

SOUTHWESTERN UNION

# Record

JANUARY 2015

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 **SAN ANTONIO 2015**  
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

ARISE! SHINE! JESUS IS COMING! GC SESSION 2015



### In this Issue...

#### DEPARTMENTS

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

#### FEATURES

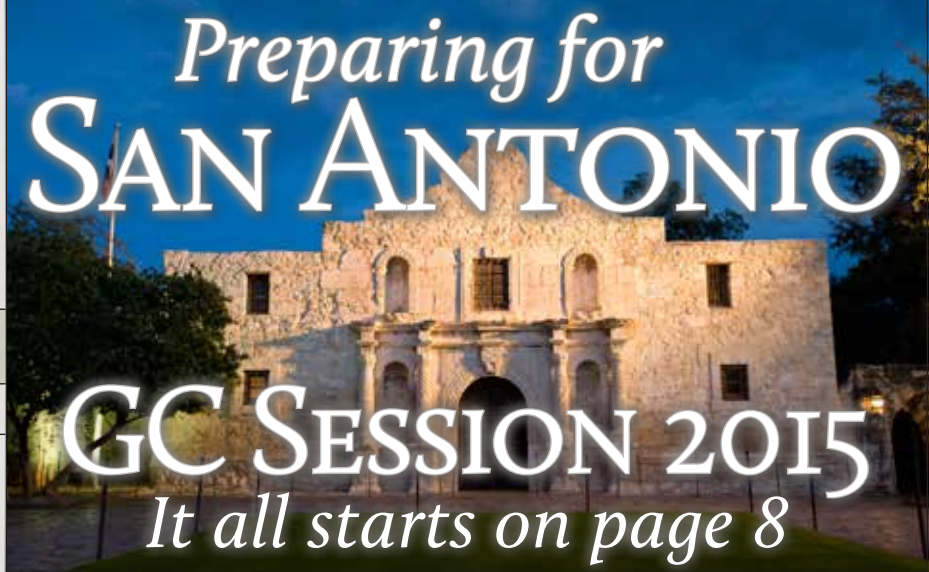
Arise! Shine! Jesus is Coming! . . . . .	8
Fast Facts About the GC Session . . . . .	10
12 Unique Reasons to Attend . . . . .	12
Adventists Urged to Study . . . . .	14
Picking a Host City . . . . .	15

#### NEWS

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

#### ETCETERA

Classified Ads . . . . .	34
Announcements . . . . .	37
Obituaries . . . . .	37
On the Record . . . . .	39



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### On the Cover

The 60th General Conference Session will take place July 2-11 in San Antonio, Texas. More than 60,000 people are expected to attend both Sabbath services. On the cover is a scene from the 59th GC Session held in Atlanta, Georgia. [Photo by James Bokovoy.]

# Point of View»

BY LARRY MOORE » SOUTHWESTERN UNION CONFERENCE PRESIDENT



## Big Things Are Happening in San Antonio!

I hope you are ready for a momentous year of mission and service! This summer, the Southwestern Union will host the General Conference Session in San Antonio, July 2-11, 2015. Adventists from all around the world will join us to worship and fellowship together, all while preparing for the second coming of Jesus Christ. Many of you know that San Antonio is my hometown and very dear to me. I am praying that we will be able to do something big for San Antonio that will give the work of our church a real boost.

In April, San Antonio will also be our host city for Your Best Pathway to Health, a three-day Adventist medical mission project at the Alamodome that will serve the community with a wide range of medical services including dental, eye care, and support services such as radiology, laboratory, and pharmacy services and preventive medicine, all at no cost to the patients. What a wonderful opportunity to showcase the character of Christ through service!

The Southwestern Union, in cooperation with the Texas Conference and the Southwest Region Conference, is also planning large evangelistic meetings with some amazing evangelists, including Mark Finley, Carlton Byrd, and Jose Rojas. We hope to see several new churches planted as a result of the meetings. Be sure to invite your friends in San Antonio to attend. Your presence at these meetings will also be a blessing. Please pray for the blessing of the Holy Spirit on these meetings.

Encompassing these big events are many training sessions and planning. Evangelism, canvassing, and lay training initiatives will take place between January and March in preparation for the mission projects that follow. Much prayer is needed in the preparation of these events and the year as a whole. May God work through us to win souls for His kingdom!

*Larry Moore*



## Leading up to San Antonio

January 3, 2015	Day of Prayer and Consecration for San Antonio
January–March	Evangelism Refresh Bootcamps in San Antonio
Already ongoing	San Antonio canvassing initiative (June 2014–August 2015)
February	Evangelism Training Rally
February 6–8	Lay training for Bible instructors by Mark Finley
March 6–21	San Antonio Homeland Mission Project
March 28	Pathfinder Rally, will include training and passing out 50-60 thousand flyers for Your Best Pathway to Health
Mar. 21–29	School of Evangelism during Jose Rojas meetings
April 8–10	San Antonio Medical Mission “Your Best Pathway to Health” at the Alamodome
April 11–12	ASI Rally with Mark Finley and Ted Wilson
April 11–15	Training for Natural Lifestyle Cooking School by Teenie Finley Follow up with Bible workers and small group leaders By Mark Finley
April–May	Local churches to hold seminars, cooking schools, etc., as follow up to “Your Best Pathway to Health”
May 7–12	Follow up with all lay workers including lay Bible instructors, small group leaders, health ministry workers, etc.
May–June	Evangelism Reaping Events: Carlton Byrd, May 15–20; Mark Finley, June 6–27; Alejandro Bullón, June 20–27



# To Your Health

BY PAT HUMPHREY » SOUTHWESTERN UNION HEALTH MINISTRIES DIRECTOR

## Come and Serve!

**Just as in Jesus' day** when the multitudes sought healing and relief from their physical maladies, thousands today in every major city are seeking physical comfort and care. For three days in April 2014, in the cities of San Francisco and Oakland, California, more than 500 volunteers from around the nation and beyond became the hands and feet of Jesus as they ministered to the physical and spiritual needs of city residents.

Sponsored by the Pacific Union Chapter of ASI, in coordination with the Pacific Union Conference, the Northern California Conference, and the Central California Conference, Bridges to Health was a collaborative effort on the part of many self-supporting and church organizations, including Adventist Health, and numerous volunteers who sacrificed their time and resources to share the love of Jesus in a practical way.

A full range of medical, dental, and vision services were provided to more than 3,000 people over a three-day period, in many cases making a life-changing impact in people's lives. A homeless man who came with missing front teeth exclaimed that the dental work he received would now enable him to apply for a much-needed job. A woman who was desperately in need of eyeglasses to correct her vision problem rejoiced that her new pair of glasses allowed her to see clearly for the first time. In addition to dental and vision, other services included women's health services, primary care, pharmacy services, and even minor surgeries.

From April 8-10, 2015, in the city of San Antonio, Texas, the Your Best Pathway to Health medical mission project will enable thousands of volunteers to become the hands and feet of Jesus, touching the lives of more than 5,000 people.

ASI, the Southwestern Union, Adventist Health Systems, the Texas Conference, Southwest Region Conference, and numerous other organizations and entities are collaborating to make this year's outreach efforts even bigger.

If you'd like to be a part of the Your Best Pathway to Health medical mission trip to San Antonio, visit [pathwaytohealthvolunteer.org](http://pathwaytohealthvolunteer.org) to sign up. Medical volunteers, including physicians, dentists, eye specialists, and other medical professionals, as well as non-medical volunteers are needed to assist in a number of vital areas of service. As of press time the specific needs for medical personnel include 30 dentists, 50 dental assistants, 20 dental hygienists, 25 ophthalmologists, and 40 primary care physicians. Come serve, and be the hands and feet of Jesus!

# Opportunities to Share Christ

## 2015 General Conference Session Presents Opportunities to Share Christ in San Antonio

**THIS JULY WILL BE A VERY EXCITING TIME** for San Antonio, Texas, with the arrival of the General Conference Session. There will be lots of great things to do and lots of points to discuss, and with the help of God, all things will be completed.

I am excited to be a member of a church located in San Antonio, because I get to see a lot of the great events happen that are leading up to the session. One of the events that I had the privilege to be a part of training that José Rojas presented for leaders of the local churches. I was part of the praise and worship team that lead out during the training. Other events that have come to San Antonio were meetings that *El Centinela* magazine had for Hispanic coordinators to promote Adventist books to the community.

Another reason I'm very excited about the Session coming to San Antonio is because San Antonio is the second largest city in Texas, and the seventh largest city in the United States. The Seventh-day Adventist Church doesn't have a big presence in the city, which creates an opportunity for us to go and make disciples of people as Jesus instructed us to do. With so many people attending the General Conference Session, there will be more than enough people to go out into the city and tell people about Jesus. This excites me, because I will be going out into my city and winning people for God's kingdom. It really will be a great time for the city of San Antonio to get to know God and all His blessings and wonders.

Not only am I excited because the people of San Antonio will know God better, but I am thrilled to be a part of another General Conference Session just because they are fun! From seeing old friends to making new ones, it is a very good life experience. My absolute favorite part of the General Conference is the Parade of Nations. Several people from each represented country put on their traditional attire and carry their flag. It is great to

see that the Seventh-day Adventist movement is growing and to see all of the countries that have an Adventist presence. One of the best moments I experienced was when the praise and worship team asked the congregation to sing the hymn "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus." Everyone started to sing in their own language, but it sounded like one voice. It was truly amazing!

This event will truly be a magnificent event that will change San Antonio in a positive way forever. I'm just blessed to be in the middle of it all.



**Saúl Flores** is a student at Southwestern Adventist University from San Antonio, Texas.



# Pass it On...

A Monthly Focus on Evangelism in the Southwest

BY RODNEY MILLS » PASTOR, SCENIC HILLS CHURCH, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

## Reaching San Antonio for Jesus

In 2015, the eyes of the world church will be on San Antonio. As the delegates meet to decide church policy and debate various issues, the people of San Antonio will learn who Seventh-day Adventists are. The publicity and public awareness that will come as a result of the largest convention in the history of San Antonio will make an impact for eternity. For the last couple of years the pastors and churches of San Antonio have been preparing to take advantage of this added awareness to bring Jesus to the inhabitants of the seventh-largest city in the United States.

Numerous plans have been made and a concentrated effort to reach people for Christ has already begun. In the fall of 2014, 10 churches in San Antonio participated in evangelistic campaigns and nearly 100 people were baptized. However, this is just the beginning!

This year there will be numerous ways to reach the community of San Antonio with the love of Jesus. Following Christ's admonition to mingle with men as one who desires their good, win their confidence, and then bid them follow Him, the area churches are planning to meet the needs of the people of San Antonio. One of those ways is through a public awareness campaign called MORE. Billboards, bus shelter posters, and social media will be used to share stories of how members have found more peace, more passion, more love, more acceptance, and more life in Jesus and the church.

On Sabbath, January 3, all of the area churches gathered together as one people for one purpose: more prayer. Led by the area pastors, members prayed with members of other churches. The theme of the prayers focused on personal dedication and renewal, family, youth, Bible study interests, the upcoming evangelistic campaigns, city officials, the General Conference Session, and for God's spirit of unity to permeate each heart and mind as we work to bring

Jesus to San Antonio in 2015.

For two weeks in March, youth from around the state and union will be coming to San Antonio to do community service projects and show more compassion. On March 21, a youth march against human trafficking will be held and led by Jose Rojas, the speaker for a major evangelistic campaign that will begin on the same day.

On April 8-10 the city will be impacted with more health. ASI will focus on San Antonio with Your Best Pathway to Health as Adventist doctors and dentists from around the country come to the Alamodome and offer free dental, eye, and medical care for the under-served of San Antonio. Following the health emphasis, each local church will host felt-needs seminars such as cooking schools, diabetes reversal, weight management, or Creation Health seminars. All of these seminars are intended to build interests and contacts for the major evangelistic campaigns to reach the city.

On May 15, Carlton Byrd of Breath of Life will begin a reaping evangelistic series at the Norris Centre that will continue until May 30. One week later, on June 5, Mark Finley will begin a major evangelistic campaign in the Shriner's Auditorium on the city's north side with the intent of planting a new congregation in an area of town that has no Adventist congregation. Then, on June 19, Alejandro Bullon will begin a reaping series. Both Finley's and Bullon's meetings will end on June 27, the Sabbath before the beginning of the 60th General Conference Session of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Please keep the city of San Antonio in your daily prayers as every effort is made to reach the city for Jesus in 2015.

Join *Your Best Pathway to Health* in San Antonio, Texas, April 8-11, 2015. 3-day Adventist Medical & Dental Mission Trip and Convention

**1,500 Volunteers Needed:** Dentists, Dental Hygienists & Assistants, Ophthalmologists, Other Physicians, Other Medical and Non-medical Volunteers

Special convention continues through Sabbath, April 11 with speakers including Ted Wilson and Mark Finley. Full children's program available for volunteers throughout the event.

**Information & Volunteer Registration at [PathwaytoHealthVolunteer.org](http://PathwaytoHealthVolunteer.org)**

# Visión Hispana

UN BREVE NOTICIERO MENSUAL DEL SUROESTE

## Manos al Servicio de Otros

**M**i padre no usó zapatos hasta la edad de 15 años. Para él no era cosa del otro mundo no tener zapatos, porque se acostumbró a esa situación. Los zapatos en ese tiempo eran muy caros, y su mamá no podía comprárselos. Me imagino que todavía no se habían inventado los tenis. Hace poco fui a un viaje misionero, y vi muchachos descalzos andando por el lodo y en la lluvia. Posiblemente, prefieren no gastar los tenis ni ensuciárselos. Bien, el asunto es éste; uno se acostumbra a andar descalzo. La piel se pone dura y fuertes callos parecen proteger los pies, que ni las piedras del camino ni las astillas en el monte afectan. Es realmente sorprendente observar a aquellos que han andado así toda su vida. Y posiblemente eso sucede con muchas otras cosas en la vida. Nos hacemos insensibles a muchas situaciones. Los callos crecen y se desarrollan fuertemente. Aíslan una parte de la otra. Podemos ser insensibles a las necesidades alrededor nuestro. Una de las cosas más interesantes de la vida de Jesús, es que era bondadoso. Simpatizaba con las necesidades de la gente con quien él se mezclaba. Sentía el dolor que otros sentían, y se compadecía de sus situaciones. Se preocupaba por suplir las necesidades de los demás como lo demostró toda su vida, aún para suplir el hambre. Nosotros, en el año 2015, a veces nos acostumbramos a ver las necesidades de otros insensiblemente. Ya no nos da tristeza ni compasión al ver a nuestros semejantes en terribles situacio-

nes. Ya es parte de la vida, y se nos endurece el corazón. No nos dolemos, no simpatizamos con ellos, y posiblemente no hacemos nada para ayudarles en sus dificultades. No los amamos. Si fuéramos contemporáneos con Jesús se diría de nosotros que fuimos como el sacerdote y el levita en la historia del buen samaritano. Qué tristeza que hemos creado callos en el corazón. Este mensaje es una invitación a reconsiderar nuestra condición callosa. Entre más amamos a Dios y reconocemos las maravillas y las misericordias que ha hecho por nosotros, estaremos más dispuestos y listos a amar a otros. Porque sentimos la compasión de Dios para con nosotros, automáticamente, sin presiones, estaremos dispuestos a compadecernos de los demás. Esto está en el centro de lo que llamamos religión.

Toma hoy para examinarte a ti mismo, para ver si posiblemente tu corazón y tu alma están desarrollando callos que te impidan vivir con compasión y simpatía por los demás. Estoy seguro de que usando más estas virtudes, Dios nos puede utilizar mucho mejor en su obra. Y es por esto que te extendemos una invitación a que seas parte de las manos amigas que necesitan servir este próximo abril 2015 en San Antonio. ¡Únete a los esfuerzos de traer sanidad a nuestros hermanos!

**Ciro Castillo**, vicepresidente para el ministerio hispano de la asociación de Oklahoma

*Viaje a San Antonio*

Patrocinado por Your Best Pathway to Health (La Mejor Vía Hacia la Salud) en colaboración con: La Unión del Suroeste, la División Norteamericana, la Asociación General Adventista del Séptimo día, Adventist Health System, la Universidad de Loma Linda, entre otras organizaciones.

*Ven a Copular*  
PathwaytoHealthVolunteer.org

Escanear para irte!

Únete a "Your Best Pathway to Health" en San Antonio, Texas, del 8 al 11 de abril del 2015.  
Viaje misionero Médico/Dental y Asamblea de 3 días

**Necesitamos 1,500 voluntarios:** Dentistas, Higienistas Dentales y Auxiliares, Oftalmólogos, Médicos generales, entre otros profesionales médicos y voluntarios no médicos

Asamblea especial continúa a través del sábado 11 de abril con oradores que incluirán a Ted Wilson y Mark Finley.  
Programa para hijos de los voluntarios disponible durante el evento.

**Información e Inscripción para Voluntario en PathwaytoHealthVolunteer.org**

Adventist HEALTH SYSTEM ASI Pathway to Health LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY HEALTH

# ARISE! SHINE! JESUS IS COMING!

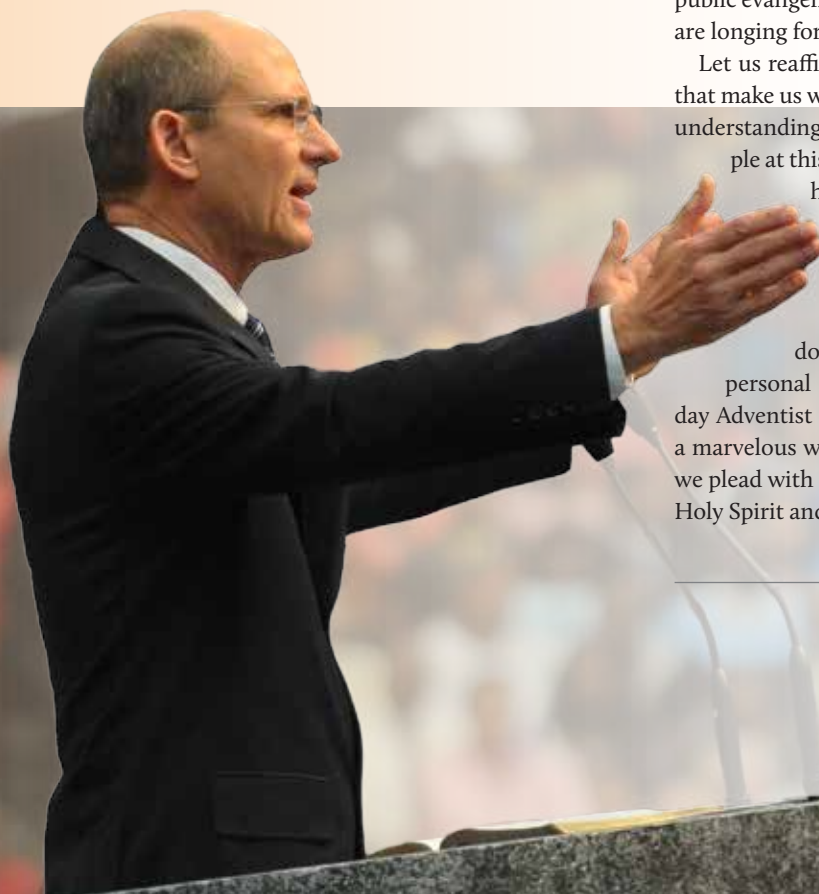
**Ted N.C. Wilson, president, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists**

**A**s the 2015 General Conference Session in San Antonio, Texas, approaches, I'd like to extend sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Southwestern Union Conference as our host. We look forward to a highly spiritual meeting as we listen to reports of how God is carrying the three angels' messages of Revelation 14 to the world, and how the Advent movement is permeating through every region, every town, and every home with this life-saving message.

During a General Conference Session, not only do we have the joy of worshipping together as a worldwide family, we have the opportunity to clearly focus on the mission of the church, and how best to accomplish that mission. Let's continue moving forward together as we focus on God's Holy Word, on the Holy Spirit's wonderful work of personal and corporate revival and reformation, on health and community outreach, on integrated evangelism using personal outreach, integrated media approaches, and public evangelism, and on our mission to the cities where millions are longing for the hope that we have to share.

Let us reaffirm the marvelous foundational truths of the Bible that make us who we are as Seventh-day Adventists, including our understanding of the sanctuary service as God's work for His people at this time, and the wonderful guiding blessing that God has given the church through the gift of the Spirit of Prophecy, as reflected in our session's theme: "Arise! Shine! Jesus is Coming!"

As we meet together in San Antonio, July 2-11, let us lift up God's work as central in all that we do. Let Christ's righteousness be the theme of our personal and public expression of who we are as Seventh-day Adventist Christians. Let's pray together for God's leading in a marvelous way during our 60th General Conference Session as we plead with the Lord for the outpouring of the latter rain of the Holy Spirit and the second coming of Jesus Christ.





# FAST FACTS ABOUT THE 2015 GC SESSION

## History of the GC Session

On May 20, 1863, in Battle Creek, Michigan, a group of Seventh-day Adventist church leaders came together to organize a General Conference. They chose a chairman and drafted a constitution and bylaws. They also selected leaders of the conference, comprised of a president, secretary, and treasurer—the same structure that exists in our church administration today.

The first 31 General Conference Sessions were held in Battle Creek. The first Session held west of the Mississippi River was in November of 1887 in Oakland, California. Session has been held outside the U.S. only three times: in Austria in 1975, the Netherlands in 1995, and in Canada in 2000. San Antonio will be the 60th Session.

## Purpose of the GC Session

General Conference Session is a global spiritual gathering and a constitutionally required business meeting that has been held every five years since 1970. Its purpose is to vote on global leadership,

set the direction of the church for the next five years, and vote changes to the Constitution, Fundamental Beliefs, and Church Manual.

## Cost of the GC Session

The General Conference World Budget each year sets aside \$1.4 million for the direct cost of the Session venue. That's \$7 million, which is less than 8 cents a year per member. Including indirect costs, such as air travel, lodging and programs of local administrative units, the total cost for Session is approximately \$20 million, roughly one dollar per member.

No other denomination comes together on a worldwide basis to elect leaders, to hear reports, and to receive offerings from everywhere to be distributed everywhere. In order to maintain worldwide unity of the church, it could cost 10 times this amount to replicate the type of infrastructure needed to gather and communicate.

Shortly after the 2010 GC Session in Atlanta, Georgia, informal



discussions began on whether the church would consider downsizing future Sessions, in part to open up opportunities for sessions to be held in venues outside of the U.S. An Adventist News Network article entitled “Reexamining Session Format” published February 10, 2011, explores some of the issues involved, but a decision to downsize future Sessions can only be made through an official vote taken at a GC Session. According to the article, “no such proposal exists.” For more information on this subject, the article can be accessed at <http://news.adventist.org/all-news/news/go/2011-02-10/reexamining-session-format>.

### GC delegates and attendee

GC Session is an open meeting—anyone can attend—but only delegates and invitees have the ability to speak and only delegates may vote. This year, there are expected to be nearly 2,600 voting delegates. Each union nominates delegates to represent its field. In addition, delegates representing major church institutions are selected.

### Items on the agenda to be voted at this session

A day will be spent discussing the theology of ordination and how it relates to gender. Suggested editorial changes to the Fundamental Beliefs will also be voted on—the most significant being the addition of a “literal six-day creation” phrase added to the Belief on Creation. Editorial changes to the Constitution and Bylaws will also be voted, as well as editorial changes to the Church Manual—the most significant being the disciplinary protocol for sexual misconduct. Also, newly created unions will be accepted through a vote.

### The process of electing church officers and a GC president

A nominating committee is formed to nominate General Conference officers, departmental directors and associate directors, and division presidents. The president is selected first and joins the Nominating Committee to offer recommendations on all the other nominations, which the committee can choose to accept or reject.

### How to get updates on the proceedings and voted actions at GC

[News.adventist.org](http://News.adventist.org)

### Benefits of attending the GC Session (for the typical church member who isn't a delegate)

Attendees gain an understanding of the world church and how it operates. They will literally see more people from different countries and language groups than any other meeting in the church and possibly in the world.





ally, the North American Division is hosting a ministerial convention in the nearby city of Austin before Session.

### This year's GC Session compared to others in the past

This year will feature electronic voting, which will allow for greater privacy in voting compared to previous Sessions when delegates held up a voting card. This is the first time Session will be held in San Antonio. Like Sessions in recent decades, it will be held in an indoor football stadium with an adjacent convention center. Also, more than 60,000 people are expected to attend the two Sabbath worships during Session.

### Other helpful info about GC Session

Be sure to see the official General Conference Session Web site for housing reservations, venue information, and other latest information as it becomes available at

<http://2015.gcsession.org>.

### Additional stories about Session:

<http://news.adventist.org/all-news/news/go/2014-07-02/adventist-churchs-general-conference-session-starts-one-year-from-today>

<http://news.adventist.org/all-news/news/go/2014-07-31/top-six-considerations-for-picking-a-general-conference-session-host-city>

### A typical day at GC Session

For those working behind the scenes, the day starts with a Steering Committee to determine the agenda items for the day. The first public meeting is morning worship, followed by a business session that lasts until lunch. There is another business session in the afternoon. In the evenings, world regions have a chance to showcase mission, challenges, and opportunities, all presented with the color and flair of national dress and music. Throughout the day, exhibits are available to view in the convention center, offering ideas and resources for a wide variety of ministries.

### Other activities in conjunction with GC Session

Members and guests will have the opportunity to serve the community with projects, including the Impact San Antonio initiative, My Whole Life Matters events, and the More Campaign. Addition-

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*Information for this article was provided by the Public Relations Department of the General Conference and/or accessed from the 2015 GC Session Web site, [2015.gcsession.org](http://2015.gcsession.org).*

## About San Antonio

### What to See

- **The Alamo**

Founded in 1718 as the first of five Catholic missions in San Antonio by Franciscan priests of Spain, the Alamo has been established as an iconic representation of liberty and freedom after the Texas Revolution in 1836. Now a touring exhibit, the Alamo is open to the public daily.

- **The Riverwalk**

With 15 miles of walkways along the San Antonio River, the Riverwalk is the largest urban ecosystem in the nation. It hosts an array of cafes, restaurants, and bistros, riverboat cruises for touring, and easy access to museums, hotels, shops, and the historical Texas landmark, the Alamo.

- **Main Plaza**

Right in the heart of the city, Main Plaza serves as a hub for music, entertainment, and a tremendous cultural experience for all to enjoy. Main Plaza hosts the popular "San Antonio: The Saga" video art installation displayed on the San Fernando Cathedral, along with vendor kiosks and occasional live entertainment events.

- **Tower of the Americas**

Standing at 750 feet in downtown San Antonio, the Tower of the Americas offers a spectacular panoramic view of the city, with attractions like the revolving Chart House Restaurant, an observation deck, and the 4-D Theatre Ride.

- **Japanese Tea Garden**

Filled with lush exotic vegetation, the Japanese Tea Garden features a year-round garden and floral display with shaded pathways, stone bridges, a 60-foot waterfall, and ponds filled with Koi. The park is open to the public for free admission and houses a Japanese café called the Jingu.

### What to Wear

The average temperature in San Antonio, Texas for the month of July is usually about 95 degrees Fahrenheit (35 degrees Celsius), so dressing comfortably is a must. Wearing cool fabrics and comfortable shoes would be perfect in the Texas summer heat.

# 12 UNIQUE REASONS TO ATTEND THE 2015 GC SESSION

Reggie Johnson, assistant editor

**1. See the Parade of Nations:** One of the most anticipated and photographed highlights of each General Conference session, the Parade of Nations usually occurs at the closing ceremonies on the second Saturday evening. It features a colorful presentation of the worldwide church: a pageantry of flags and costumes that underscores the Seventh-day Adventist church's global reach. Seeing ambassadors of Adventism from so many countries will serve as a reminder to attendees that each one is part of a world church.

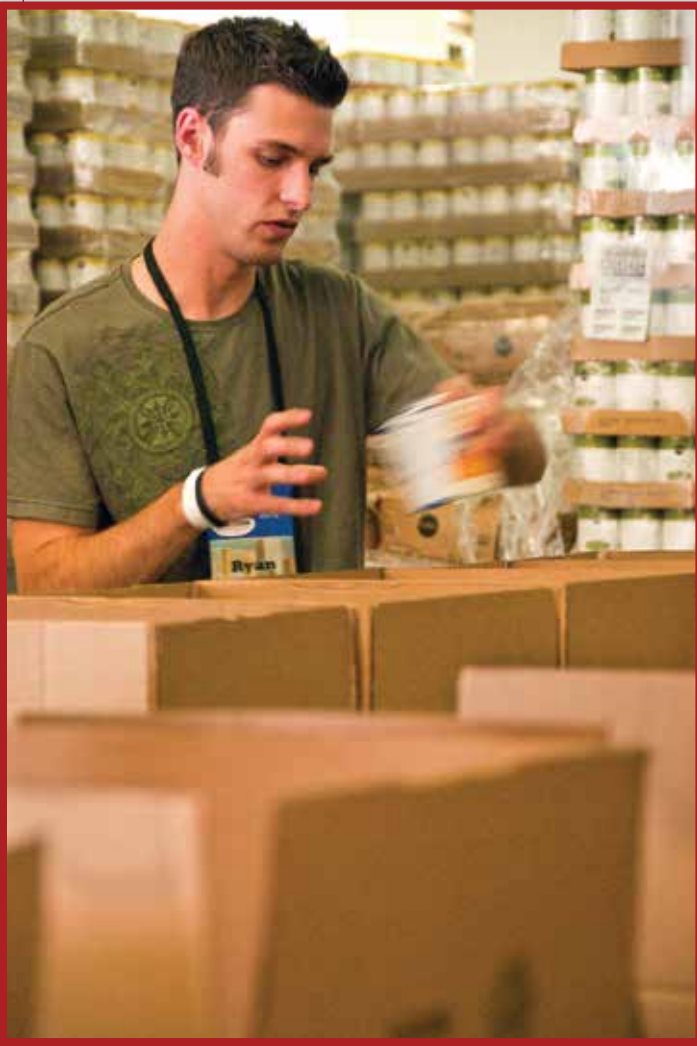
**2. Peruse the exhibit hall:** The exhibit hall features a huge conglomeration of ministries, schools, charities, services, businesses, and products that are of special interest to Adventists.

The hall will be open from 9:00 a.m.–6:30 p.m., Sunday through Friday, and Saturdays from 2:00–6:30 p.m. and 9:15–10:45 p.m.

**3. Enjoy a divine service** with 60,000 to 80,000 people who share the same beliefs and love for Jesus. The GC Session is the only opportunity for Adventists to enjoy this amazing and one-of-a-kind church experience.

**4. Observe the delegates** on the floor as they make decisions and discuss issues of importance to the world church. (Note that participation is limited to delegates but observation of business sessions is permitted.)





of the GC Youth Department, hosted by the NAD Youth Department. Visit [www.gcyouthministries.org](http://www.gcyouthministries.org) for more information.

### **8. Attend meetings for Adventist Women:**

“Arise and Shine.” A series of special meetings for women at the session who are not delegates will be presented by Women’s Ministries and Shepherdess International. Morning meetings are scheduled for Monday through Thursday, July 6-9, 9:30-10:45 a.m. Two afternoon seminars will take place Tuesday and Thursday, July 7 and 9, from 2:00-4:00 p.m. Location: Grand Ballroom C in the HBG Convention Center. All meetings will feature inspiring presenters who will explore topics of spiritual and personal growth, service, and daily living. The meetings will include good music and reports from around the world. No registration required.

### **9. Grow with Sabbath School/Personal Ministries (SSPM) Tool Time:**

Seminars for Sabbath School and Personal Ministries. Lunch and dinner workshops will be presented for all attendees including delegates on enhancing Sabbath School and Personal Ministries skills. These will be of particular interest to leaders and teachers of Sabbath Schools as well as leaders of Personal Ministries and community services. The short (45-minute) presentations will feature the experience and gifts of ministry leaders from around the world. They will take on practical concerns such as improving Sabbath School attendance, new methods of creative teaching, approaches in soul-winning, service to the community, and much more. All presentations will be in English with Spanish translation available for some.

### **10. Enhance devotional life with Prayer Ministries Seminars:**

Prayer ministries seminars will be offered as part of the emphasis on Revival and Reformation (see the final item in this list).

### **11. Take in the Adventist Mission Stage:**

The stage features music and reports from around the World. One of the most popular features at recent GC Sessions has been the Adventist Mission stage. Like a mini-camp meeting, it features a fast-moving program of music, guest speakers, live interviews, mission stories, and videos. Sponsored by the GC Office of Adventist Mission, the stage brings you a colorful celebration of music and missions. For more information, visit [www.AdventistMission.org](http://www.AdventistMission.org).

### **12. Join in the Revival and Reformation:**

Woven throughout this GC Session will be extra time given to singing, prayer, testimonies, and scripture to encourage and support our greatest and most urgent need: ‘a revival of true godliness among us’ (*Vol. 1 Selected Messages*, p. 121). Opportunities include:

- A prayer room (prayer, seminars, and announcements for other activities will be available here)
- Revived By His Word features
- 777 Prayer Emphasis
- Resources for Revival and Reformation in the exhibit hall

**5. Make new friends** from around the globe. You already have so much in common with each person in attendance, given your shared core values associated with Seventh-day Adventist beliefs!

### **6. Get involved in outreach with the 5K walk/run:**

Sign up for the 5K Fun Run/Walk at <http://2015.gcsession.org/5k-fun-run>. Join us to raise awareness about childhood obesity and encourage people from all ages to be healthy and live a more active lifestyle. Donations are being accepted to develop resources for raising more awareness and reducing childhood obesity in North America through the Adventists InStep for Life initiative.

### **7. Get involved with outreach through Impact San Antonio:**

Impact San Antonio (“Training, Inspiration, Service”) is a window of opportunity for the global Seventh-day Adventist young adult community (18 years or older) to bring hope to the city. Organized in conjunction with the General Conference Session, Impact San Antonio is an initiative

# Adventists Urged to Study Women's Ordination for Themselves

President Wilson and TOSC chair Stele ask for prayers for the Holy Spirit to guide the proceedings.

Ted N.C. Wilson, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, encouraged church members worldwide to earnestly read what the Bible says about women's ordination and to pray that he and other church leaders humbly follow the Holy Spirit's guidance on the matter, in preparation for the final vote on women's ordination at the General Conference Session in July.

Artur A. Stele, chair of the church-commissioned Theology of Ordination Study Committee (TOSC), who echoed Wilson's call for church members to read the Bible and pray on the issue, recommended reading the study's three brief "Way Forward Statements," which cite Bible texts and Adventist Church co-founder Ellen G. White to support each of the three positions on women's ordination that emerged during the committee's research.

These three positions include:

Position No. 1: The biblical qualifications for ordination, as found in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, never mention women being ordained as priests, apostles, or elders. Therefore, it says, the Adventist Church has no biblical basis to ordain women.

Position No. 2: The leadership roles of Old and New Testament women such as Deborah, Huldah, and Junia, and biblical passages in Genesis 1, 2 and Galatians 3:26-28 stress that all people are equal in God's eyes. Therefore, the biblical principle of equality allows the Adventist Church to ordain women to positions of church leadership wherever possible.

Position No. 3: There is a biblical pattern of male leadership in Israel and the early Christian church, but God made exceptions, such as the case of granting Israel's desire for a king. Women's or-

ination is a matter of church policy and not a moral imperative and, therefore, the Adventist Church should allow each field to decide whether or not to ordain women.

Wilson urged each of the church's 18 million members to prayerfully read the study materials and "Position Summaries" available on the Web site of the church's Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research.

"Look to see how the papers and presentations were based on an understanding of a clear reading of Scripture," Wilson said.

"The Spirit of Prophecy tells us that we are to take the Bible just as it reads," he said. "And I would encourage each church member, and certainly each delegate of the General Conference Session, to prayerfully review those presentations and then ask the Holy Spirit to help them know God's will."

Because the world church leadership is committed to, "a very open, fair, and careful process," on women's ordination, Stele and Wilson both shared how church members could share their convictions and influence the discussion by speaking with delegates who will represent them at the GC Session this coming summer.

Wilson added that the crucial question facing the church wasn't whether women should be ordained but whether church members who disagreed with the final decision on ordination, whatever it might be, would be willing to set aside their differences to focus on the church's 151-year mission: proclaiming Revelation 14 and the three angels' messages that Jesus is coming soon.

"If we're not careful, the devil will sidetrack us into controversy that will create a diversion from what God intends for his last-day remnant church to accomplish, and that is to proclaim the three angels' messages and gladly share about Christ's soon coming," Wilson said. "The bigger question is how will we relate to the ongoing mission of the church."

"Most importantly," Wilson said, "we covet your prayers that we would humble ourselves as leaders and listen to the direct interventional voice of the Holy Spirit and God's will as revealed in Scripture."

Stele concurred, saying: "I think the more significant way to participate would be if every church member prayed. Pray for the process and pray for the Session so that it isn't human wisdom that prevails but God's will."



Artur Stele, chair of the Theology of Ordination Study Committee, addressing a meeting of the group in Baltimore, Maryland, on July 23, 2013. Photo: Ansel Oliver / ANN

# Top Six Considerations for Picking a General Conference Session Host City

Ansel Oliver, Adventist News Network

**S**ilver Spring, Md. » Seventh-day Adventist Church leaders and support staff at the denomination's headquarters are gearing up for next year's 60th General Conference Session, a 10-day global spiritual gathering and business meeting. Preparations for Session, which in recent decades has been held every five years, invariably involve fielding a frequently asked question:

"Why does it seem like Session is always held in the United States?"

The short answer: because it usually is.

The longer answer involves numerous factors in selecting a Session site.

Indeed, the 2015 Session will be held in the United States. Nearly 2,600 voting delegates and tens of thousands of visitors are scheduled to meet in San Antonio in the state of Texas. And it's true, Session has been held outside of the U.S. only three times: Vienna, Austria in 1975; Utrecht, Netherlands in 1995; and Toronto, Canada in 2000.

GC Session is one of the world's largest religious events, and city tourism officials must make their pitch more than a decade in advance. The final selection is made by the denomination's Executive Committee, which is comprised of 330 church leaders from around the world.

In an interview, Session Manager George Egwakhe, who is an associate treasurer for the Adventist world church, shared the Executive Committee's requirements for choosing a Session host site. (Insider tip: #2 is the main reason Session is usually held in the U.S.)

**1. Indoor seating for 70,000 people.** Nearly 2,600 delegates discuss and vote on policy items during business meetings each morning and afternoon. But in the evenings, crowds swell as two or three of the 13 world divisions each take a turn presenting the results of mission outreach in their territory over the past five years. Session is now usually held in a football or baseball stadium. The venue usually fills to near capacity on both Saturdays of Session for Sabbath worship. Now and then there is talk of scaling down the size of Session—which could open up the possibility of Session being held in a greater variety of countries—but that isn't likely to happen soon. The 2020 Session is already set for Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, Indiana, United States.

**2. An adjacent convention center.** This requirement alone severely limits the number of potential host city sites around the

world. While many prominent cities have an adequate indoor stadium, very few have a nearby convention hall. "Even in the United States we have a limited number of cities that can accommodate our needs because of this requirement," Egwakhe says. In addition to business meetings, Session is also a global spiritual gathering and ministry trade show. Denominational and supporting ministry organizations set up booths in the convention center, and it becomes a place to network and check out new resources. Throughout the day, thousands of visitors view innovative ministries, products and new uses of technology for mission. They often help the Adventist Church's mission in their own corner of the globe by taking home new ideas for ministry and spreading the gospel.

**3. Accommodations.** Session delegates need affordable hotels near the Session venue. With 10 straight days of all-day meetings, jet-lagged delegates and visitors can't afford to travel across the city or from another town each morning and evening to conduct their work.

**4. Air travel costs.** "Flights to the United States are relatively less expensive than for most delegates to travel from their region to another part of the world," Egwakhe says. Europe could be a viable travel option, but again, it doesn't have a city that meets requirement #2. Also, most Session support staff are based in the U.S., which saves on overall travel costs for a large block of attendees.

**5. English-speaking venue staff.** English is the official business language of the Adventist world church. Therefore, stadium support staff must be able to converse with Adventist leaders on a myriad of issues—everything from "We'd like to receive a bid from your venue to hold Session" to "Excuse me, where is the information desk?"

**6. Visas.** According to this year's 2014 Statistical Report, the Adventist Church operates in 215 countries. With such a diverse world family meeting together, it's important to hold the gathering in a country that is accessible to as many people as possible. "The United States is very open in granting visitor visas to a lot of people in the world," Egwakhe says.

For more information about the 2015 GC Session, visit the website [2015.gcsession.org](http://2015.gcsession.org).

# Only One “Camp” After San Antonio



I believe the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the remnant church of Bible prophecy. In the words of the prophet, “Enfeebled and defective as it may appear, the church is the one object upon which God bestows in a special sense His supreme regard” (*Acts of the Apostles*, p. 12). There will not be another church that will come in and replace the Seventh-day Adventist Church. However and whatever individual members of that body might choose to behave or believe, the church will go forward to the very end of time and will be the “church triumphant.”

As our world church looks forward expectantly to the San Antonio General Conference Session, there are many voices expressing their concerns, opinions, biases, and positional statements on a host of issues, not the least of which is the subject of the ordination of women to gospel

ministry. For some, this matter seems to be of such paramount significance that it outweighs everything else that will be presented to the delegates—and the ultimate vote of the delegates will, in their minds, be the litmus test of whether this is still God’s true church.

I do not intend to belittle in any way the importance nor the impact that this decision will have on our church. But if I believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is God’s remnant church, then whatever the outcome of any and all decisions made in San Antonio by duly appointed representatives of the world church, I will be prepared to move forward with my church for the fulfillment of the gospel commission. To proclaim the love of God in the context of the three angels’ messages will remain the mission of the church. Whatever may be decided about women’s ordination, I will continue to love my fellow brothers

and sisters in Christ. I will not disparage or belittle anyone who may have been “in a different camp.” I will continue to pray for the outpouring and ministry of the Holy Spirit that the prayer of Jesus for the unity of His people will be realized. I will continue to make primary the church’s focus on mission and evangelism.

Theologians have wrestled over women’s ordination using the same Bible passages and the same Spirit of Prophecy quotations, but ending up in two different “camps.” I am trusting that just as God has directed the affairs of His church through extremely challenging issues in the past, He will do the same again July 2-11, in San Antonio. But after the vote, there must and will be only one “camp!” And I intend to still be a part of it . . . and I invite you to do the same.

**Stephen Orian**, president

## 1300 Sweaters for the Master

**HOT SPRINGS, ARK. »** Another delightful milestone has passed in the life and service of Emily Stumpf Laue, longtime member of the Hot Springs Church. Beginning in 1987, Laue transformed her crocheting hobby into a very productive

children’s ministry, which she has continued for 27 years. This year she crocheted her 1300th sweater for the children of the world—and the number keeps rising!

At age 92, Emily believes in keeping busy for the Lord. Each time she has 12

to 15 sweaters completed, she boxes them up and sends them to Indiana Academy, where they are relayed on to ADRA in Washington, D.C., and then to children around the world. Missionaries Fred and Marilyn Wilson have carried many of them to Africa.

Emily’s Adventist family roots were first planted in New Orleans in the 1920s, when her parents, Arthur and Mariam Stumpf were among the first Adventists in the area to be baptized into the faith. After college, she served with her husband, Bob Laue, in the Southern Union until their retirement in Hot Springs in 1996. To the Laues, retirement simply meant finding new ways to serve Jesus, and together they did just that. Few have taken as seriously as Emily, the words in Ecclesiastes 9:10: “Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.”

**Juanita Bissell**



Emily Laue with some of her sweaters.

ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE



# ARME Bible Camp Comes to Gentry Church

**GENTRY, ARK. »** During the first week of July 2014, the Gentry church was blessed to host ARME Bible Camp. Church members from throughout the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference, as well as visitors from around the world, came to be trained for service in Christ's ARME, the title of which conveys the desire to "Arm me with the armor of God." ARME trains individuals to "experience a true biblical revival and reformation founded upon a correct interpretation of scriptures and a deep genuine relationship with Christ" (armeministries.com/mission).

The five-and-a-half-day conference began Tuesday evening with a powerful message from Ivor Myers, who founded the original ARME Bible Camp. Throughout the conference, he spoke on the four "lenses" or ways to view every Bible passage—(1) literally, (2) personally, (3) corporately through the church, and (4) symbolically—through the inferences of Christ's first and second coming. On Sabbath, he outlined how the Sanctuary, as "the blueprint," explains the doctrines and the history of God's church in such a simple way that even a child can understand it. Other speakers included Ingo Sorke,

Alistair Huong, and Martin Kim.

Along with the adult training, youth were engaged in the "Heir Force" program, which included biblical stories, crafts, games, and study of the brain and its functions—both physically and spiritually. All ages were blessed with practical tools for internalizing God's Word and communicating with Him. The all-night prayer meeting (which included the youth), was one of the most exciting highlights of the conference, along with the personal testi-

monies of the conference attendees.

The ARME Bible Camp ended with the challenge of engaging its participants in fasting (either total or partial such as a Daniel fast), combined with an attitude of humility in prayer and Bible study. The revival that began during the ARME Bible camp will continue to inspire and prepare God's people as they look forward to Jesus' imminent return!

**Melissa Hanson**



ARME Bible Camp group.

# Baptism for Ozark Church

**OZARK, ARK. »** Following evangelistic meetings that Bryan Seymour, pastor, held at the Ozark church, Joyce (Jody) Elaine Miller decided to follow up with some Bible studies so she could study and find answers to some of her questions.

Jody had been raised an Adventist when she was young and was baptized during that time. But the years passed and Jody became entangled in the struggles of life and wandered away from the church. In God's time she moved to be near her mother in Ozark and was encouraged to attend worship services with her. Then came the evangelistic series and Bible studies, and Jody began to have a peace in her heart that

hadn't been there for a long time. On July 5, 2014, Jody recommitted her life to the Lord and was baptized.

Jody's family and new church family are happy for her renewed faith and decision to become a member. Her new found faith and heartfelt joy is a testimony of Christ's love and patience. Jody enjoys camping and horseback riding, but most of all she loves spending time with her four children, and 13 grandchildren. She has a bright future in her journey of serving the Lord.

**Arlene Lewis**



Joyce (Jody) Elaine Miller's baptism by Bryan Seymour, pastor.

# Slidell Church Hosts Dual VBS

**SLIDELL, LA. »** The Slidell church was the host of dual Vacation Bible School sessions this past July. Session One was for ages 12 and under, and Session Two was for teens, age 12 and over. The theme for the first session was "Wilderness Escape, Where God Guides and Provides," which focused on the children of Israel and their time of wandering in the wilderness while learning how to trust God to provide for their needs.

The second session was a study of the Bible as recorded in the book, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, by Ellen White. The young people learned how the patriarchs and prophets of Bible times trusted God, and about the

consequences they faced when they failed to rely on God for their needs. Some of the teens' favorite stories were about Samson, Moses, Enoch, and Samuel. Both sessions

were well attended and highly successful. Vacation Bible School leader Denise Deroam was thrilled with the success of both sessions and plans to have two ses-



▲ Teens at study.

◀ Teens interacting in a game.



sions again next year. We thank God for our young people and their interest in learning more about God.

**Vernella Rogers**

# Searcy Church Recognizes Graduates

**SEARCY, ARK. »** The Searcy church loves to encourage its young people who are pursuing their education. A special program was presented during the worship service in May 2014, recognizing students from kindergarten to post-graduate school. Students who received special recognition were: Connor Gaines, kindergarten; Seth Cloyes, high school; Ronnie Clements, high school; Jaxon Cole, high school; Amlam Niragire,



B.S. in Electrical Engineering; and Wilkister Tangasi, M.S. in Epidemiology. Richard Hall, pastor, concluded the service with a prayer of dedication for the students.

**Becky Evans**

Searcy church recognizes its graduates.

# Praying for Rain



I thoroughly enjoy the book of Acts. I believe it is a must read for every believer. The record left to us should excite us and give us courage as pilgrims journeying on the narrow road.

From the very beginning of the book, Luke, speaks about Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit. In fact, sometime during those 40 days after the ascension, Jesus told them, “not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised...” What was promised? The baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Why the need of the Holy Spirit? Jesus said, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”

After Jesus ascended the disciples returned to the Upper Room, and instead of worrying how they were to witness to the world, or how they would administer the gospel, or how they could accomplish such a great assignment, the Bible records in Acts 1:14, “These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer...”

They had one single purpose. They had one focus. They had one assignment. Prayer! From the time of the ascension of Jesus to the day of Pentecost, these followers of Jesus being of one mind, devoted themselves to prayer

I like how the King James Version says it Acts 2:1, “they were all with one accord...” What a transformation! These men had had a reputation for grumbling, arguing, and even jockeying for position prior to this. As leaders in the church, they had grandstanded, and asked to call fire down from heaven, and then tried to use their mother to persuade Jesus for preferred position in the Kingdom! But after 10 days in the Upper Room they were changed. They were one!

It was at this point of unity, that a “rushing mighty wind” filled the room and tongues of fire rested on each of them, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit. The

promise of the Father had been realized. What a fulfillment!

Of course, you know the rest of the story about the preaching, and the conviction the Holy Spirit brought upon the people, and the resulting baptisms adding to the church. The key for me is to understand that in one sense, that small group in the Upper Room was the church. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on those servants of the Most High that day was in reality, the church in official session. When those servants preached, they preached the Word of God. It was God’s voice speaking through those willing participants. And they had Holy Spirit power!

So what do I take away from that experience and apply to our day?

**First and foremost**, God is still in charge of the church! He carefully holds His people in the palm of His right hand. Therefore, we have nothing to fear!

**Second**, don’t put the cart ahead of the horse. Meaning, we need to go back and take time in the Word of God, and like the disciples of old, “with one mind con-

tinually devote ourselves to prayer.” We must pray for the Holy Spirit and Holy Spirit power. An old friend and colleague of mine would always remind me, “more prayer, more power!” Paul said it best in Philippians 4:6, “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.” Or as the Living Bible says, “Worry about nothing, pray about everything.”

**Third**, wait for the Lord!

Those three lessons are a must for all of God’s people as we prepare for this year’s General Conference Session. Regardless of the challenges His people face, it is time for His latter rain to be poured out in abundance. It is time for the return of Jesus. Instead of looking all around us, we need to look up, and then as Paul says, worry about nothing and pray about everything. And finally wait for the Lord!

**Richard C. Dye, Sr.**, executive secretary,  
Oklahoma Conference

## Tulsa Centennial Reunion

First Seventh-Day Adventist Church of Tulsa announces its Centennial Reunion to be held April 18, 2015. All current and former pastors, members, and friends are invited to attend this special celebration. Please submit copies of old photos or stories you may have to the church at: 920 S New Haven Ave, Tulsa, OK 74112. For more information contact Joyce Bohannon Carlile, 918.851.8560, den\_joy@hotmail.com, or Jackson Whitacre, 918.640.3995, jacksonwhitacre@gmail.com.



# Bristow Celebrates Two Baptisms

The hottest day of the summer was celebrated with two baptisms at the Bristow church: Sophia Fisher, age 12, and Peggy Riley. Sophia and several other young people studied with Bristow's pastor, Harvey Gil. Sophia had a deep desire to be baptized in 2013, but the baptistery was not in working order. Thanks to the efforts of the church board, Johnnie Baker, John Harrison, Gilbert Perez, Darry Semillano, Tom Weber, and head deacon Melvin Ailey, with other dedicated volunteers, a new baptistery was purchased and installed. Tom Weber completed the baptistery with new steps and decking to the entrance. The best part is that the baptistery is heated! Peggy

and Sophia were the first in Bristow's congregation to be baptized in the new baptistery and we look forward to others taking

that step soon.

After the baptisms, three other precious souls were voted into church membership, having been baptized the previous week at Wewoka Woods Adventist Center, during the Oklahoma Camp Meeting: Brian Stout, Danesha Stout, and Ariane Reiderer. The impact of our yearly camp meeting shouldn't be underestimated! Bristow members are happy to have new family and friends join them as our church grows in Jesus. "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:5, NKJV).

**Caroline A. Fisher**



From left: Peggy Riley, Sophia Fisher, Brian Stout, Danesha Stout, and Ariane Reiderer with Harvey Gil, pastor, officiating.

# Seminole Church Reaches Out to Nursing Home Residents

**SEMINOLE** » The Seminole church looks forward to every third Thursday when they go to visit the Seminole Nursing Home. There they sing their hearts out, bringing the joy of Jesus to the residents.

The residents enjoy the songs and they sing along with the church group. Some church members bring special music and provide a sermonette. The residents especially appreciate when the church members spend time one on one with them to get better acquainted. The time and attention they receive makes a big impact on the residents, whose days are rather routine and uneventful. It also puts a smile on the faces of the church members, who have made some new friends. Helping others always provides multiple blessings.

**Heidi Gilmore**



Seminole church members visit with the Seminole Nursing Home residents.

# Jay Church Opens Food Bank

**JAY** » The Jay church had a burden to help its community, but was unsure how. After much prayer and consideration, and after one of its members was helping out at the local food bank, a light bulb came on.

The local food bank can only help those who live in the community and have many regulations on how much food a family can have and how many times they are allowed to seek assistance for food.

Through support of the church members, Gail Hill set out to find out everything we would need to start our own food bank. Gail worked on finding cabinets, donating a couple of her own freezers and a refrigerator for storing the food. Members have also lent a helping hand with decorations and making t-shirts for the volunteers.

The food bank's doors opened in March, 2014. It is open every Monday from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Volunteers, such as Laura Lewis, Mary Burrells, Kay Mayes, and many others, give their time to help the patrons as they pick out the food they need.

The food bank grew so much that they needed a bigger place to store everything. The old school building, that hasn't been used for anything but storage, was transformed into the improved food bank. The members had been praying that the building would either become a new church for the Native Americans or the Latino population that was in the community, but nothing would ever come of it. Be-

cause of the growth, church member Lisa Milner, created an Excel spreadsheet to use as a record of each person that has walked through the doors.

The next project was to turn the library into a walk-in freezer. "I'll make it happen" said Jerry Mayes, pastor. And that is what he and a couple of other members set out to do. This has been such a blessing for the church and the community. The Lord has been there every step of the way, even when Satan tried to halt it, by having the pipes burst in the winter and the carpeting and walls were soaked with water.

The food bank receives no assistance from the government and trusts only in the Lord. Every week, more blessings are bestowed upon the program. As the patrons

are waiting for their turn to go back and receive the food, they are blessed by health and music videos from Fountain View Academy and others. Since it was started in March 2014, 239 people have come, in and that's not counting those who are repeat customers. The average age range is 40-60. Many are grandparents, whose children have had to move back home, or they have custody of the grandchildren for various reasons.

Patrons are asked various questions to know how to help them better, such as if they would like help with any health issues, or pastoral visits, etc. This information is used to schedule health, cooking, financial management, stop smoking, or depression classes. It isn't a requirement, but some of the patrons have returned on the Sabbath for church service. We even had Jan Allen, another church member, giving a class of making corn and wheat flour. Sometimes, Hill makes a healthy vegan dish for the patrons to try, and a copy of the recipe is placed nearby.

"The only requirement is that you are hungry and in need of food" says Hill. We welcome them all. They are all God's sheep, aren't they?"

**Lisa Milner**



Fresh produce is available to the patrons of the Jay church food bank.



OKLAHOMA CONFERENCE



## General Conference Session: Get Ready For An Awesome Experience

This summer, the 60th General Conference Session will come to San Antonio. It will be the third General Conference Session in the Southwestern Union Territory. My first experience with the GC Session was in Dallas, Texas, in 1980. My first impression was seeing the influx of people from all nations and languages present and the enthusiasm they exhibited for their church and its message and mission. The sacrifice made by so many with meager means to attend the gathering of their world church convention.

It was awesome and inspirational. Since that first one, I have had the privilege attending every one since. More than just a gathering to conduct the business of the church's policies and principles, I see an enthusiasm by the people for the finishing of God's work and the Second Coming of Jesus. If that energy could be captured and spread through our churches, I have no doubt that we could hasten the Lord's return.

It was at the 1990 Indianapolis, Indiana General Conference Session that my mother attended with our family. She was

so impressed by the messages, the world pageantry, and the Christian demeanor of the people that two weeks after she returned home she joined the Tenth Street church in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, where she served faithfully until her death in 1994.

You should plan to be in San Antonio, Texas for the General Conference Session during July 2-11, 2014. Prepare for the experience of your life!

Samuel L. Green, president

## South Louisiana Youth Federation

**BATON ROUGE, LA.** » The South Louisiana Youth Federation held a youth event October 31 through November 2 in the Baton Rouge area. In an age when technology dominates the average lifestyle, it was only natural that the South Louisiana Youth Federation's organizing committee would seize such an opportunity to captivate the minds of our youth. However, as the scheduled weekend activities unfolded, youth were not the only ones left captivated.

The weekend's theme was WiFi: Are You Connected? According to first-year president Earniesha Lott, "The aim of the theme was to bring awareness to our youth that we're living in the last days and they need to be connected to Christ like never before." She went on to add that the culminating program took nearly ten months of planning, which included multiple meetings, numerous phone conferences, and of course, a tremendous amount of prayer.

"It was a joy to welcome the nearly filled to capacity opening night audience to

the Faith church, which hosted the Friday night service," said Lott.

Opening night featured youth from Lake Charles, Hammond, New Orleans, and of course, Baton Rouge showcasing their God-given talents in song, liturgical dance, instrumental music, and mime. Then it was time for the vesper thought given by outgoing conference youth director Helvis Moody.

Capitalizing on the theme, and with John 1:9 "The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world" as his Scripture, he posed the anticipated question "Are you connected?"

Moody continued, "In spite of our being tech savvy, like Christ, we must never change." Using the analogy of needing a password for a WiFi connection, we were reminded that our connection to Christ is unlimited; our bill has been paid by Christ's blood. "We must have wireless fidelity—faithful enough—everywhere we are. Only then can we be assured a connection from earth to glory.

His final admonition to all was "When you're connected, stay connected!" to a resounding "Amen." Moody and Faith church's Michael Bailey then answered anonymous questions previously submitted by youth. It was followed by Elsie Thibodeaux's Bible Bowl Spotlight and then closing prayer by Bailey. Sabbath's activities were held at the Berean church, where Friday night's attendance carried over to the extent that extra seating was required, resulting in chairs lining the aisles and others occupying the extra pews in the choir area. Before the divine worship service was over, the hospitality committee responsible for the



SOUTHWEST REGION CONFERENCE



attendance count reported a total of 650 in the sanctuary plus 47 children in Berean's annex, where children's church was held. Sabbath School took a different approach in that as opposed to presenting the conventional Sabbath School lesson, 28 different children and youth, representing various areas of south Louisiana, presented the 28 Fundamental Beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in intervals punctuated with musical selections.

Lott and her committee left the interpretation of each belief up to the children. What resulted was a conglomerate of poetry, posters, art work, and speeches all depicting one of the beliefs.

The Sabbath speaker was New Orleans native, Kenn Dixon, who pastors the Casalita Drive church in Garland, Texas, and is also the communication and media relations director for the Southwest Region Conference. He began by praising his home federations "which have always been good; and that distinction hasn't changed." His message, titled "Does the Devil Know You?" caught a few by surprise, as some were wondering how this would tie in with the weekend's theme. It didn't take long for us to make the connection. His pre-sermon prayer included how on the previous night, the world had celebrated evil and darkness, but followed with how dawn always follows darkness.

Our attention was then directed to Acts 19:1, and the warning of dangers in Ephesus, the home of black magic used to gain health and happiness.

"Because he knows he has but a short time, the devil doesn't want to lose any he catches. We pray but our prayers go unanswered, and we wonder why," said Dixon. He reminded the youth of the futility of trying to connect to Christ while listening



ultimate goal was to create an atmosphere that would bring the youth closer to Christ. We praise God that that mission was accomplished."

The Pathfinder parade with area director Leonard Cade and his assistant, Elaine Harrington, lead-

ing the way began after lunch. Utilizing a route that took the group through the local community gave them an opportunity not only to distribute literature but also to present an interactive performance by Xtreme Praise of the Maranatha church in Alexandria, and Radiant Praise of Morning Star in Lake Charles. But it was Lott and Dixon who had the final word as they praised God for the success of the federation and thanked the attendees for their overwhelming support. The night's socials were a choice between game night at a local arcade and a basketball tournament at Berean's gym. Of course, some chose both.

We salute Lott and her team and, of course, our youth and young adults who taught us that to be truly connected, we have to know "We're in the final introspection, intervention, and investigation."

When asked for her assessment of this phase of the federation, Lott said, "The

to profanity in music, or watching violence and sex scenes on TV—all without flinching. Adults didn't escape as he identified a salacious TV drama popular with many of them. "The devil uses the visual to confuse us into believing that what he presents is just a way of life," he continued.

He followed by telling how the devil and Jesus are after the youth's minds. "You can praise dance, sing, or mime for Jesus without being connected. Borrowing or stealing somebody else's signal for connection purposes is analogous to trying to connect to Christ without having a personal relationship with Him. The connection to Christ cannot be manufactured. Knowing about the power of Jesus doesn't mean we know Him." The Holy Spirit utilized Dixon's altar call, resulting in nine youth and adults giving their lives to Christ in baptism.

Evelyn M. Edwards

# Tour de Youth: "Ride for the Future"

**DALLAS, TEXAS** » The Tour de France is one of the most demanding endurance sports in history. It is two weeks of cycling more than 2,200 grueling miles, brutal mountain climbs, and unpredictable weather. Cyclists braved these conditions for a chance to wear the coveted "Maillot Jaune" or yellow jersey. Many who start the race are not able to complete it, because it is truly a "suffer fest."

On June 28, 2015, pastors, lay-people, and cyclists from around the United States, will join the Southwest Region Conference as we host a Tour de Youth (TDY) cycling event. Team Southwest will cycle from Dallas, Texas to the 60th General Conference Session in San Antonio, Texas. The prize for this ride is not the "Maillot Jaune" but a far more precious prize, our children. TDY is an inspirational five-day, 325 mile journey to raise awareness of youth and adult obesity, while raising funds for Adventist Education. The goal is to promote healthy lifestyles.

Elizabeth Landau with CNN.com Health reported that the adult and youth obesity rates have risen in 28 states over the past years and are projected to continue. "Ten out of 11 states with the highest rates of obesity are located in the South." These findings are incredible and frightening. Angela Glover Blackwell, Founder and CEO of PolicyLink sites income disparities also "may contribute to this trend of obesity being prevalent in the South."

We were not created to live stationary lives. Our young people need great role models for health that they can reach out and touch. Young people need leaders that will do more than just talk about healthy lifestyles and making education affordable. We must put our words into action for the future of our youth.

Our schools play an important role in the health and lifestyle choice of our children, if it can be made affordable. "Christian education is one of the most important evangelistic arms of the Seventh-day



On June 28 pastors, lay-people, and cyclists from around the U.S. will ride with the Southwest Region's "Tour de Youth" from Dallas to San Antonio for the start of the General Conference Session.



Adventists church." Yet, in 2008, Larry Blackmer shared that, "Formal Adventist education, however, is serving fewer than 40 percent of the children in our churches."

In the same *Adventist Review* article, he states, "It's obvious that we must find ways both to make Adventist education affordable and to provide Adventist educational services to those who can't or choose not to utilize the formal Adventist school system."

Prayer and financial support are needed to help the Tour de Youth "Ride For The Future" to be successful. Show an expression of support by offering at-risk boys and girls an alternative environment in which to grow, spiritually and academically, while pursuing the American Dream. Most importantly, we are not in pursuit of the "Yellow Jersey," but we do want all of our

children to be winners. Your support will help provide a Christian education environment where kids are encouraged to uncover and, pursue God's plan in preparing them for their lifelong service in advancing God's Kingdom.

Please contact Kenn Dixon for more information about the Tour de Youth at [kdixon@swrgc.org](mailto:kdixon@swrgc.org).



# Texas-sized Praise and Worship



Get ready San Antonio, here they come! I will confess that I am not a big fan of large convocations. In the past I have tried earnestly to avoid them as much as possible. But there is something special about the upcoming 2015 General Conference Session scheduled for this summer in the expanding metropolis of San Antonio. Perhaps it is the tremendous evangelistic opportunity the event affords with the seventh largest city in the United States, home to nearly 1.5 million people. Perhaps it is because we as a church have not been able to penetrate this location steeped in Catholicism on one hand, yet marooned in secularism on the other. I recently asked a North American Division official, when was the last time a major event had been preceded by four evangelistic crusades one right after the other by Mark Finley, Alejandro Bullock, Carlton Byrd, and José Rojas. The answer? "Never!" The stage has been set for the Spirit of God to be poured out upon a city that languishes in great need.

I am taken by the words of Ellen

White, "The spiritual darkness that covers the whole world is intensified in the crowded centers of population. It is in the cities of the nations that the gospel worker finds the greatest impenitence and the greatest need. And in these same cities are presented to soul-winners some of the greatest opportunities! Mingled with the multitudes who have no thought of God and heaven are many who long for light and for purity of heart. Even among the careless and indifferent there are many whose attention may be arrested by a revelation of God's love for the human soul..." (*Review and Herald*, November 17, 1910). God longs to reach the teeming multitudes in the great cities across the globe before it's too late.

Current statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau reveal that the city of San Antonio has grown in population at nearly seven percent between the years 2010 and 2014. They also disclose that nearly 27 percent of the city's population is under the age of 21. Sixty-five percent of the residents of San Antonio are of Latino descent, and two-thirds of them are second, third, or fourth

generation Hispanics, meaning that they are American born, prefer English and are culturally secular in nature. Eighty percent of the city's people are high school graduates, while only one in four has a college degree. Nearly 60 percent are homeowners and the median household income per year is \$45,000. One more astounding fact is that according to *USA Today*, each year, San Antonio is the recipient of 26 million visitors and tourists. All of these facts state that the harvest is ripe. If Christ Himself were leading the battle cry in these important months leading up to the General Conference Session in San Antonio this summer, what words would He have for us who are on the ground, in a position to be instruments of His love, grace, and truth to a city that languishes in great need? Listen to His words in Matthew 9:37, 38: "Then He said to His disciples 'The Harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the Harvest to send out laborers into His Harvest!'" Are we willing and ready to go?

Carlos J. Craig, president

## iFollow at Garland Spanish

**GARLAND** » Philippians 2:4 says, "Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others." The youth at the Garland Spanish church decided to put this Bible verse into action. Here, we learned the importance of serving God at an early age. We sought to encour-

ter God through more than just seeing and feeling the printed pages of the Bible. The purpose was to echo the words of Job 42:5, "I have heard of you by the hearing of my ears, but now my eyes see you."

The church held a camp, iFollow, with the goal of going out to help others. Each

day, the attendees went out into the community to meet its needs. One day, the group decided to help a member of our church by mowing his lawn and moving some things he wasn't able to. The next day, they decided to go to a nursing home and talked to the elderly. It was here where our youth started to sense the importance of being compassionate about others, especially to those who experience loneliness. At the end of the camp we were blessed because we were giving and not receiving.

iFollow camp taught us to be true followers of Christ. It taught us to get out of our comfort zone and to see other people how God sees them, as great candidates for His everlasting kingdom.



Garland Spanish church youth helped others as part of iFollow camp.

# The Athens Church Swap

**ATHENS** » A few years ago the attending membership of our church in Athens had dwindled down to only seven at times. We were faced with the financial question of “Can we afford the church expenses and upkeep?” After all, the church was close to 40 years old with a basement that occasionally took in water from the underground spring beneath it. Mold had moved into the damp basement, and the parking lot was also in need of repair.

To make things even more challenging, the fellowship hall was a detached second building that forced us to brave the elements after church to go to our weekly potluck. With no other obvious choice, the church members decided to put the church property up for sale and look for a smaller place that our finances could afford. We waited for over a year without a single interest. During that time, God brought some new members in that helped support the church and before long, our finances were back in good



The Athens church, after facing some financial and facility upkeep struggles, experienced an exciting answer to prayer. God met the needs of their church and a Baptist church next door—they traded churches and mortgage notes.

shape. The church members decided to take the church off the market.

Now for the miracle! Last November, I was driving in my truck and talking to God. I asked Him why we didn’t sell the church and what His plans were for us. Later that week the pastor of the Baptist church located beside ours called me with a proposal that seemed too good to be true. He

informed me that they had run out of room on their property and were renting a vacant Baptist church only two miles away for their youth group.

He said they were willing to pay the note on that church and trade us for ours, just to keep their youth group close. The church was built only 12 years ago, is almost 2,000 square feet bigger overall, has a beautiful sanctuary and an inviting foyer, nine rooms, including a nice pastor’s study, and sits on almost seven acres of land. And the best part—everything is under one roof and is now handicap-accessible. The Baptist church even agreed to pay all the closing costs and

paid for a new church sign to reflect our name.

It just goes to show that “all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28). The new church is located at 3710, NE Loop in Athens, Texas.

**Tom Martin**

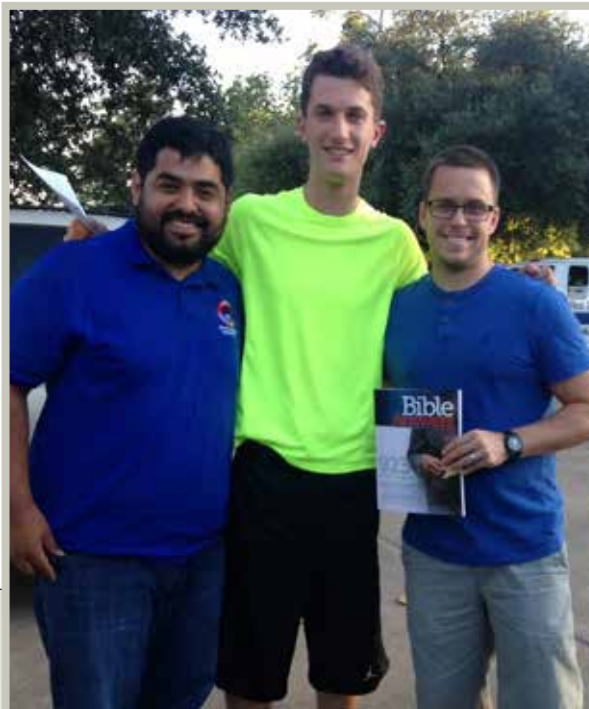
# The Power of Canvassing

As the summer approached I could not have foretold what the Lord had in store for us. We would begin our summer in Huntsville, Texas, and we would end our summer in Bryan, Texas. We had 10 students from Southwestern Adventist University and other academies in Texas ready to work for the Lord. They all came with natural worries; for some of the students, this was their first time canvassing and for others, this was their last time. Nevertheless, they all were eager to walk the streets, eager to knock on doors, and eager to bring the people of these “little towns” the message of our Lord Jesus Christ through the printed word.

“You must begin to print a little paper and send it out to the people,” declared Ellen White to her

husband James, on November of 1848. “Let it be small at first,” she continued, “but as the people read, they will send you means with which to print, and it will be a success

from the first. From this small beginning it was shown to me to be like streams of light that went clear round the world” (*Colporteur Ministry*, p. 1).



During the second half of the summer while we were in Bryan, we had a particular young man join our team, Ryan Lorino. He approached a home where a young Methodist pastor opened the door. Ryan presented the whole set, but that pastor turned his attention just to one book, “Bible Answers.” This is a significant book because this material contains each of the Seventh-day Adventist doctrines. At that time, when Ryan finished

Canvassing is a powerful way for young people to share Christ and also earn money and scholarships for their education.

the presentation, the pastor asked Ryan to bring 50 copies of this book because he wanted to share and study this book with his young adult group. This experience made Ryan grow in faith and helped strengthen his relationship with God. That day he saw God do the impossible!

My name is Jonathan Rodriguez, and I have been working for the past two years as a publishing director, coordinating this

ministry in the area of Houston. As a part of our job each summer, we receive young people from Southwestern Adventist University and other parts of Texas who dedicate their summers to sharing Christ door-to-door by distributing truth-filled magabook literature all over the state. This program offers them the opportunity to minister to people while earning a scholarship to help cover their school expenses.

The program is open to committed young people who are age 16 and older.

I know that God is guiding us to involve more students in this program. There are a lot of people waiting to hear about Jesus Christ's love. May the Lord use us to guide others to Him.

**Jonathan Rodríguez**

# Adventist Rodders Club Car Show Benefits Grandview Food Bank

**GRANDVIEW** » The Adventist Rodders Club of North Texas held their Fourth Annual Shoe-n-Shine car show at Beaumont Ranch in Grandview on September 14, 2014. The proceeds of this show benefit the Grandview Area Food Bank, which serves approximately 130 families a week in the Grandview area and more than 1,000 families with their Food Pantry Express on the third Saturday each month in five cities throughout the region.

Sixty-one cars, from a 1909 Sears Motor Buggy to a 2005 Mustang and everything in between, were there to show off

their "ride" and support a local cause. The "People's Choice Award" was won by Richard Roberts for his '64 Impala SS convertible which he bought new and restored to better than new in 2011. The "Participants' Award" went to Ronnie Barton for his '31 Ford pickup. Five of the area pastors from various denominations chose their favorite and each winner received a new Bible.

Southwestern Adventist University volunteered to videotape the event and the university's radio station, 88.3 KJRN The Journey, was present. Carter Blood Care was there for people to give "the gift of

life."

Canned "golden oldies" music livened up the day along with entertainment from three live bands.

Four hundred spectators toured through the cars over the span of the day. Once the awards were given out and monies totaled, the Adventist Rodders Club donated \$3,503 to the Grandview Area Food Bank.

Besides the annual car show, the Adventist Rodders Club of North Texas holds road rallies and does an annual Hot Rod Sabbath. Members don't have to own a classic or hot rod to join, just a love of old cars will do. ARC is sponsoring a the Meet-N-Greet at General Conference Session on July 5, 2015, 10:00-1:00 p.m. at Roosevelt Park in San Antonio, Texas. For more information on how to join, contact Rick Garner at [nomadder55@gmail.com](mailto:nomadder55@gmail.com). You can also find us at [www.arcntx.com](http://www.arcntx.com) and on Facebook.

**Rhonda Garner**



More than 400 visitors came to see 61 cars at the Adventist Rodders Club of North Texas fourth annual car show on September 14, 2014. The event raised funds for the Grandview church's food bank.



TEXAS CONFERENCE

# You Belong to a Worldwide Church Family



TEXICO CONFERENCE

Every five years, delegates from around the world come to the General Conference (GC) Session to give reports on what is happening around the world, vote on issues pressing the church, make changes to the Church Manual, and elect GC officers for the next quinquennium. Since the GC Session is going to be in our backyard next year (San Antonio, Texas, July 2-11, 2015), we have cancelled the 2015 Texico convocation/camp meeting to encourage as many of you as possible to attend and witness this historic event.

We are a diverse church—from every tribe, nation, and people. It is impressive to see almost every nation represented and recognize the fact that the gospel can and is breaking down religious and cultural

barriers. I have found that I have more in common with church members from other parts of the world that share the same belief system that I do, than my own family members who are not Seventh-day Adventists. Even though we may not speak the same language and have completely different cultures, what unites us is the love of God and the mission of proclaiming the Three Angels' messages.

When we lived in Alaska, we decided to take a newly baptized family to the 2000 GC Session which was then held in Toronto, Canada. The family thought they just belonged to a small congregation in Anchorage. On the final Saturday morning, while sitting in the Sky Dome stadium filled to capacity with approximately

80,000 attendees, the mother was filled with deep emotion. Tears started flowing down her cheeks and she bowed her head in prayer thanking the Lord that she belonged to a world-wide church.

It is my desire that you will make plans to be there and experience the impact of meeting dedicated Seventh-day Adventists from around the world. Let us pray for the 2015 GC Session. Let us pray for the delegates that the decisions made will uplift God's holy name and advance His kingdom here on earth.

Lee-Roy Chacon, president

**Young Adult Ski Trip**  
 Taos, New Mexico \* February 5-8, 2015

**Contact:**  
 Suzanna Facundo  
 @ 817.295.0476  
 for more information

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# Stand Down reaches out, provides food, clothes to veterans

Avelino was in the Army once. He doesn't remember when. Sitting at a table in Alumni Hall on the campus of the Santa Fe University of Art and Design during a Stand Down event for homeless veterans Friday, he pointed to a scar on his forehead. "TBI," he said. "Traumatic brain injury."

He needed a haircut. "It's getting too bushy," he said. He wanted new clothes. He wore layers of clothing, and everything — the shirt, the pants, the jacket — was just too big. The soles of his sneakers were giving out. He kept pulling various identification cards out of his pockets and then misplacing them.

Avelino — who wasn't sure he wanted his last name published — said he was happy with the Stand Down, a two-day event designed to give homeless veterans a hot meal, clothes, sleeping bags, counseling on several levels, haircuts, and medical and dental screenings.

Avelino was one of about 250 people — about 160 of whom were veterans — who came into Alumni Hall between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Friday to take advantage of the event, sponsored by Adventists Community Services of Santa Fe. This is the fourth year of the Stand Down, according to Phillip Chavez of the Santa Fe Vet Center. The organizers don't turn away anyone who claims to be homeless, but they keep track of how many are veterans.

In past years, the event has drawn about 350 veterans and 200 others who are considered homeless, Chavez said.

Veterans Affairs representatives joined various community service providers — including Life Link, St. Elizabeth Shelter and La Familia Medical Services — at a series of tables lined around the hall. Entertainment — from a rendition of the national anthem to a spirited presentation of "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy" — continued throughout the day.

Pastor Eric Redic, who was overseeing Friday's Stand Down, said many veterans — particularly those from the Vietnam era — are reluctant to ask for help and are dealing with so many issues related to their service that they often shun other people.

"A lot of them are outcasts," he said. "This event lets them know that somebody cares."

John Herman, a social worker for the Homeless Veterans Program, said it's tough to know how many veterans are homeless in the state or in the nation. "It's a population that's really hard to count," he said.

"A lot of them have mental health issues. A lot have substance abuse issues. A lot are straight-up economic issues. And a lot of the times, it's all of the above," he said.

Avelino said he spent the previous night sleeping in a park by a fire station. He gets scared at night. "I hear noise," he said. He said he has no peripheral vision in his right eye, so if you stand to that side, he can't see you and gets nervous.

What happened to him in the Army, or since, is unclear. His warm smile suggests he may be as young as 50, but everything else about his face, including



the questioning eyes, seems older.

He is not alone. Another Army veteran, John, also has a face that looks older than the age he gives. He's missing some teeth. His breath smelled of alcohol Friday. He collected a duffel bag of clothing, a sleeping bag and toiletries at the Stand Down. He said he is not homeless but didn't want to say where he lives.

"It's not easy," he said. He lost a job he held for 20 years. Then he lost his wife. He said he was six months away from earning his associate degree at Central New Mexico Community College in Albuquerque

when everything fell apart and he had to drop out of school.

"They help you with a few things," he said, referring to the volunteers at the Stand Down. "They try to get you back to work."

Stand Down is a military term relating to a military unit's relaxation of status from an alert or operational position.

**Robert Nott**

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**Top:** Help stations were represented by many local organizations.

**▲** A worship service, foot washing, communion and anointing service were provided for spiritual nourishment and healing.

**Above left:** Massages were one of the many services offered.

# Odessa Offers "Hope for the Family"

**ODESSA, TEXAS** » On October 17, 2014 at the Odessa English church, our very own Texico Conference president, Lee-Roy Chacon, initiated and conducted "The Hope for Family" seminar for this year's fall outreach to the Odessa community. The program was supported by the church in an average attendance of about 80 individuals every evening. We had guest singers every evening including Nelva Chacon, Ricardo Martínez, various children, a men's group, and our newly formed church choir led by Rhodora Pugao and Dorothy Mayor.

With the ardent collaboration and participation of church members, district pastor Abner Razon and his wife, Nefritire, welcomed

16 new members to the church family. Of the total, four were new baptisms, one was a rebaptism, four were professions of faith, and seven were transfers from other churches. The seminar concluded on October 25 with a wedding and baptisms on Sabbath morning, then a youth program and social in the evening.

The church is continuing with follow-up studies and seminars

with the new members and a good number of Bible study interests. The Odessa church is again looking forward to the forthcoming spring major evangelism in 2015. May everyone be found deeply rooted in the faith and end-time work as that final glorious day approaches.

**Dodie Pelopero**

TEXICO CONFERENCE



▲ Pastor Lee-Roy Chacon offers "Hope for the Family" at the Odessa Church.

◀ Jesus Rivas and Diana Agosto celebrate their wedding and baptisms.

▼ New additions to the Odessa Church family with pastors Lee-Roy Chacon (left) and Abner Razon (right).



# A Night at the Meyerson: A Tradition of Dedication

**DALLAS** » On February 15, the exciting tradition of A Night at the Meyerson continues. The annual performance, in its 22nd year, is a collaboration of more than 500 high school student musicians and vocalists with Southwestern students and

only festival in the North American Division that provides a world-class venue for the finale performance. The performance at the Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center in Dallas is a once-in-a-lifetime experience for the visiting students and allows Southwestern to raise funds for scholarships through sponsorships and ticket sales. Last year's concert raised more than \$20,000 for scholarships.

Students are encouraged to audition to become a Festival Scholarship Finalist. Last year's finalists came from Texas, Georgia, California, and even Chile. A showcase concert performed by the finalists occurs the Wednesday

help students realize their potential and use music as a ministry to glorify God.

"I enrolled at Southwestern after winning a music scholarship during Southwestern's Music Festival," says nursing major Elaine. "Because of my experiences singing at the Meyerson, I've had many requests to sing for programs and church services across Texas. I'm also a member of the University Singers, traveling to places like Puerto Rico, cathedrals and small churches across the U.S., and even performing for the U.S. Senate. Because of this, I'm now a nursing major with a music ministry."

It takes a lot of work to make the Music Festival and *A Night at the Meyerson* happen. While the Southwestern faculty work hard to organize the event and teach more than 500 students in just four days, parents have been working hard to support those same students for years. Those parents are putting their children through school, helping them with homework, paying for music lessons, and even traveling long distances to attend the Meyerson event. Remembering that dedication is what makes the evening so special as parents, faculty, and students gather together in a beautiful venue to celebrate God's gift of music.

Darcy Force



Southwestern Adventist University proudly presents

## a night at the Meyerson

February 15, 2015

Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center | Dallas, Texas

*Ticket sales open January 1. Ticket sales and festival schedule available at [www.swau.edu/musicfestival](http://www.swau.edu/musicfestival)*

# Sonnett Peterson Joins Southwestern Union IT Department

**BURLESON, TEXAS** » Sonnett Peterson has joined the Southwestern Union Conference as its new associate director of information technology. In this position, she will support the union and five conference office treasury departments in the use and implementation of accounting software, specifically Adventist Accounting Software International.

“Sonnett’s expertise and extensive background in accounting will be an asset to those in the field,” say Jerrilynn Bicek, Southwestern’s IT director.

“I count it a blessing to have the opportunity to return to Texas, which has always felt like home. I am excited to be working with the wonderful people in the Southwestern Union, and am especially thrilled to be in a role that will allow me to help others. God has gone out of His way to put me in this position, and I am grateful and dedicated to do the work He sets before me.”

Peterson leaves her position as a staff auditor for General Conference Auditing Services in Atlanta, Ga. She worked previously as the business manager for Atlanta Adventist Academy in Atlanta, Ga., as an English teacher for Samyook Language Institute in South Korea, and has held several positions in finance and accounting.

Peterson holds a bachelor’s degree in business from Southwestern Adventist University, and will complete her Certified Public Accountant certification at the end of January. She will complete her MBA from Southwestern Adventist University this August.

According to Deryl Knutson, Southwestern Union treasurer, “Sonnett has shown herself to be highly skilled, easy to work with, and a great asset. We are happy to have her on the team.”



Sonnett Peterson joins the Southwestern Union as the associate director of information technology.

## Young Adult Ski Trip

Taos, New Mexico \* February 5-8, 2015



### Contact:

Suzanna Facundo  
@ 817.295.0476  
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**Biology Department, Southwestern Adventist University**, is seeking a qualified applicant (Ph.D. preferred). Primary emphasis in paleontology and

zoology; ability to teach introductory geology, microbiology and/or bioinformatics desirable. The successful candidate will be supportive of literal creationism. Send cover letter and CV to [Schwarz.arthur@swau.edu](mailto:Schwarz.arthur@swau.edu). Position open until filled.

**Southwestern Adventist University** Education and Psychology Department seeks full-time qualified psychology professor beginning July 1, 2015. Doctorate degree is required. Please submit CV and cover letter to Dr. Marcel Sargeant at [sargeant@swau.edu](mailto:sargeant@swau.edu). Position is open until filled.

**The Kinesiology Department at Southwestern Adventist University** seeks full-time physical education professor to begin July 1, 2015. Master's degree required; doctoral degree preferred. Submit curriculum vitae and cover letter to Human Resources office. Must have some teaching experience. Contact Mr. Vesa Naukkarinen at 817.202.6684 or [vnaukkar@swau.edu](mailto:vnaukkar@swau.edu).

**Pacific Union College** is seeking a full-time faculty in the Religion Department to begin during the 2015-2016 academic year. Preference is for candidate with a Ph.D. in Religion (open to ABD), with an emphasis in either Old Testament, New Testament, or any branch of Theology, and with successful teaching experience. For more information or to apply call 707.965.6231 or visit <http://www.puc.edu/faculty-staff/current-job-postings>.

**Pacific Union College** is seeking a full-time manager

of the Albion Biology Field station to begin immediately. Ideal candidate will possess a bachelor's degree (business administration preferred) and strong organizational and communication skills. Expertise in budget management and knowledge of boat operations is also desired. For more information or to apply call 707.965.6231 or visit <http://www.puc.edu/faculty-staff/current-job-postings>.

**Pacific Union College** is seeking a Special Collections Librarian to begin July 1, 2015. Ideal candidate will possess a Master of Library Science degree from an ALA accredited institution and have experience in academic librarianship, archives, and information literacy programs for students. For more information or to apply call 707.965.6231 or visit <http://www.puc.edu/faculty-staff/current-job-postings>.

**Lead Programmer/Analyst:** Pacific Press Publishing Association seeks Seventh-day Adventist for the full time position of Lead Programmer/Analyst to support all Information Technology (IT) software support functions, including problem analysis, design, programming, testing, implementation and training. Applicants should have bachelor's degree in Computer Science or related field and knowledge and experience in industry standard programming language including web development tools, and the ability to lead a team of programmer/analysts. Contact Ms. Alix Mansker, HR Director, PO Box 5353 Nampa ID 83653, phone 208.465.2567, fax

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## Announcements

### 5K Fun Run During General Conference Session:

There will be a 5K Fun Run during the GC Session in San Antonio, Texas, on Sunday, July 5, 2015, followed by a Health Expo and the distribution of the Mission Health Book. Only 2,500 slots are available and preregistration is required on a first-come-first-serve basis. Register today at [www.runsignup.com/gcsession5Ksignup](http://www.runsignup.com/gcsession5Ksignup).

### Laurelbrook School (Dayton, Tenn.) Homecoming:

April 2-5, 2015. Honor Classes are 1960, 1965, 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005, 2010 and new grads 2015. A fun-filled weekend of events is being planned. Theme for weekend is "The Time is Now." For more information, contact the school, alumni officers or email Phillip Walton at [alumni@laurelbrook.org](mailto:alumni@laurelbrook.org).

## Obituaries

### BROWN, Mildred Jean Williams,

born October 30, 1933 in Sprinkle, Texas, and died October 22, 2014 in Dallas, Texas. She was a faithful member of the City Temple church in Dallas for many years. After her high school graduation, Mildred was employed as a pastry chef for the Austin Independent School district. In 1956 she joined the Adventist church during an evangelistic series by Fordyde Detamore and was baptized by Jesse Wagner. On July 29, 1963, Mildred married the love of her life, Rawdon E. Brown. Mildred worked as a teacher in the Adventist system in Omaha, Neb., and in New Orleans, La., and then as the receptionist at the Southwest Region Conference headquarters in Dallas until her retirement in 2009. Survivors: husband, Rawdon E. Brown, Sr., of Dallas; son, Rawdon E. Brown, Jr., of

Dallas; sister/cousin Maud-ester Herbert, of Austin, Texas; three sisters, Ida Nell Banks (Hilmer), Elizabeth Williams, and Janice Ansley, all of Austin; three brothers, Charles (Carla) and Gaylord, of Lago Vista, Texas; and Harvey (Eva), of Austin.

### COLLINS, Margaret Maxwell,

born April 11, 1941 in Eddy, Texas, and died October 19, 2014 in Albuquerque, N. Mex. She was a member of the Beulah church in Roswell, N. Mex. She married S.K. Collins in 1959 in Roswell, N. Mex., (divorced 1978). Margaret began her career in nursing as an LPN in 1968. She then attended ENMU-Roswell and was awarded the designation of an RN in 1970. Margaret then attended and graduated from the University of New Mexico as a nurse practitioner specializing in women's healthcare in 1973. She began working for the State of New Mexico

Department of Health at the Chaves Health Office in 1970, eventually serving as a nurse practitioner specializing in women's healthcare. She retired from SoNM in 2002 and in 2007 moved to Albuquerque to be near her children. Margaret spent her life working with the youth of Chaves County. She served on many community boards of non-profit organizations. She was a kind individual who loved people and was passionate about helping others. Survivors: daughter, Sandra J. Collins; son, Samuel K. Collins, Jr. (Jean) both of Albuquerque, N. Mex.; sister, Lucy Eatmon (Curtis) of Las Vegas, Nev.; two grandchildren, and 10 great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her sister, Dorothy June Dabney.

**FELCH, Leora**, born July 31, 1929 in Fennimore, Wis., and died August 17, 2014 in Weslaco, Texas. She was a

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member of the Mercedes church. She is survived by her son, Carlo, and daughter, Barbara.

**INGLIS, Itandewi**, born August 8, 1962 in Edinburg, Texas and died November 2, 2014 in Castle Rock, Colo. She was a member of the Aspen Park church in Conifer, Colo., and was a former member of the Rosenberg Spanish church in Rosenberg, Texas. Survivors: husband, Robert Inglis; son, Caleb Inglis; sister, Xochitl Litton; brother, Xicotencaltl Diaz; brother, David Diaz; brother, Jacob Diaz; and mother, Jovita Martinez.

**LABRADOR, Amparo**, born January 21, 1929 in Bacolod, Phillipines, and died September 7, 2014 in McAllen, Texas. She was a member of the Edinburg church. Survivors: five children, Cynthia, Flor, Edna, Eleanor, and Darlene; three siblings, Betty, Angles, and Julio; 15 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

**MALLERY, Daisy**, born January 18, 1947, near Franklin, Pa., and died May 29, 2014 in Dallas, Texas. She was a member of the Jefferson Central church. She served as a registered nurse for more than 40 years, including service with the U.S. Army nurse corps in Vietnam. She was recipient of the National Defense Service, Vietnam Service, and Vietnam Campaign medals. Upon return to the U.S., she served at Brooke Army Medical Center, where she met her future husband, Steve Mallery. They married at Fort Sam Houston, in San Antonio, Texas on May 11, 1970. Her subsequent

civilian career included medical-surgical, home health, and long-term care nursing. Her Christian faith inspired her to serve her Savior and humanity. Daisy enjoyed travel, especially a recent trip to Ireland where she could explore her cultural roots. Her daughter, Susan, preceded her in death. Survivors: husband, Steve Mallery; daughter and son-in-law, Stephanie and Danny Powell; son Matthew Mallery; one granddaughter, one great-grandchild, four sisters, three brothers, and numerous nephews and nieces.

**MEIER-VIERA, Alicia**, died September 24, 2014 in Hope, Calif. She was the mother of Elizabeth Talbot, speaker-director of the Jesus 101 Biblical Institute, and wife of Juan Carlos Viera, who is the former Director of the Ellen G. White Estate.

**PINEDA, Juan**, born June 24, 1943 in Waxahachie, Texas, and died July 2, 2014 in Waco, Texas. He was a member of the Hillsboro church. Survivors: wife, Janie; niece, Olga Marshall; and nephew, Rick Marshall.

**RYAN, Dorothy L.**, born May 20, 1923 in Kansas, and died November 20, 2014 in Kansas City, Mo. She was a member of the conference church. Survivors: sons, Roy Ryan, Michael Ryan, and Roger Ryan; daughter, Eugenia McCullough; 10 grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren, and two sisters.

**SHEEL, Rita Jewell Whicker**, born July 9, 1946 in Townsend, Mont., and died September 15, 2014 in

Myrtle Beach, S. C. She had previously been a member of the Lawton, Okla., Norman, Okla., and Cleburne, Texas churches. Survivors: husband of 47 years, Stephen Sheel; daughters, Tanya Sheel, of Oakwood, Ohio, Julianne Johnson, of Miamisburg, Ohio, Danielle Mueller, Woodstock, Ont., Kimberly Sheel, of Valparaiso, Ind., and Tracy Less, of Myrtle Beach S.C.; sisters, Dena Birdwell and Tammy Micheff; brother, Hodd Whicker; and three grandchildren.

**SMITH, Charles Lester**, born July 29, 1949 in Dover, Ohio and died September 27, 2014 in Elgin, Texas. He liked hunting, collecting steins, and was a member of the Elgin church. Survivors: sister and brother-in-law, Saundra and Wray Serl; brothers, Arthur (Alba) R. Smith and Vernon (Kathy) N. Smith; and several nieces and nephews.

**THACKER, Merle Estelle Stinson**, born September 29, 1917 in Douglass, Texas, and died September 30,

2014 in Keene, Texas. She was a member of the Keene church. She was preceded in death by her husband, Roy, and son, Charles. Survivors: daughter and son-in-law, Beverly and Jerry Ullrich; two grandchildren, and three great-granddaughters.

**WARD, Marguerette Lanell**, born June 2, 1935 in Rector, Ark., and died September 9, 2013 in Tulsa, Okla. She was a member of the Fort Smith, Ark., church. She served there as home and school leader, community service leader, deaconess, and held many other offices. She was always on hand to volunteer, not just in the church, but also in the community. She was preceded in death by her son, Leslie Ward. Survivors: husband, Melvin Ward, of Fort Smith; three sons, Carey Ward, of Conway, Ark., Stanley Ward, of San Antonio, Texas, and Keith Ward of Rudy, Ark.; daughter, Kayla Hamilton of Fort Smith.; 10 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

SABBATH SUNSET CALENDAR						
	Jan 2	Jan 9	Jan 16	Jan 23	Jan 30	Feb 6
Abilene, TX	5:45	5:50	5:56	6:03	6:09	6:16
Albuquerque, NM	5:06	5:11	5:18	5:25	5:32	5:39
Amarillo, TX	5:46	5:52	5:59	6:06	6:13	6:20
Brownsville, TX	5:50	5:55	6:01	6:06	6:11	6:16
Dallas, TX	5:32	5:38	5:44	5:50	5:57	6:04
El Paso, TX	5:13	5:18	5:25	5:31	5:37	5:44
Fort Worth/Keene, TX	5:34	5:40	5:46	5:53	5:59	6:06
Gallup, NM	5:13	5:19	5:26	5:33	5:40	5:47
Galveston/Houston, TX	5:34	5:39	5:45	5:51	5:57	6:03
Gentry, AR	5:14	5:20	5:27	5:34	5:41	5:49
Little Rock, AR	5:10	5:15	5:22	5:29	5:36	5:43
Muskogee, OK	5:19	5:25	5:31	5:39	5:46	5:53
New Orleans, LA	5:12	5:17	5:23	5:29	5:35	5:41
Oklahoma City, OK	5:28	5:43	5:41	5:48	5:55	6:02
Roswell, NM	5:02	5:07	5:14	5:20	5:27	5:34
San Antonio, TX	5:47	5:52	5:58	6:04	6:10	6:16
Shreveport, LA	5:21	5:26	5:33	5:39	5:46	5:52
Tulsa, OK	5:20	5:26	5:33	5:40	5:47	5:55

# On the Record »

BY PAT HUMPHREY » COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR, SOUTHWESTERN UNION



## A Little Taste of Heaven

**IT WASN'T UNTIL I ATTENDED MY VERY FIRST GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION**—held in 1990 in Indianapolis—that I got a true sense of the rich diversity that comprises our church membership. I still remember my feelings of awe and amazement as I observed that vast sea of people of every hue, culture, and language—many dressed in their native costumes—assembling together as one body for the Sabbath worship services. I had attended camp meetings before, but never one of this magnitude. It was like a little taste of heaven! Without a doubt this experience helped me to more fully comprehend what it means to be part of a large worldwide church organization.

At that 1990 GC Session neither my husband nor I were delegates, and our family spent only the weekend there. As a relatively new member of the Adventist Church at the time, I didn't understand much about the purpose of the GC Session, had no idea what went on during the business meetings, nor did I have a clue as to what the "hot" issues of the day might have been. But I can tell you that by attending that session, even for only a short time, my faith was affirmed, my love for God was rekindled, and I felt thrilled to

be part of such a massive body of believers worldwide who, while different in many ways, are united by the common belief that Jesus is coming again soon.

As this year's GC Session approaches—25 years after attending my first one—it will be exciting to observe how much more diverse our church has become since 1990. At this Session I'm sure it will also be more evident that, as the years have passed and our church has grown, the issues and challenges that we face as a church have become more complex. But there's one

thing I'm confident of, as evidenced by this Session's theme—Arise! Shine! Jesus is Coming!—our church is still firmly united by the belief that Jesus is coming soon. I'm also confident that God will bring His church safely through whatever challenges we face.

If you've never attended a GC Session before, I hope that you'll have a chance to experience what it's like to be part of this massive convocation of Seventh-day Adventist believers from around the world. As you hear reports of the marvelous things God is doing through His people, enjoy beautiful and uplifting music, and listen to powerful messages from God's Word, I'm sure that you will be inspired to do even more to finish the work to hasten Jesus' coming. Arise! Shine! Jesus is Coming!

*Pat Humphrey*

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# I am Succeeding



“Southwestern wasn’t my first choice of college. But after finishing my undergraduate program there, I know it was God’s first choice for me. I wasn’t a believer before attending Southwestern. I studied and was baptized while there.

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Southwestern is where I found my passion, where I learned to think and to work like a professional, made life-time connections, and especially learned how to balance all the important matters of life. I’m confident in saying that Southwestern has prepared me well to continue my journey.”

*Ngoc-Tam Nguyen, BBA 2012, Masters 2013*

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in Pechero Hall room 128

**Sandia View Academy**  
Tuesday, February 3, 6:00 pm  
Elementary School Gymnasium

**Valley Grande Adventist Academy**  
Tuesday, February 3, 6:00 pm

**South Texas Christian Academy**  
Wednesday, February 4, 6:00 pm

**Jefferson Adventist Academy**  
Thursday, February 5, 6:30 pm

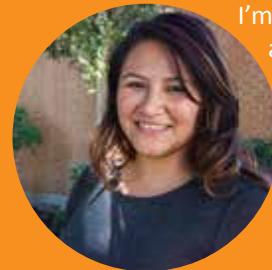
**North Dallas Adventist Academy**  
Wednesday, February 11, 6:30 pm

**The Oaks Adventist Christian School**  
Wednesday, February 18, 7:00 pm

**Adventist Christian Academy of Texas**  
Thursday, February 19, 6:00 pm

**Tulsa Adventist Academy**  
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