. 3/4 acre lake, small greenhouse, large organic garden, blueberries, apple, plum, walnut, pecan trees, and bee hives. Six miles to church school. 573.245.9999. Email: [bountifullivingretreat@gmail.com](mailto:bountifullivingretreat@gmail.com).

### Northwest Oklahoma Home:

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member for its Occupational Therapy program. This position requires a doctoral degree. The ideal candidate will have teaching experience and prior practice in physical dysfunction or mental health. ADU offers rewarding educational opportunities in a nurturing Christian environment. We are proud of our heritage as Florida Hospital's university, and for excellence in education and service to our community. For more information, contact Dr. Tia Hughes at [tia.hughes@adu.edu](mailto:tia.hughes@adu.edu), and check us out at <http://www.adu.edu>.

**Better Life Television** is seeking a broadcast engineer to maintain 20 TV stations and our Grants Pass, Oregon headquarters. Requires knowledge of RF broadcast engineering and FCC regulations. SDA member in good standing. Come enjoy the beautiful Pacific Northwest while helping to reach millions for Christ. Send résumé to: [ContactBetterLife@yahoo.com](mailto:ContactBetterLife@yahoo.com).

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**Union College** seeks chair of BS Nursing program. Responsibilities include strategic planning, curricular assess-

ment, faculty development, and support of college activities. Nebraska state licensure, teaching experience, and doctoral degree or advanced coursework required. Submit cover letter and vitae to Dr. Malcolm Russell, VPAA, [marussel@college.edu](mailto:marussel@college.edu). Call: 402.486.2501.

**Bible Worker/Canvasser** needed for 3 months this summer in Elk City, Oklahoma. Total stipend is \$2,400. Call Pastor Johnson at 580.472.3472.

#### MISCELLANEOUS

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**Looking for Authors** who have written a book on self-help for young adults (depression, suicide, eating disorders, dating, etc.). Also accepting children's books, mission stories, biographies, and inspirational/doctrinal topics. Call TEACH Services at 800.367.1844.

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**Diabetes Reversal and Weight Management:** Butler Creek Health Education Center, Iron City, TN. June 29-July 11, 2014. Prevention and recovery from lifestyle disease. Reversal of most Type 2 diabetes and permanent weight loss. Cost: \$975 (physician fees not included). For more information call 931.724.2443. [www.butlercreek.us](http://www.butlercreek.us).

**Single and over 40?** The only interracial group for Adventist singles over 40. Stay home and meet new friends in USA with a Pen Pal monthly newsletter of members and album. For information, send large, self-addressed, stamped envelope to ASO 40, 2747 Nonpareil, Sutherlin, OR 97479.

**Join us for worship at Yellowstone National Park** every Sabbath from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Services led by Rocky Mountain Conference pastors at 10 a.m. in Old Faithful Lodge.

**Walk in the Steps of the Reformers:** You are invited to join the North American Division Stewardship Reformation Tour across Germany on September 3-10, 2014. Extended tour: Italy, September 10-14. Hosts: John Mathews, Don and Marti Schneider. For details contact: Margaret Botting, 916.792.1815, [MargaretBotting@gmail.com](mailto:MargaretBotting@gmail.com). Registration: [www.Plusline.org](http://www.Plusline.org). Bulletin insert: [www.iGiveSDA.org](http://www.iGiveSDA.org). Don't miss this opportunity of a lifetime.

**WANTED:** The White Estate is looking for original photographs, personal items, or other artifacts relating to Ellen White for display in its new visitor center scheduled to open in 2015. To discuss your item(s), please contact James Nix at 301.680.6557, or [JimNix@WhiteEstate.org](mailto:JimNix@WhiteEstate.org). All messages about your items will be answered.

## Announcements

### The Denton and Betty James Scholarship Endowment

is a new endowment set up by family and friends of Denton James. Income from the fund is distributed annually to Literature Evangelism students at Southwestern Adventist University. If you would like to be a part of this special fund, please mail your contribution to The Denton and Betty James Scholarship Endowment, c/o Southwestern Union Conference, PO Box 4000, Burlison, TX 76028.

### Kona Adventist School

invites all former students, staff, and members of the Southwestern Union to attend our 50th Anniversary. July 26-27. Contact Valerie Oskins at 808.960.2406, or Cyndi Kiyabu 808.896.8646. Located at 82-1013 Kinue Rd., Captain Cook, HI.

### "Ye Olde" Cedar Lake Academy Reunion

will take place June 6-8, 2014 for alumni and schoolmates of 1964 and earlier of Great Lakes Adventist Academy, Cedar Lake, Michigan. Honor classes: 1934, 1944, 1954, 1964. Details will be forthcoming by postal service. For further information, contact GLAA Alumni office at 989.427.5181 or visit [www.glaa.net](http://www.glaa.net).

### Attention Pathfinder Clubs Attending 2014 Camporee in Oshkosh:

Historic Adventist Village needs Pathfinders to pre-register before visiting this August during Camporee. Please note that upon arrival, there will be two lines, one for those that have pre-registered and one for those who have not. To find the registration form, please type "adventist heritage oshkosh 2014" into a search engine on the Internet.

## Obituaries

### BOSHELL, Lois Allen Calhoun,

born May 17, 1923 in Sulphur Springs, Tex., and died January 19, 2014 in Mesquite, Nev. She was a member of the Jefferson Academy church. Lois married Morris H. Allen on December 29, 1941. They lived in Jefferson, Tex., until Morris passed away in 1985. She later married James Boshell in 1988, who also preceded her in death in 2003. Survivors: daughters, Joyce Bruneau, of Mesquite, and Peggy Parry, of Ojai, Calif.; brother, Charles Calhoun, of Comfort, Tex.; four grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, and two great-great-grandchildren.

### CAIN, Mary Collins,

born November 15, 1943 in Baton Rouge, La., and died March 3, 2014, in Missouri City, Tex. Having accepted Christ at an early age, she was a life-long member of the Baton Rouge Berean church where she had actively served in various capacities. For more than 20 years, she taught early childhood development in the Lafayette Parish School System. Upon retirement, she volunteered as a teacher's assistant at the Martin Luther King Christian Academy in Baton Rouge. She was preceded in death by a brother, James W. Collins, and a sister, Gloria Collins Simpson. Survivors: son and daughter-in-law, Tommy, Jr., and Michelle Cain, of Richmond, Tex.; step-mother, Betty Collins, of Baton Rouge; sister, Ruth, and husband, Victor Baham, of Spring, Tex.; brother, Edward, and wife, Etta Collins, of Richmond, Va.; brother, Joseph, and wife, Jean Collins, of Baton Rouge; four grandchildren, and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins and other relatives and friends.

**CLARK, Sudie**, born September 6, 1907 and died February

15, 2014 in Keene, Tex. She was a member of the Cleburne First church. She was preceded in death by four brothers, six sisters, and her husband, George Clark. Sudie is survived by several nieces, nephews, and friends.

**DICKERSON, Lois**, born July 29, 1928 in Washington, Kansas, and died November 25, 2013 in Ft. Worth, Tex. She had formerly been a member of the Weslaco, Tex., church from 1975-1986 and the Gentry, Ark., church from 1986-1995. She was the dean of girls for Valley Grande Academy from 1977-1981. Survivors: sons, Dennis Dickerson, of Crowley, Tex., Mike Dickerson, of Ringgold, Ga., and Jon Dickerson, of San Antonio, Tex.; daughters: Debbie Nakamura, of Kapaa, Hi., and Terri Capps, of Edgerton, Wisc.

**LABRADOR, Eliezer Arroyo**, born February 21, 1921 in Bacolod, Philippines and died January 25, 2014 in McAllen, Tex. He was a member of the Edinburg church. He is survived by his wife, Amparo; daughters, Cynthia, Flor, Edna, Eleanor, and Darlene; and 14 grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, and one sister.

**LOVETT, Rodley Clyde**, born August 6, 1937 in Baton Rouge, La., and died October 17, 2013 in Fort Worth, Tex. He served nine years in the US Navy. He had been a member of Adventist churches in Aruba; Baton Rouge, La; Zachary, La.; Islip, N. York; Conroe, Tex.; Keene, Tex.; Joshua, Tex.; and Hico, Tex. He served the Lord faithfully as church member, deacon, and elder. He rests now in the hope of Jesus' second coming and life eternal in a perfect and sinless world. He was preceded in death by two sisters, Lois Carlino and Loretta LeBlanc. Survivors: wife of 52 years, Janet Lovett;

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son Kenneth (Mike) Lovett, and wife, Caroline; daughter, Kathy Coker, and husband, Johnny; son, Dan Lovett, and wife Mary; son, Brandon (Keith) Lovett, and wife Melanie; son, Jason Lovett, and wife, Amber; daughter, Aimie Lovett; daughter, Alicia Word, and husband Eddie; 19 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; sister, Susie Oden, and husband, Robin; and numerous nieces and nephews.

**NEWTON, Clarence C.**, born January 13, 1932 in Oklahoma City, Okla., and died January 19, 2014 in Fort Worth, Tex. He was a member of the Joshua, Tex., church. Clarence was an alumnus of Southwestern Adventist Jr. College (1951 and 1953). He was drafted into the Army in 1953 and, having had printing experience at the college, he was assigned to the print shop at Fort Sill, Okla. He returned to school and graduated from Union College in 1958 and Andrews University in 1971. He was a principal and teacher for SDA schools in Louisiana, Texas, Michigan, and North Carolina. He retired in 1995 from the Carolina Conference after 35 years of teaching in the Adventist

system. Sixteen of those years were spent at Dallas-Ft. Worth Jr. academies. He loved teaching math and science, and many of his students loved his style of teaching. After retiring from teaching, he moved to Alvarado, Tex., where he and his wife built their home. He also served as treasurer for the Keene Adventist Elementary School for several years. He was preceded in death by his sister, Wanda Bell, and daughter-in-law, Barbara Newton. Survivors: wife, Judy Weigley-Newton, of Alvarado; sons, Clarence Newton III, of Burlleson, Tex., and Wayne Newton (Lydia), of Castle Valley, Utah; step-children, Gary Fancher (Kathy), of Downers Grove, Ill., Shelly Fancher, of Alvarado, Dana Hansen (Jeff), of Weatherford, Tex., Dawn Janzen (Warren), Cookeville, Tenn.; five grandchildren, eight step-grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

**SPRIGGS, Cecil Ray**, born July 26, 1951 in Clovis, N. Mex., and died February 7, 2014 in Friona, Tex. He was a member of the Clovis church. Cecil lived his life as a reflection of what he believed. He was faithful in church attendance, and spent

the majority of his time in God's house doing whatever needed to be done. He never looked for nor needed anyone to pat him on the back and tell him he was doing a great job. He will always be remembered as a kind, loving, and humble man. He touched our lives in so many ways. We love him for all he was and who he was. He will be greatly missed. Survivors: sister, Betty Strange, of Clovis; brother, Ace Spriggs, of Pueblo, Colo.; and many nieces and nephews.

**YEAGLEY, David**, born September 5, 1952 and died March 11, 2014 in Oklahoma City, Okla. David fought the good fight throughout his life with various cancers, but at this stage he lost. He now sleeps waiting for Jesus to return. He was quite a celebrated man, as a pianist, composer, orator, political commentator, scholar (he earned an M.Div. in Biblical studies and history from Yale University; an M.A. in literature and history from Emory University; an artist diploma in piano performance and pedagogy from the Hartt School of Music; and his doctorate of musical arts in piano performance and composition from the University of Arizona.), published author and guest lecturer. He was the head elder of the Central church. He was the great-grandson of American Indian Comanche Chief Bald Eagle, and was a historian of the Comanche Tribe and the first American Indian to release a CD of his own classical compositions. Survivors: brother and sister-in-law, Jonathan and Debbie Yeagley; sister Susan; a niece, and three nephews. He will be greatly missed by his church family.

### SABBATH SUNSET CALENDAR

	May 2	May 9	May 16	May 23	May 30	Jun 6
Abilene, TX	8:20	8:25	8:30	8:35	8:40	8:43
Albuquerque, NM	7:52	7:58	8:03	8:09	8:14	8:18
Amarillo, TX	8:33	8:39	8:44	8:50	8:55	8:59
Brownsville, TX	8:01	8:05	8:09	8:13	8:16	8:19
Dallas, TX	8:09	8:14	8:19	8:24	8:28	8:32
El Paso, TX	7:46	7:51	7:56	8:01	8:05	8:09
Fort Worth/Keene, TX	8:11	8:16	8:21	8:26	8:31	8:35
Gallup, NM	8:01	8:07	8:13	8:18	8:23	8:27
Galveston/Houston, TX	7:59	8:03	8:08	8:12	8:16	8:20
Gentry, AR	8:06	8:12	8:17	8:23	8:28	8:32
Little Rock, AR	7:54	8:00	8:06	8:11	8:16	8:20
Muskogee, OK	8:08	8:14	8:20	8:25	8:30	8:34
New Orleans, LA	7:38	7:42	7:47	7:51	7:55	7:59
Oklahoma City, OK	8:16	8:22	8:28	8:33	8:38	8:42
Roswell, NM	7:41	7:46	7:51	7:56	8:01	8:05
San Antonio, TX	8:11	8:15	8:19	8:24	8:28	8:31
Shreveport, LA	7:56	8:02	8:07	8:11	8:16	8:20
Tulsa, OK	8:11	8:17	8:23	8:28	8:33	8:38

# On the Record »

BY PAT HUMPHREY » COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR, SOUTHWESTERN UNION



## Come Sharpen Your Tools

**MARTIN LUTHER ONCE SAID:** “The maid who sweeps her kitchen is doing the will of God just as much as the monk who prays—not because she may sing a Christian hymn as she sweeps but because God loves clean floors. The Christian shoemaker does his Christian duty not by putting little crosses on the shoes, but by making good shoes, because God is interested in good craftsmanship.”

I think the idea Martin Luther was trying to get across is that God appreciates excellence in the things we do. That concept is also very well illustrated in Ecclesiastes 9:10 (NKJV), which says, “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.” In other words, whatever we do, while we have the opportunity, we should do it with passion and to the best of our ability—especially the work we do for God.

I don’t know what area of ministry you are involved in, or whether you’re

even engaged in ministry at all. But whatever the case may be, I hope you’ll take advantage of the opportunity this August to get inspired and to “sharpen” your tools for ministry. In *Acts of the Apostles*, p. III, we are told “there is a large work to be done outside the pulpit by thousands of consecrated lay members. Long has God waited for the spirit of service to take possession of the whole church so that everyone shall be working for Him according to his ability.”

As we look around us and see the astounding events that are taking place every day, it becomes more and more ap-

parent that time is short. I like the way my pastor-friend Duane McKey puts it: “Jesus is coming soon. Let’s finish the work so we can get off this old ball of mud and go home!” The Equipped for Ministries convention is designed to help us do just that. Please don’t miss this wonderful opportunity to sharpen your tools for ministry and be trained by some of the best ministry leaders in our denomination. Whatever your area of interest—whether it’s children’s ministry, Sabbath School, prison ministry, health ministry, family ministry, or another—you’ll be sure to find a ministry training track that’s just right for you at our upcoming convention. See you in Frisco, Texas, August 28-31!

## Record

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## Important Registration Dates

**August 17 - Freshmen Orientation**

**August 24 - Registration**



I'm an Enrollment Counselor at Southwestern. Call, email, send a carrier pigeon... or come visit campus. I'm here to help you!

*Guadalupe Williams*