

SOUTHWESTERN UNION

Record

FEBRUARY 2016

*Organized
to Serve*



THE STRUCTURE OF THE ADVENTIST CHURCH



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On the Cover

The most important part of church structure is not an office, church, conference, union, or division. It's the individual members. Simply put, without the members, there would be no church. The *members* are God's church. The church is an organized group of members who come together to serve God. It's through members that the church is able to take the gospel to the world.

Point of View»

BY BUFORD GRIFFITH, JR. » SOUTHWESTERN UNION CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY



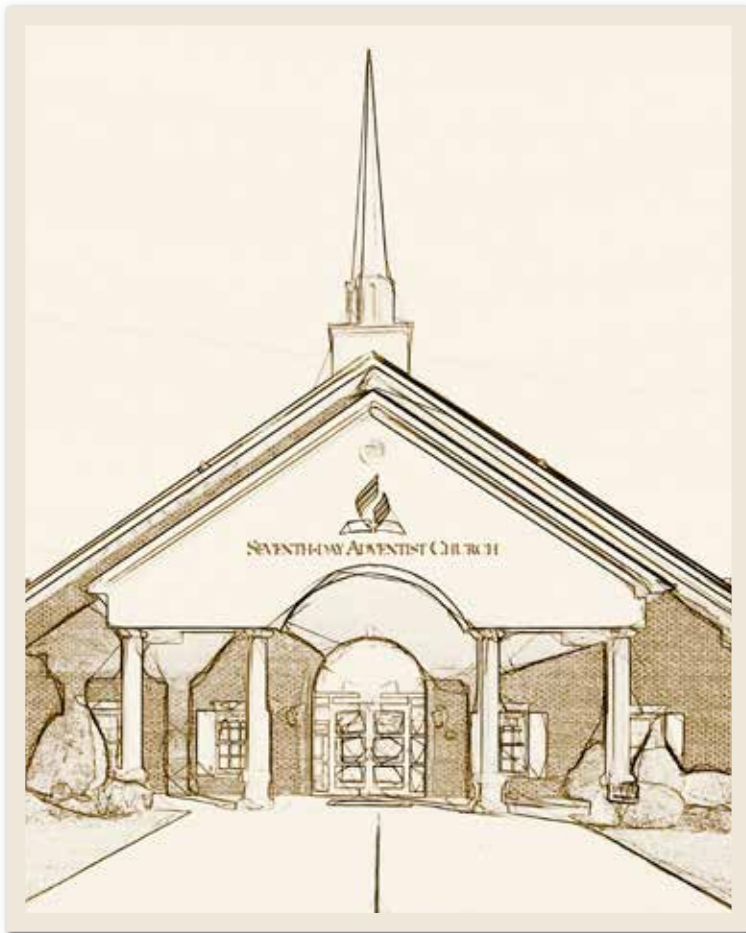
Organized to Serve

Recently, I heard a sermon entitled, “Here to Serve, but Not to Stay.” The message focus was on the fact that Christ established His Church for service—to minister to the needs of mankind physically, emotionally, and spiritually. His command to “Go ye therefore... to all the world... (Matthew 28:19)” is to take the gospel to every corner of the world. The gospel is all encompassing, for it involves ministering to the whole person, whoever and wherever they are. It is a large task. Individually, we are to serve, with the gospel, any who come into our circle of influence. Corporately, as a church, the mandate is to go to the entire world. It takes a very well-ordered, organizational structure, involving a great number of people to accomplish the task set before us as a people. In cooperation with the Holy Spirit, nothing is impossible with God. We are called to be in the world, with the gospel truth in lifestyle and testimony, but not of the world.

It is through the organizational structure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, through the power of the Holy Spirit, that the church is fulfilling the spiritual mandate of Christ to take the gospel to the world. It is through the genius of God that He is gathering His people through the local churches, connected to conferences, which are connected to unions, which are connected to divisions, which are connected to the General Conference, to take this gospel to all the world. You can go anywhere in the world and the organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the same—connecting people through a common bond of their belief in Jesus Christ and His soon return. Think about it, Seventh-day Adventists are a globally connected people who are to connect with the world populace in preparation for the soon return of Jesus Christ.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is a world-

wide movement of nearly 19 million believers spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ gathered in 13 divisions, to form over 122 unions, made up of over 600 conferences, which comprises over 140,000 congregations in over 208 countries and 924 languages.



“The church is God’s appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world. The church is the repository of the riches of the grace of Christ; and through the church will eventually be made manifest, even to the ‘principalities and powers in heavenly places,’ the final and full display of the love of God.” (Ephesians 3:10, *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 9).

Count it all joy to be connected with a church [people] called to serve on this earth but destined not to stay here.



To Your Health

BY PAT HUMPHREY » SOUTHWESTERN UNION HEALTH MINISTRIES DIRECTOR

The Story Behind Adventist Health Ministries

As early as 1827 Joseph Bates began working for the cause of temperance. But the first united move to start a temperance program came in 1863 with the organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In the April 1877 issue of the *Health Reformer*, Ellen White penned the words, “True temperance teaches us to abstain entirely from that which is injurious, and to use judiciously only healthful and nutritious articles of food.”

Shortly after that the church organized the American Health and Temperance Association, which later became the International Health and Temperance Association. In 1893 the SDA Medical Missionary and Benevolent Association was organized for over-all guidance of the denomination’s medical work, including temperance, with J. H. Kellogg, M.D., as president.

Later, an attempt of the General Conference to bring this more or less independent body into closer denominational control resulted in the withdrawal of the association from its denominational connection. In 1905 the Medical Missionary Department (or council) of the General Conference was organized. The temperance work, however, continued to be conducted primarily by the American Temperance Society, and later by a separate Temperance Department.

The Medical Missionary Department name was changed to the Medical Department at the General Conference and, in the late sixties, the name was changed to Health Department. In 1980, when departments were being downsized, it was voted to combine the departments of Health and Temperance. Then in 1996 the North American Division recommended that the name Health and Temperance Department be changed to Adventist Health Ministries Department.

HEALTH MINISTRIES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Although its authoritative agencies and name changed through the years, it is clear that Health Ministries has been a vital part of the Adventist church from its very beginning and still remains at the forefront of who we are as a denomination

today. The local church Health Ministries leader is elected by the church nominating committee, as is any other church officer.

The Health Ministries leader is responsible to the church board (and is probably a member of that board). The Health Ministries leader works with the church pastor, the Health Ministries committee—if there is one—and the director of Health Ministries at the conference.

The conference Health Ministries director is responsible to the conference president, and works with the directors of Health Ministries at the union and division levels.—Adapted from www.nadhealthministries.org.

The Southwestern Union is comprised of five conferences, each of which has a Health Ministries director, several of whom were recently appointed to their positions. We’d like to take this opportunity to introduce you to your Health Ministries directors. For resources and information, these are the “go-to” people for each conference:



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Remaining Faithful Despite the Consequences

ON JULY 10, 2014, I SIGNED A SIX-YEAR AGREEMENT WITH THE U.S. ARMY. I had been facing some financial problems and had decided to join the Army so that I would be able to pay tuition for college. Before signing the agreement, I discussed having the Sabbath off at basic training. When I was younger, I had neglected the Sabbath, an action which took me far away from God. Now, I was not willing to forget the Sabbath.

I prayed about joining the Army, and the Lord answered, allowing me to sign. In September of 2014 I flew to Fort Leonard Wood, Mississippi, where basic training was to take place. I did well during basic training, but I became very concerned, because I was not given the opportunity to go to church on Saturday during the first two weeks. I prayed that they would allow me to attend church on the third Saturday. During the third week, I went to the office of my drill sergeant to ask if I could go to church on Saturday. The conversation ended when the drill sergeant said that he did not care about my request and that I would not have the opportunity to attend church on Saturday. If I wanted to go to church, he told me I would have to go on Sunday.

I was very discouraged. A few years prior to this, I had spent about a year and a half away from church, with no faith in God, simply because I had decided to make my studies my priority in life, not God.

Basic training seemed to go by very quickly, and before I knew it, three weeks had gone by. During my sixth week there, I made a final decision about my situation. I decided that I had to quit and be responsible for the consequences. According to my drill sergeant, the consequences would be that I would have to pay \$50,000 to the U.S. government, I would lose my Pell Grant (financial aid) and my civil record would be messed up.

This was a very difficult decision for me. I prayed before going to talk with the drill sergeant. I said to God that whatever deci-

sion I had to make, I would do it for His sake. But I did not realize how hard it would be. As the drill sergeant finished explaining everything to me, I told him I was sure about my decision and that I would take responsibility for everything, because I knew

God had a plan for my life. The sergeant treated me like I was nothing, and laughed when I talked about God. I had no idea what to expect after that, but in my prayers I just asked God to guide me by His will.

I was sent to RHU (Return and Holding Unit), which was kind of like a jail, but with some privileges, such as having your phone once a week or allowing you to purchase books online. I spent five weeks in RHU. While it was stressful and I was discouraged, the time also made me realize how important God and His church are in my life. It helped me to accept His will in my life and His plans for me. At the end, my lawyer came to

me and explained to me that since I had not finished basic training, I was not considered a member of the military, and that none of those consequences applied to me. I would be able to continue with my studies and my normal life with a clean civil record. I would not have had the strength to make the decision to keep the Sabbath in spite of the consequences if I had not prayed to God for guidance and read this verse one day while doing my devotional, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness" (Matthew 25:23, NIV).



Jorge Morales is a junior theology student at Southwestern Adventist University in Keene, Texas.

THE CHURCH THAT FILLS ITS BAPTISTERY EVERY MONTH

A congregation near Dallas highlights the key role that local churches play in the Adventist world church.

By Andrew McChesney

Three months came and went with no baptisms at the Richardson Seventh-day Adventist Church near Dallas, Texas.

The absence might have gone unnoticed at any other church. But it was agonizingly obvious to the Richardson congregation, which fills its baptistery with water on the fourth Sabbath of every month whether or not someone will get baptized.

Puzzled church members began to ask what was going on.

“We came to the conclusion that we had added good things to the church but had forgotten to focus on the essential things: sowing, growing, and reaping,” said the church’s senior pastor, Dan Serns. “When we did that, we started baptizing again.”

Why would a church fill its baptistery if no one was ready for baptism?

The answer underscores the crucial role that Richardson and other local Adventist churches play in fulfilling the Adventist world church’s ambitious goal to encourage each of its 18.5 million members to actively share Jesus as part of a new initiative called



Total Member Involvement.

Ted N.C. Wilson, president of the General Conference, the administrative body of the Adventist world church, identified Total Member Involvement as a church priority after his re-election at the 2015 General Conference Session in San Antonio, Texas.

The General Conference, based in Silver Spring, Maryland, is supporting the effort with programs such as the 10 Days of Prayer, held in January, while the church’s 13 world divisions, including the North American Division, have additional programs. Lower down in the church’s structure, unions and conferences also have been charged with find-



ing ways to motivate members to get involved.

But the main driver of Total Member Involvement is at the grassroots level: the local congregation, church leaders said.

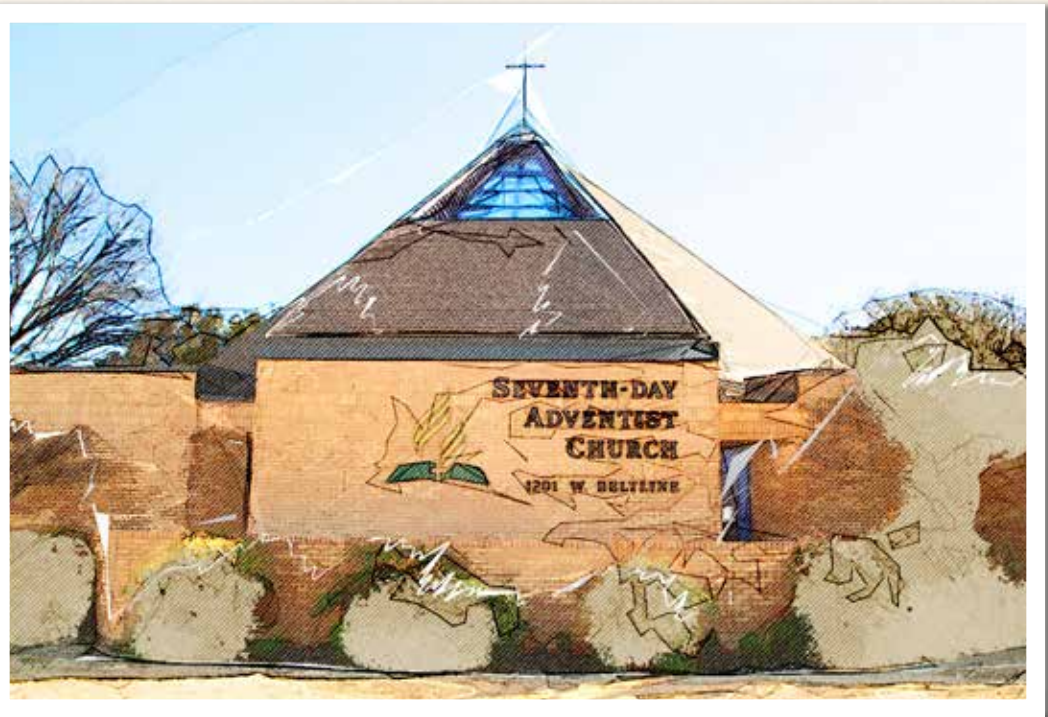
“Total Member Involvement finds its full force at the local church,” Wilson said in an interview. “Regardless of whether you are a lay member, pastor, or church administrator, we are all local church members and need to become completely involved with God’s advent message to the world. I challenge every church member to take seriously their membership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church and do something for Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit.”

The idea of getting every believer involved in soul-winning is not new—the concept is part of God’s plan of redemption—and some local Adventist churches, such as Richardson, have been active for years. But the General Conference hopes that the renewed emphasis will encourage all levels of the church, and especially local churches and their members, to find ways to participate.

to be baptized if they are ready.”

At least one person has been baptized every month over 72 months, with the exception of eight times, he said.

Today the church baptizes 40 to 60 people a year, pushing its



An Overflowing Church

The Richardson church took the unusual step to start regularly filling its baptistry shortly after Serns became pastor six years ago. Serns hoped to continually keep congregants focused on what he described as the three main callings of Seventh-day Adventists: the mission (to share the Adventist message to all the world in this generation), the message (the Three Angels’ Messages of Jesus’ soon coming in Revelation 14), and the motives (to fulfill the Great Commission to “make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” in Matthew 28).

“It’s a great reminder to us,” Serns said of the filled baptistry. “Also, the more that people see baptisms, the more they are willing

capacity to the limit. Two services are held every Sabbath to accommodate the 625 to 725 people who show up for the 375 seats.

Richardson recently planted its ninth church, a remarkable achievement for a church that only planted its first church in 2000, 35 years after opening. The first church plant came under Richardson’s previous pastor, Tom L. Evans, who is credited with breathing new life into the congregation. Evans now helps plant churches across North America as the associate director for the North American Division Evangelism Institute.

“Pastor Tom Evans did a lot to get his members involved in planting new churches. Pastor Serns has taken the church to a new level of member involvement,” said Larry R. Moore, president of the Southwestern Union Conference, which oversees about 660

churches and companies in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. "I would like to see more churches get their members involved in work and witnessing."

Getting Involved From the Start

The Richardson church believes that the key to getting members involved is to put them on the path before they are baptized.

Everybody who becomes a member is required to attend a two-hour new member orientation the night before baptism. The meeting, Serns said, focuses on three things: up-reach (a review of the Adventist Church's 28 fundamental beliefs and how to share them), in-reach (how to plug into the church's small groups and ministries), and out-reach (each new member is invited to make a prayer list of seven people who they want to see baptized in the next six months).

On baptism day, each new member, surrounded by family and friends, shares a brief testimony about how God brought him or her to this place in life.

"We want to hear their stories," Serns said. "I am convinced that we've got to hear our stories more. It will bond the congregation."

Anyone who cannot attend the new member orientation or share a testimony is rescheduled for baptism.

"We want people to come in strong because in the last days we need everyone to be strong," Serns said.

Richardson sees small groups as a way to keep members strong. Any church member can start a group. All that is needed are two other members and the support of a church board "mentor," as the church refers to its board members. The church has Sabbath School groups, Bible study groups, mission groups, and even a basketball group.

Buford Griffith, Jr., executive secretary of the Southwestern Union Conference, said he was especially impressed with the Sabbath School groups, which he has discussed with Serns.

"Pastor Serns has developed a very involved Sabbath School program that has resulted in a

large number of small groups," Griffith said. "It is a perfect way of discipling new members while keeping those already in the church actively and enthusiastically sharing their faith."

Anyone Can Share Jesus

But Richardson does not limit Total Member Involvement to members. It has several positions that every person who attends the church is invited to hold, including GLOW missionary.

"There is nothing like GLOW tracts to start a conversation," said Serns, who also trains fellow pastors as evangelism coordina-



4 Keys to Total Member Involvement

By **Tom L. Evans**, associate director for the North American Division Evangelism Institute, a church-planting consultant, and former pastor of the Richardson (Texas) Adventist Church

- 1.** Let church members know that their activities are making a difference. I believe one of the most important roles of a pastor and elder is to be an encourager and affirmer. On Sabbath morning, a brief prayer with an active church member and thanking him or her for serving God will go a long way! On Monday morning, send out a specific and thoughtful word of appreciation with a card or by e-mail to several people.
- 2.** Use planned testimonies regularly. Nothing causes greater energy and excitement for ministry than seeing lives changed for eternity. New converts should be interviewed so their stories can motivate the church to further evangelistic engagement. Members who brought new converts to the church can be the ones to introduce them to the congregation and interview them. Even elders can conduct baptisms.
- 3.** Give shovel-ready jobs to new members. We should not sideline new members until they are "proven." They can become engaged in ministry right away, even before they are baptized. As soon as someone shows interest in our church, we should be exploring ways that they would like to be involved in ministry. Partnering with an experienced and loving member to do ministry together is dynamite!
- 4.** Empower youth with leadership opportunities. At Richardson, our young people ran their own church service in the fellowship hall once a month. They planned everything with the support of an adult sponsor. Imagine a young person inviting a friend from high school to come hear him or her preach or sing. Many young people were baptized as a result of this simple but powerful ministry. Young people also can lead in outreach ministries and in-home Bible studies. Youth who engaged in these activities while I pastored Richardson were on fire for Jesus and many hold leadership roles in the church today.



tor for the Texas Conference, one of five conferences within the Southwestern Union Conference. “Through GLOW tracts I have had more opportunities to pray for people.”

One church member, Janita, got a surprise when she decided to give the religious tracts to every worker at a local mall’s food court during a slow period, Serns said.

A female worker glanced at the tract, saw it was about God, and burst into tears.

“I need to speak to you,” she said.

The woman explained that she had prayed desperately the night before about her drug addiction and her fear that social services would take away her children.

Today, the woman is a member of the Richardson church and gives away GLOW tracts.

Serns encourages people to share GLOW even if they are scared, saying they can engage in “chicken witnessing” such as leaving tracts in empty public restrooms or even in boots at a shoe store. One GLOW missionary, saddened to see a store aggressively selling alcohol during the holidays, ended up pairing tracts with dozens of bottles of wine.

Richardson keeps stacks of 100-pack bundles of GLOW tracts in the church lobby, inviting people to take them in exchange for their name, phone number, and the title of the tract. The church distributed 75,000 tracts last year.

Another position that the Richardson church offers members and non-members alike is a baptism coach.

A year ago, a 24-year-old man named Cory approached Serns after the sermon to announce that he wanted to get baptized.

“In the old days, I would have said, ‘Let’s get together and figure out when we can get together,’ and then the person would lose interest,” Serns said. “Now I tell everyone that they can be a baptism coach. We have people who are baptized with the person they were coaching.”

When Cory voiced his desire for baptism, Serns immediately asked, “Who can be your baptism coach?”

Cory pointed at a small, shy woman in the lobby and said, “My grandma, Clara.”

The grandmother was overjoyed at the news that Cory wanted to be baptized but asked what she needed to do as his baptism coach.

“It’s very simple,” Serns told her and led her and Cory to a rack of baptism study guides. The Richardson church uses an Amazing Facts series with 14 lessons.

Serns gave the first two lessons to Cory and told him to complete two lessons a week. He advised the grandmother to stay ahead of

Cory and asked her if she knew anyone on the church board who could help if she had questions. The two settled on a name.

Serns then gave two more lessons to Cory and asked him to look for someone who might want to study with him.

Finally, Serns told Cory that he should plan on getting baptized on the fourth Sabbath a couple months later.

Sure enough, Cory was baptized as planned. When he shared his short testimony with the church, his grandmother and her elderly friends stood proudly around him. This, Serns said, is total member involvement.

“They stick with him like glue to make sure he stays in church,” he said.

“We Are All at the Local Level”

By **Ted N.C. Wilson**, president of the Adventist world church

All of us are members at the local church level. It is there where neighbors, family members, and communities are reached. It is there where our faith in God’s power can be enlarged as we see His hand in the progress of soul winning.

Total Member Involvement is a personal activity. We need to be involved with many aspects of our local church because attending church is not a spectator sport. When we experience Christ’s all-encompassing righteousness, love, and grace, we understand our response of love in complete service and involvement as Christ’s disciples. This involves sharing this personal experience outside the four walls of the local church by reaching into the community.

There are literally scores of things that every member can choose to do in becoming involved with local church activities and especially outreach. The personal ministries director, local church evangelism coordinator, head elder, and church pastor can be good sources of initial projects aimed at Total Member Involvement.

I believe with all my heart that Jesus is coming again soon, and He is wanting to work through each of us to lift up Christ, His Word, His righteousness, His sanctuary service, His saving power in the great controversy, His three angels’ messages, His health message, His last-day mission to the world, and His soon second coming.

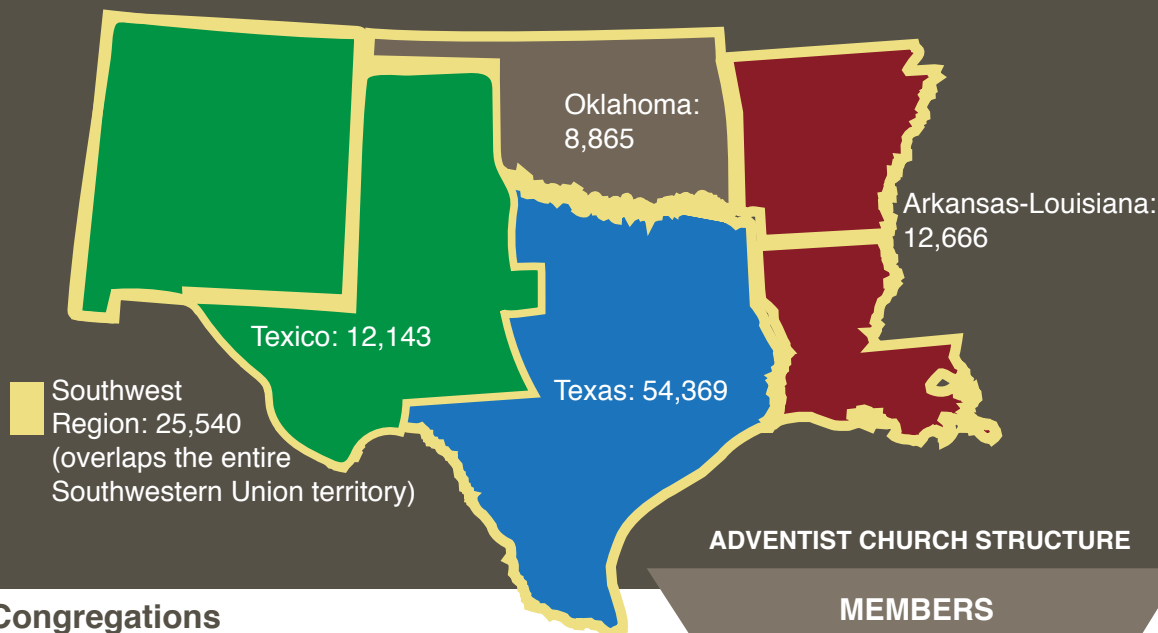
The Lord is calling His remnant people to realize the time in which we are living and become totally involved in His soul-winning work at the local church level and beyond. Your life will never be the same again!

GC President Ted Wilson shares more about Total Member Involvement via video, which can be accessed at the following link: <https://copy.com/krIDHJzSVxAlxIc>

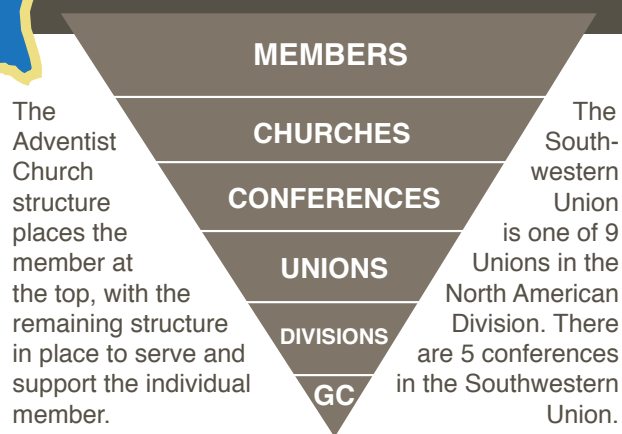
BY THE NUMBERS

A SNAPSHOT OF THE ADVENTIST CHURCH IN THE SOUTHWESTERN UNION

Southwestern Union
Total Membership: 113,583



ADVENTIST CHURCH STRUCTURE



667 Congregations



65 K-8/K-12 Schools



1 University



4 Hospitals

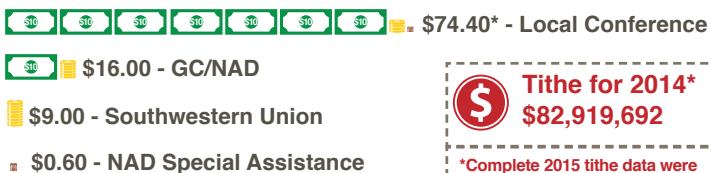


Information taken from www.AdventistYearbook.org



Where Tithes Go

For every \$100 given in tithe:



Tithe for 2014*
\$82,919,692

*Complete 2015 tithe data were not available at the time of publication. Current data indicate a 1.76 percent increase over 2014.

TELLING OUR STORY:

The Development of the Regional Conferences

By James L. Lewis, director, Office for Regional Conference Ministry

In 2015, regional conferences celebrated 70 years of existence. The reason for their existence has been to fulfill the mission of proclaiming the Adventist message to any and all people groups without regard to race, culture, or national origin, with a primary focus on Black Americans. It is for this mission that passions have been cultivated, time and money have been allocated, and prayers on behalf of seeing people make a decision about their personal salvation have been sent to the throne room of God at each and every hour of every day.

Black Adventists can trace their roots to the Millerite movement, with individuals such as Charles Bowls and William Foy, who not only accepted the preaching of William Miller but were instrumental in spreading the Millerite message in the 1830s and 1840s. According to Helvius Thompson in *Telling the Story, The History of Regional Conferences*, prominent Black individuals such as Sojourner Truth (who was baptized by Uriah Smith in Battle Creek, Michigan) and Frederick Douglass joined the remnant church. However, the first official formation of a congregation of Black members occurred in Edgefield Junction, near Nashville, Tennessee. In 1886, Elbert Lane organized a Black congregation of 10 members, due to tension that was created by former slaves worshiping with White members. Ellen White proved to be crucial in the proclamation of the gospel in the South. Under her counsel and guidance, her son, Edson White,

outfitted a boat in Allegan, Michigan, which he later named the Morning Star. He sailed down the Mississippi River, finally docking in Vicksburg, Mississippi, where they established a school, according to Charles Bradford's *The Formation of Regional Conferences: A Case Study*. Edson White would be responsible for laying the foundation for the education and training of young Black men and women as a visionary school was opened in Huntsville, Alabama. It was named the Oakwood Industrial School and in the 1940s it became Oakwood College. Later, in 2008, the Oakwood College name was changed to its current name, Oakwood University.

Charles Kinney (1855-1951), often referred to as the Father of Black Adventism (*Jubilee, The Birth of Black Conferences, 50th Anniversary on the History of Regional Conferences, 1945-1995*), became the first Black Adventist to be ordained to the gospel ministry. Baptized by John Loughborough in 1878, Kinney was ordained as a Seventh-day Adventist minister in 1889. Responding to the furor of White church members who refused to sit in the auditorium with former slaves,

Kinney suggested that Black conferences would be a solution to working effectively with Black people in proclaiming the Three Angels' Message, and to reduce the racial tension prominent at that time (*Ibid.*).

The work among Black Americans grew rapidly in the late 1800s and the early 1900s. It became a priority to establish these



new believers organizationally so they, in turn, could tell others in their communities the good news of the Three Angels' Messages. By 1909, the Black membership in the Adventist Church had reached 2,000 members (Ibid.). In response to the growth of Black work in the United States, the General Conference created the Negro Department. Strangely, the first two elected secretaries for the Negro Department were White. In 1918, W. H. Green was elected to head the Negro Department. Green served in this position for 10 years until his death in 1928. During this time, the Black membership of the Adventist church increased from 2,000 to 4,000 (Ibid.). By 1929, some of the leading Black American pastors felt that "colored conferences" were of a necessity if the gospel was going to be preached in a systematic way to people of color. They presented a formal request for the development of "colored conferences" in 1930, but their request was not only denied but they were told to "go home and not mention the matter again until Jesus comes" (Charles Bradford, pp. 4, 5).

A tragic incident occurred in 1943, when Lucy Byard, a longtime Adventist member, became ill while visiting in the Washington, D. C., area, and was taken to the Washington Sanitarium and placed in a hospital room. When it was discovered that Byard, a light-complexioned Black woman, was not White, service was refused and while she waited for transportation to be taken to Freedman's Hospital of Northwest Washington, D. C., she died of pneumonia. It was believed that her condition worsened due to the lack of treatment at the Washington Sanitarium. According to Thompson, armed with this indignity, Black ministry and laity united to demand not just Black conferences but also the full integration of the church's institutions and hospitals.

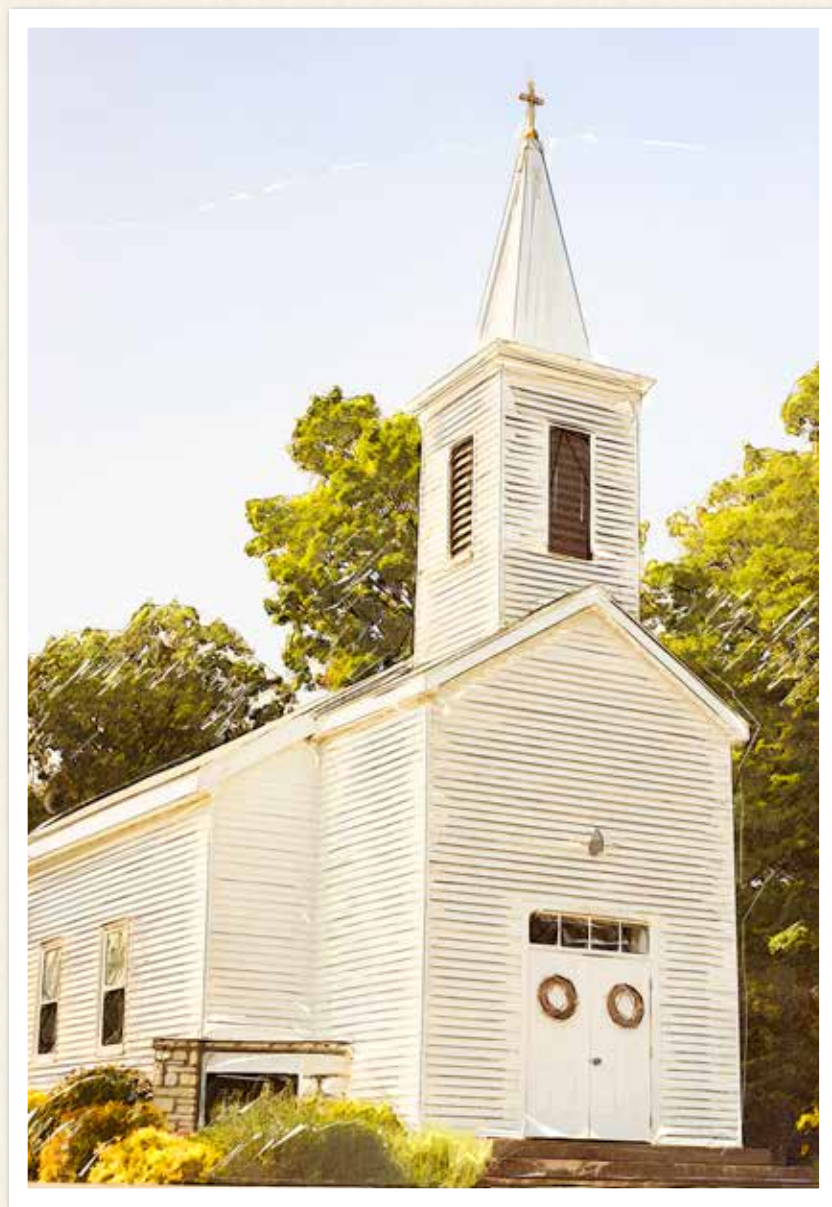
These concerns were introduced on April 8, 1944 during a Spring Council session in Chicago, Illinois. During this meeting, the General Conference approved the following recommendation: "That colored conferences be established by Union conference committees where the colored constituency was deemed large enough. These conferences would be administered by colored people and would sustain the same relation to their respective Unions as White conferences" (*Telling the Story, The History of Regional Conferences*, p. 6).

Following this meeting, the first regional conference, so named because the geographical boundaries extended throughout multiple states in their respective union territories, was organized on July 17, 1944, as the Lake Union Conference voted into existence the Lake Region Conference with J. Gershom Dasent as president and Fred N. Crowe as the first secretary/treasurer.

A few months later, in October of 1944, representatives of the Black constituency for the Atlantic Union organized the Northeastern Conference, with L. H. Bland as the first president and Lionel Irons as the secretary/treasurer. In early 1945, the Allegheny Conference was voted into existence within the Columbia Union, and its first administrative team was J. H. Wagner, president and J. L. Moran, secretary/treasurer. The following statistics, provided by the Office for Regional Conference Ministry in Huntsville, Alabama, tells the story of the first year of operation for the Lake Region, Northeastern, and Allegheny conferences. The three conferences reported a total of 79 churches, 9,134 church members, total tithe receipts of \$520,519.61, and 780 baptisms in 1945.

Telling Our Story: 1945-1965

Under the leadership of its pioneers, regional conferences saw a dramatic increase in evangelism, innovative development of church ministries, significant increase in tithe income, and leadership development as both laity and pastors were nurtured in the urgency of spreading



Notable Milestones in Regional Conference History (1985-2015)

- The Breath of Life Television Ministry - Walter Arties, Founder (1974)
- The Black Administrators Caucus - Charles Edward Dudley (1982)
- The United Youth Congresses (1985)
- The Office For Region Conference Ministry, in Huntsville, Alabama (1996)
- The SDA Regional Conference Retirement Plan - Joseph W. McCoy (1999)
- The Bradford Cleveland Brooks Leadership Center - Harold Lee, first director (2007)

the Three Angels' Message. Regional conferences contributed to worldwide missions, as Black men and women went to the mission field throughout the world to proclaim the gospel.

The South Atlantic and South Central conferences were organized in 1945 in the Southern Union, with H. D. Singleton and H. R. Murphy chosen to be the first presidents, respectively. In 1947, the Southwest Region Conference came into existence with W. W. Fordham elected to serve as its first president. The last Regional Conference organized in the 1940s was the Central States Mission, where T. M. Rowe was chosen to be its first president. This made seven conferences organized within three years after the vote to establish regional conferences.

By the end of the first 20 years of operation, regional conferences had grown from 79 to 369 churches, from 9,134 church members to 48,673 church members, and just over a half million in tithe income to \$4,326,251.12. Baptisms totaled 5,071 in 1965. This number represented an annual growth of more than 20 percent in the regional conferences.

During the infancy of the Allegheny Conference, John Wagner envisioned a school that would be in a safe, caring environment, where young people in grades 9-12 could attend in the North without the racial tensions associated with the South. On September 9, 1946, Pine Forge Institute opened its doors to 90 students.

Telling Our Story: 1965-1985

In 1967, the Allegheny Conference divided into two separate conferences: Allegheny East Conference with W. Thompson serving as its first president, and Allegheny West Conference with Walter Starks serving as its first president. Fourteen years later, in 1981, the South Atlantic Conference gave birth to a new conference with the Florida area and portions of Georgia becoming the Southeastern Conference. James Edgecombe served as the first president.

By the 40-year mark (1985), regional conferences had increased to 663 churches with 139,847 members who gave \$49,498,919.00 in tithe. Spurred by local pastors and prominent national evangelists like Earl Cleveland and Charles Brooks, baptisms into the remnant church reached 8,412. In 1985, four regional conferences (Allegheny East, Lake Region, South Atlantic, and South Central) had memberships that exceeded 15,000 members. In the late 1960's inner-city ministries became an integral part of

the evangelistic strategy for regional conferences. Under the leadership of Ricardo McKinney and Earle Moore, citizen assistance mobile units were positioned throughout the country. Moore and the South Central Conference were positioned strategically near the reflection pool to serve the thousands of people who participated during the March on Washington's "Resurrection City" in May-June, 1968. It was also during this 20-year time period that minis-

ters of regional conferences gathered in Huntsville, Alabama, for the first Evangelism Council (1979) under the collective visionary tutelage of Cleveland, Dudley, and Mervyn Warren, the latter serving at the time as the chair of the Theology and Religion Department at Oakwood College. The purpose of the Council was to provide the latest in evangelistic training for pastors, but even more importantly, to encourage all participants to recommit themselves to presenting the gospel in their communities. This council has grown from its humble beginnings to draw approximately 1,500 pastors annually and has been renamed Pastors' Evangelism and Leadership Conference (PELC).

Telling Our Story: 1985-2015

Today the nine regional conferences, along with the regional ministry of the Bermuda Conference, and the Pacific and North Pacific Unions, still hold to the original mission, the proclamation of the gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, with a primary focus on Black Americans.

As of 2014, regional conferences now have a membership of approximately 300,000 members who worship in over 1,200 churches. Today's regional membership is quite diverse, consisting of not only African-Americans but Asian-Americans, Haitian-Americans, Caribbean-Americans, Africans from the West, South, East, and Central portions of Africa, and many other cultural groups. These 300,000-plus members gave nearly \$932,000,000 in tithe in the four-year period from 2010 to 2014. Baptisms for 2014 totaled nearly 10,000.

Conclusion

Despite the tremendous gains regional conferences have experienced, the mission has yet not been fulfilled. The scope of their mission has been expanded to include the intentional proclamation of the gospel in the urban areas of the United States, where most of their members reside. By preaching a gospel of hope, regional conferences reach out to a segment of society who need to know that others care because God cares. Regional conferences have historically, and will continue to proclaim the transforming power of a relationship with Jesus Christ to all who will hear and accept the Three Angels' Messages.

LEST WE FORGET

By George R. Knight

Organized at Last

And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting, they committed them to the Lord in whom they believed. Acts 14:23, RSV.

Although the concept of church structure that provides order across congregations is far from absent in the New Testament, it was not a favorite topic of many Adventists.

But the time had come. In April 1861 the Sabbatarians established a committee that recommended the formation of district or state conferences to oversee church activities in their respective regions.

Reactions were forceful, especially in the Eastern states. James White reported in August that “the brethren in Pennsylvania voted down organization, and the cause in Ohio has been dreadfully shaken. He summed up the situation by writing that “on our eastern tour thus far we seem to be wading through the influence of a stupid uncertainty upon the subject of organization...We are in many places but little better than broken fragments, still scattering and growing weaker.”

Ellen White shared his opinion, declaring that same month that she was “shown that some have feared that our churches would become Babylon if they should organize; but those in central New York have been perfect Babylon, confusion. And now unless the churches are so organized that they can carry out and enforce order, they have nothing to hope for in the future; they must scatter into fragments.” She deplored the lack of “moral courage” and the abundance of “cowardly silence” on the part of those ministers who believed in organization but had remained silent. Her words left no doubt that the time had come to “stand together” on the issue (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol., p. 270-272).

The moment for action had arrived.

In the general meeting of the believers in October 1861 the first item of business was “the proper manner of organizing churches.” And one of the central contributions of the session was the “recommendation” to the churches in the state of Michigan that they unite under the name of the Michigan Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. James White was elated. To him it was a “sign of better days.”

The next year saw several more local conferences established. The devil likes nothing better than to sow confusion. And he can

do that more successfully in an unorganized group. Unfortunately, the value of organization is not fully appreciated until it is gone.

Thank You, Lord, for what You have given us.

The General Conference

There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. Ephesians 4:4.

While the formation of state conferences was helpful, they did not solve all of the administrative problems. Who, for example, would coordinate their work or assign ministers to different areas? J. H. Waggoner raised that issue to consciousness in a forceful manner in June 1862. “I do not believe,” he wrote, “that we shall ever fully realize the benefits of organization till this matter” of a general or umbrella conference “is acted upon.” Several readers of the *Review* responded to Waggoner’s proposition with hearty affirmations during the summer of 1862.

Without a general overarching structure to represent the whole body of believers, J. N. Andrews argued, “we shall be thrown into confusion every time that concert of action is especially necessary. The work of organization, wherever it has been entered into in a proper manner, has borne good fruit; and hence I desire to see it completed in such a manner as shall secure its full benefits, not only to each church, but to the whole body of brethren and to the cause of truth.”

B. F. Snook noted that already sectional feelings had developed in the young denomination and that the only way to bring unity into the movement was through a “general conference.”

James White, as you might guess, enthused with such talk. As he saw it, the proposed General Conference must be “the great regulator” of the state conferences if they were to secure “united, systematic action in the entire body of believers.” The duty of the General Conference would be “to mark out the general course to be pursued by the State Conferences.” Thus, “if General Conference is not higher in authority than State Conferences, we see but little use for it. Its function would be to coordinate the work of the church across its entire geographic range.

The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists organized at a meeting called for that purpose in Battle Creek from May 20 to May 23, 1863. That momentous step opened the way for a

unified Church to eventually take the message of Revelation 14 to the far corners of the earth. The extent of the Adventist mission program could never have been accomplished by a collection of disjointed churches or conferences each with its own goals.

Thank you, Lord, for the unity and strength that comes from organization.

Retrospect On Organization—1

We are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love. Ephesians 4:15, 16, RSV.

The organization of the General Conference marked the end of an era in Adventist history. Sabbatarian Adventism had moved from a virtually unstructured beginning to a mildly hierarchical form.

Both of the Whites, as the “unofficial” leaders of the church, were quite pleased with the new organization. They had experienced enough of the chaotic condition of Adventism during the late 1840s and the 1850s that they would never cease to uphold *properly exercised* church authority.

Ellen White penned one of her strongest statements on the value of organization in 1892. Looking back, she reminisced: “We had a hard struggle in establishing organization. Notwithstanding that the Lord gave testimony after testimony upon this point, the opposition was strong, and it had to be met again and again. But we knew that the Lord God of Israel was leading us, and guiding by his providence. We engaged in the work of organization, and marked prosperity attend[ed] this advance movement. . .”

“The system of organization had proved a grand success...*Let none entertain the thought that we can dispense with organization. It has cost us much study, and many prayers for wisdom that we know that God has answered, to erect this structure. It has been built up by his direction...Let none of our brethren be so deceived as to attempt to tear it down, for you will thus bring in a condition of things that you do not dream of. In the name of the Lord, I declare to you that it is to stand, strengthened, established, and settled...Let everyone be exceedingly careful not to unsettle minds in regard to those things that God has ordained for our prosperity and success in advancing his cause*” (Letter 32a 1892; italics supplied).

God believes in organization. So do I. Taking the everlasting gospel and the other teachings of Revelation 14 to all the world did not happen by accident. Adventists developed organization to forward the denomination’s mission. And it has done so. The success of the decision to establish the General Conference as a coordinating body back in May 1863 would absolutely astound those who voted it in.

Retrospect On Organization—2

Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Acts 20:28, NIV.

The impelling force behind the drive for organization was an integrated complex of interrelated ideas. One of the most important was a growing biblically based understanding of the church’s mission. By 1861 some denominational leaders had concluded that they had a world to win, and by 1863 the newly formed General Conference executive committee began to discuss sending a missionary overseas. A broader vision of mission led to a more extensive recognition of the necessity of developing an adequate organization to support that mission. In short, James White and others gradually came to realize that no significant mission outreach could exist without a rational and effective support system.

A second reality that helped James and his fellow believers broaden their concept of church structure was the need to maintain doctrinal unity. In 1864 he contrasted the good fruits of Seventh-day Adventist organization with the “miserably confused condition of those who reject organization.”

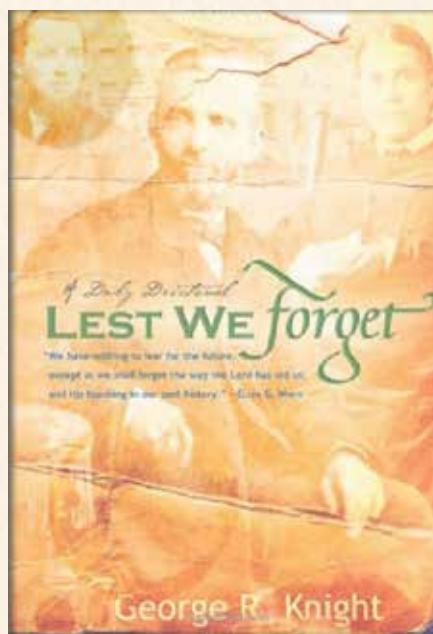
G.I. Butler developed that line of thought a bit further in 1873 when he wrote that “we are a thoroughly organized people, and our organization is not based on mere appearances, but upon a solid foundation. Having struggled against all kinds of influences, within and without, and being now a unit, speaking the same thing from ocean to ocean, it is not a very easy thing to shake us to pieces.”

The doctrinal issue, of course, had close ties to mission. Because they were unified in doctrine, they were willing to unite in mission to the far corners of the United States and eventually to the rest of the world.

In the end it was the mission of the church that demanded an adequate church structure. As James White repeatedly noted, it was not ambition to build up a denomination that suggested organization, but the sheer necessities of the case.”

While for James in 1871 the stamp of an adequate system was that “the machinery works well, the early Adventists also sought to base their organizational structures on a foundation that was in harmony with the Bible’s teaching on the principles that should undergird the nature and mission of the church. In the long run, organization was a byproduct of a scriptural understanding of the church and its end-time role of warning the world before the Second Advent.

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A Movement of Destiny



ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

In the very early days of our church history, there was a real fear among believers about organizing and about clearly stating biblical beliefs. Many felt that if their beliefs were spelled out it would be establishing a creed, and organization meant becoming a denomination. Many of the fears were grounded in the experiences of believers who had been shunned by fellow church members in the churches from which they had come because of their belief in the soon return of Jesus. Yet it didn't take long to determine that a uniformity of beliefs needed to be established, uniformity was needed in the hiring of ministers, and church properties needed to be placed in the legal name of an association.

Within 17 years—from the time between the Great Disappointment of 1844 to the

organization of the Michigan Conference in 1861—the basic structure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church was hammered out. By 1863, when the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists was formally organized, there were already five conferences that had gone through the process of electing leadership, identifying and credentialing workers, and establishing legal basis for the holding of church properties.

It quickly became evident that God had raised up a “movement of destiny.” It was not just another church arising on the religious landscape, but a people called to proclaim the distinctive truths of Bible prophecy in the context of the three angels' messages of Revelation 14:6-12.

It is the God-inspired and God-directed system of church structure, organization, and governance that has led to the dramat-

ic growth of this movement of destiny. In 1863 there were approximately 3,500 members scattered across the northeastern part of the United States. Today there are close to 19,000,000 members scattered across the world!

No single congregation is capable of organizing a global evangelistic outreach. Rather, it is the union of churches under the coordinated effort of conferences, unions, and the world divisions of the church that has enabled the kind of mission impact that has taken our distinctive message to more countries around the world than that of any other Protestant church. We are not just another church, but truly a “movement of destiny,” called of God to carry a message of hope in the soon return of our Savior.

Stephen Orian, president

Springdale Spanish Church Evangelism Brings 12 Baptisms

SPRINGDALE, ARK. » The members of the Springdale Spanish church are on fire for God! More than 85 percent of the church's members are involved in our local missionary work of passing out literature and missionary books in the community. Sometimes



The group of 12 individuals who were baptized in Flint Creek behind Ozark Adventist Academy with Rulfin Nuñez.

we wait patiently for the harvest while the Holy Spirit works on hearts and minds. At the end of a week of meetings with Rulfin Nuñez, pastor, 12 individuals were baptized and honored during a graduation. The church rejoices to see the fruit of their labor and to know that the Holy Spirit is working mightily with them.

Bismarck Castillo

Little Rock Spanish Church District

LITTLE ROCK, ARK. » Hector Caban was ordained on June 13, 2015, to the gospel ministry and installed as pastor of the Little Rock Spanish church district on June 27. Aymer Plana, who was the interim pastor while Hector was recovering from a nearly-fatal accident, was installed as the pastor of the Hot Springs/Glenwood/Ola church district at the same time.

Juan Borges, executive secretary



Top right: Hector Caban was recently ordained.

► From left: Eleidys Plana, Aymer Plana, Juan Borges, Hector Caban, and Yenlys Caban



“Let’s Move Day” in Siloam Springs

SILOAM SPRINGS, ARK. » “Let’s Move Day” began with a cold, rainy start, but it did clear up in time for the Siloam Springs church to set up 19 different stations for the 125 kids registered to go through. We had 57 volunteers registered to help from seven neighboring Seventh-day Adventist churches in the area, and there were more on site who did not register. It was a great experience, a lot of fun, and we can’t wait to do it again next year.

Tony Cash

The Siloam Springs church hosted a “Let’s Move Day” in September 2015. An energetic group of 125 children were registered to participate in stations, which included jumping rope, hula hooping, foot races, gymnastics, and more. There was something for everyone!



Sulphur Springs Evangelism Results in Five Baptisms and Three Re-baptisms

SULPHUR SPRINGS, ARK. » During the last half of July and the first half of August, 2015, Tommy Blount, pastor, held meetings in Sulphur Springs. The meeting hall was furnished free of charge by a local businessman, Steve Holland, who paid for all the utilities, including the air-conditioning. We started out with a good attendance

of eight or nine non-members, but on the second day, the air conditioning began to fail and it felt quite uncomfortable. I felt the devil was behind this, trying to discourage us and working to get some of the attendees to quit coming. We had a season of prayer, and we found an a/c repairman who came that day and fixed it. The next

evening everyone was comfortable again, and we retained all those who had attended the first two meetings.

One person came all the way from Monett, Missouri. He stayed with his daughter in Gravette, Arkansas, and only missed one night. One couple came from north of Noel, Missouri, and attended 22 nights. I am still studying with them. Three families that had been affiliated with our church but had stopped attending came and were so impressed with the presentations that they wished to be baptized or re-baptized. Five baptisms and three re-baptisms! Praise the Lord! Another woman who had been attending for some time requested to have her membership changed to our church. It is wonderful to know that the Holy Spirit is still working in Sulphur Springs!

Leonard L. Lovell



Those who were baptized at the Sulphur Springs church

Clarksville Baptism

CLARKSVILLE, ARK. » We give glory to God for Joseph Magazzeni's re-dedication to the Lord in baptism! Joseph decided to go with his wife, who is a nurse, on a mission trip to the Philippines. He was assigned to do literature evangelism work on the trip, and it changed his heart and his life. We pray that God abundantly blesses the ministry of Joe and his wife!

Stephane Rogers

Joseph Magazzeni (left) was baptized by Tommy Blount, pastor, (right) after a mission trip changed his heart and life.



Service With A Smile



One of the things I remember fondly is growing up in a small rural community. I am just a country boy. And one of the things I treasure are the memories of special people and instances in my life.

One of those memories takes me back to when I was pretty young. My grandmother decided I needed a new shirt. She took me to a clothing store that was right close to the Square downtown.

I can remember looking at the faces on those older gentlemen as we entered their establishment. Each one of them had a smile. I can remember I was in awe as I looked around their store. At the time, it seemed it was the largest clothing store in the world.

My grandmother explained we were looking for a nice new dress shirt for Sabbath. She wanted good quality at a fair price. One of the men asked my grandmother if I was one of J. O.'s boys. J. O. was my great grandfather. He had done business with this store for years. She replied that I was. All the while, he was smiling.

I can remember watching his face from start to finish. He had a smile on his face. I never forgot that experience. He was serving each of his customers with grace, patience, and most importantly, a smile.

I have thought about that experience many times throughout the years. And one of the things I remember fondly is "service with a smile."

"Service with a smile" should be one of the reasons we exist as leaders in the church. The purpose of church structure should be that of service, not power. Whatever position we may hold from the elder, deacon, children's Sabbath School leader to General Conference president, and everything in between, is for the purpose of serving God's people.

I like what is recorded in the book of Acts, chapter 14, verses 21-23, "After they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God." When they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed."

I am fascinated with this passage. Paul and Barnabas preached the gospel, made disciples for the cause of Christ and they "appointed elders for them in every church." They created church structure. And its purpose was to serve the people of

God as they moved forward. From what we know of the apostle Paul, it was with great joy. Or, service with a smile!

Throughout the past many years I have witnessed how many folk have viewed the church like a company or corporation that is a pyramid. All the people on the bottom, and the leader at the top. But what I see in the Bible, is an inverted pyramid. The leader is on the bottom serving those who are above him with the people on the top!

The Gospels give a couple of observations as well. Those who regarded church structure for the sake of preserving the organization were often legalistic and rigid. The Bible called them Pharisees. The other example was Jesus, the disciples and those people who had been healed, rescued, and transformed. They were warm, winsome, and joyous. The Bible calls them the Church.

So what's the point of church organization? If we take the Scripture's model, the Church is for: proclamation, guidance, support, discipleship, affirmation of strengths and spiritual gifts, security, trust, transformation, and to advance the kingdom. The Church is to be the hands and feet of Jesus, wrapped up in the warm, smiling faces of His people ready to serve others.

It's service with a smile!

Richard C. Dye, Sr. Executive Secretary

Vinita Church Presents Prophecy Seminar

VINITA » The Vinita church recently conducted an "End-time Messages from Jesus" prophecy seminar. These messages were presented by Frank Molina during the Sabbath worship hour. We had at times, as many as 10 non-Adventist attendees. The presentations were a blessing for those who have never attended an evangelistic presentation, yet have been members for years, as well as for our newest members. They were able to visualize these prophecy presentations in a new light.

Frank Molina



Our newest members (from left): Elizabeth Landers (by profession of faith), Becky Turnbough (baptized November 14), Barry Hicks, and Bobby Spottedhorse (by profession of faith).

First Seventh-day Adventist Church of Tulsa Small Groups Program

TULSA » About 50 members of the Tulsa First church have been enthusiastically participating in small groups that meet on Friday evenings in the homes of group leaders. Michael Smith, pastor, directs the program and hosts one of the five groups. Participants are diverse in age, ethnicity, and life experience, with everyone enjoying fellowship with the others in spite of their differences. Newly baptized members have formed friendships within the group, which help them feel loved and cared for by their church family. Each meeting begins with a light meal followed by singing, prayer, Bible study, a time to share answers to prayer, along with other things that are on group members' hearts, and discussion about their community outreach project. The groups' future

plans include inviting friends and loved ones who are not church members to attend their weekly meetings.

"Being in a small group creates the opportunity to really get to know people who you would usually just say 'hi' to at church. I love the support and spiritual nourishment the group provides," says group member Lauren Fraser.

Judith Carrico



Top: One of the small groups led by Michael Smith, pastor, seen here holding his son, Caanan, on the far right.
 ▲ The groups enjoy singing together.
 ◀ Group participants look over the weekly Bible lesson.

Oklahoma Conference Welcomes New Pastor

TULSA » The Tulsa Spanish church has been blessed by the addition of a new pastor to the team of pastors in the Oklahoma Conference. Sami Ruiz comes to Oklahoma from California. He graduated from Montemorelos University and worked as a pastor in Mexico for a short time. His wife, Jamie, is from Oklahoma and she also graduated from Montemorelos as a teacher. Sami has been assigned to be the youth pastor in the Tulsa Spanish church. We are very glad to welcome them both.



Sami Ruiz, his wife Jamie and their new born daughter, Amie Lynn.

Christ's Method Alone Working in Jay

JAY » Gail Hill is one of the most enthusiastic leaders in the Jay church, and she was reading Matthew 25:33-40, where Jesus tells us that when we meet the physical needs of others, we are actually ministering to Him. She felt greatly impressed that our church family should be doing more for our community. She then started the Feed My Sheep Food Bank in our fellowship hall across from the church. We quickly outgrew that facility and it was moved to the old church school building that had just been completely remodeled and refurbished. In April of 2016 we will have had the privilege of serving our community, from our food bank, for two years—and what a blessing it is to be a blessing to others!

Having read the inspired statement that Christ's method alone will give us true success in reaching the hearts of people, we endeavored to mingle with them, find out their needs, pray with them, and cultivate their friendship. Having won their confidence, we decided to offer them the Native New Day Bible guides—designed specifically for Native Americans by Native Americans.

The response to our offer has been amazing! At present we have 112 individuals from the food bank doing the Bible studies, and many of them are so enthusiastic about them. Several have remarked what a blessing these lessons are and how very much

they are learning from God's Word.

There is an evangelism room where those who wait for their turn may listen to beautiful gospel music or read the literature placed on the tables. Many are actually working on their Bible studies while they wait.

In October, we were offered the opportunity to take over the Caring Kitchen, which was being shut down in Grove due to highway construction. Now, once a week we also serve a hot meal to anyone that comes—sometimes more than 100 people!

The State of Oklahoma has been such a blessing to us, as well. They have paid for all the expenses of the move and have now purchased four commercial freezers and three commercial refrigerators for our use in the Caring Kitchen and the food bank. The God of heaven has truly opened the windows of heaven and poured out so many blessings that we are constantly amazed and so very grateful. The Jay church is a very small congregation and the work can be quite overwhelming. We are praying that God will inspire others to come help us meet the needs and win the hearts of our community.

Kay Mayes



Top: Serving hot meals at the Caring Kitchen

▲ The overflowing Feed My Sheep Food Bank

► Praying together

Berean Church Celebrates 79th Anniversary

BATON ROUGE, LA. »

No, it wasn't the "big" one, but according to Robert Davis, the Berean church's pastor, it didn't matter. "It was a birthday, and every birthday deserves a celebration," he said. Thus, Berean recently observed its 79th anniversary—the fifth corresponding with Davis' tenure at the church. Margaret Lawrence was assigned the task of coordinating the event. And coordinating she did in spite of rather short notice, but Davis was determined to have the observation before year's end. Lawrence, in conjunc-

tion with Davis, agreed on the rather timely theme "Thanks Be to Thee" complemented with 1 Thessalonians 5:18—"In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

A standard practice of our birthday homecoming celebrations is a recognition invitation to a community resource person who is not a member of the church. For this anniversary, Lawrence tapped State Representative and attorney Edward "Ted" James who in addition to his elected duties is an advocate for religious liberty and a community activist as evident in his having received AARP's 2014 "Legislator of the Year" award. "I'm a lawyer by trade and believe in building better communities. I humbly feel anointed to serve God—though selected by people—and am looking forward to furthering my relationship with Berean." He went on to announce that he was just returning from having spent the morning transporting fifty senior citizens to participate in early



State Representative Edward "Ted" James poses with Lyn Hakeem upon receiving plaque.

voting for Louisiana's upcoming gubernatorial election. Lyn Hakeem who had introduced James went on to present him with a plaque commemorating his community services.

Our anniversary speaker, Darriel Hoy, pastor, is not only a native daughter but our first female anniversary speaker as well. Presently she is the director of Youth Ministries for the Central States Conference. According to Davis, the two met at seminary while at Andrews University, and Davis said he would categorize her as "focused, astute, and God-inspired." Hoy began with gratitude for Berean's nurturing, accolades for Davis and his clergy staff and emphasis on supporting youth ministries and Sabbath School.

Her message, titled "Don't Let the Devil Steal Your Joy" was taken from 1 Samuel 1:1-18, and began with a reference to the story of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" and its analogy to the story of Hannah and Elkanah. "We always feel we



Robert Davis, pastor, with speaker Darriel Hoy in front of the foyer banner depicting the anniversary theme and scripture.

need a little more because that is what's expected, but our goal should not be getting more, but being content with what we have. Hannah had to grapple with her own disappointment as well as attacks from her enemies. When Satan steals your joy, he breaks your faith in God," she said. She continued with how disappointments can lead us to bitterness, but how we have to avoid scoring for Satan; scoring was a reference to her love for the basketball team at her alma mater. "In Hannah's battle with Peninnah, Hannah's circumstances knocked her down, but didn't defeat her for Hannah still had some fight in her." Hoy's admonition to us was to get back up when life knocks us down "And the way to get back up is to get down on our knees." The audience appeared to heed her advice as much of the congregation responded to the altar call. We are grateful for God's leading in "our product's" life.

Evelyn M. Edwards

Round Rock Provides Food Boxes to Community in Need

ROUND ROCK, TEXAS » In an attempt to become relevant to the neighboring community, the Round Rock Seventh-day Adventist Church Community Services Department has, for the past 11 years, given packed boxes of food and household staples—fresh vegetables, dairy, bread, and toiletries—to needy families in the immediate community on every second and fourth Thursday of each month,

In partnership with the Capital Area Food Bank (CAFB) of Austin, Texas, the Round Rock Community Services auxiliary, functioning on a small budget of \$400 a month, subsidized with individual member monetary donations, purchase staples (between \$0.06 and \$0.11 per pound) from CAFB, where vegetables, dairy, and bread are free.

After loading the 17-foot rented U-Haul, members and community volunteers return to the church to unload the packed items, which are then placed in boxes to

be given to families in the local churches and immediate community.

Each month more than 350 boxes are distributed (approximately 4,200 annually). The Round Rock church leadership thanks God for the commitment and consistency of its members who volunteer for this program. We are grateful to play a practical role in serving this corner of God's vineyard.

W. B. Stanley



Round Rock church members and community volunteers annually provide approximately 4,200 boxes of food and household items to community members in need.



When God Speaks

GARLAND, TEXAS » Growing up an Adventist, I understood that the seventh day is the Sabbath. I understood that you are required to give 10 percent in tithe. I understood that God sent His Son to die for us. I heard about Him all my life. I just didn't take the time to get to know Him. I went through the motions when it came to church. Wake up, get dressed, go to church, eat potluck, go home. I never knew the true meaning of church, but if you asked me, I would have answered, "To get closer to God." The typical answer. It never occurred to me that this whole Christian experience is about living in harmony with God and inviting others to experience this same harmony. The only thing that occurred to me was, "I can't wait to go home." Being a pastor's kid did not help either, because I felt the constant pressure to be "perfect." This, of course, threw me in a state of rebellion against God. I started hanging out with the wrong crowd at school, and giving in to the negative influences, such as listening to the wrong music, saying the wrong words, and being downright disrespectful to God's name and character. During many sermons and chapels at school, I felt the need to give my life to Christ. However, since none of my friends were going up or even listening, I would disregard that small voice.

God was forever trying to reach me, but I would push Him back, only praising Him when things went right. I "played Christian" to mask who I really was. I prayed to God every night, but only out of habit. I lied so much it became second nature. The way I treated the Sabbath was for my own pleasure. I would talk about God at school, but I never even cracked open the Bible. It wasn't until August 2015 that this all changed. My dad had informed me that the Texas Conference was going to hold an evangelism training camp called Glad Reaper. I felt like I needed to go to this camp, but I didn't know why. I decided to pray. After praying, I felt a voice telling me to go to this training event.

That next week, I arrived at Lone Star Camp. The first day dragged on. Song service was a blur, and I barely listened to the sermon. The next day, which was Sabbath, we were to spend all day in workshops. I quickly started despising this event, but kept it to myself. The speaker of the workshops, Pastor Lynn, was very enthusiastic about young people preparing to preach the gospel. I didn't quite understand his enthusiasm, but his style of speaking intrigued me, so I listened intently. During one of the workshops, I decided to challenge God. I silently prayed, "Ok, God, I'm here. You wanted me here and I don't know why, but let me know by the end of this weekend."

The weekend flew by and finally it was Saturday night. It was late, around midnight, after the basketball game and bonfire, when I began walking back to my cabin by myself to take a shower and go to sleep. The sky was so clear; you could see just about every star. I decided to sit down on one of the wooden benches and talk to God.

"It's the end of the weekend, what do you

want me to do?" No answer. I proceeded in pouring out my heart to God, asking all the questions I had. Then, I got a strange feeling that God wanted me to preach. Preach? I can barely voice my opinion without the fear of what others think of it! I had to make sure this was, in fact, God calling me to this. I asked Him to show me some indication that this was Him asking me to do this epic, yet humble, task. No sooner than I asked for a sign, a shooting star shot through the sky! It was the brightest star I had ever seen! What made it more personal was the fact that no one else saw it! Tears filled my eyes, knowing that this was, in fact, an answer from the Almighty.

It has been months since that night. God has really blessed and transformed me. The music I used to listen to has since changed. The words that would come out of my mouth have been silenced. I realized that the "friends" that I hung out with did not value me as true friends should. Those Sabbaths spent doing my own things are now spent away from distractions and are focused more on my fellowship with God and my family. I read the Bible more and I attend a Bible study group at my church. God even blessed me with the opportunity to preach an evangelistic series with three other youth from my church. He used me as His mouthpiece to share His love to others. My spiritual journey has not been easy. Satan has tried his best efforts to pollute my social life, as well as my spiritual life. However, even in the midst of these troubles, God has refused to leave my side. Through my ups and my downs, He reminds me He is still in control. Though it is difficult at times, God continues to open doors and allows me to reach out to people who are hungry for the Word!

Khari Dixon

Khari Dixon sitting with other youth who preached during the Week of Youth Evangelism at Casalita Drive church in Garland, Texas.



More Than a Denomination



I can remember as a young boy asking my father, who was a pastor at the time in the Mid-America Union, "Dad, who is your boss?"

His answer rings clear in my head even today, nearly 50 years later. "God and the people of this church!"

A healthy respect for both the rich history and the structure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is vital to the creed of every member and believer of this denomination. Of surety, it is more than a mere denomination. It is God's church! There are those voices today that declare that God is no longer in the midst of this church, that it is time to draw away and form separate entities. The words of Ellen White, pioneer and prophet, are pointed. "We cannot now step off the foundation that God has established.

We cannot now enter into any new organization, for this would mean apostasy from the truth" (*Selected Messages*, vol. 2, p. 390). There is no doubt at all that the two main stabilizing bulwarks of our faith and hope are Christ, Who is our righteousness, and "sola scriptura." But the enduring structure and stability inspired by God Himself, has contributed to the church's ability to weather attack after attack from those who have through the years become instruments of the devil in their attempts to undermine and destroy God's church.

Our church is organized with a repre-

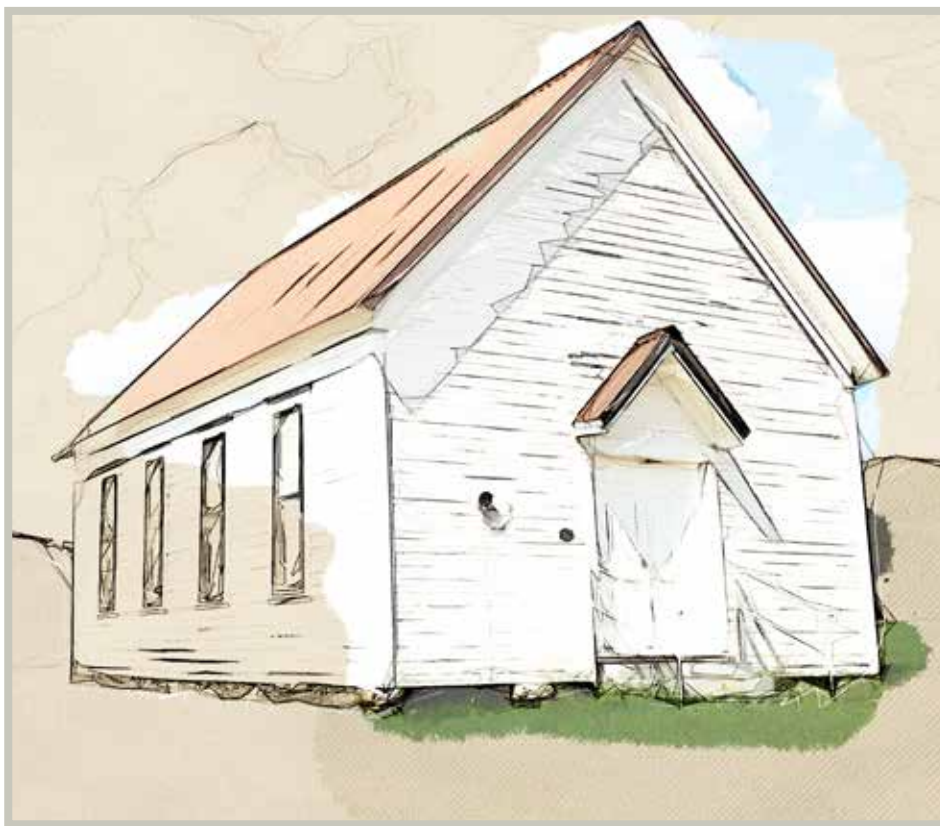
sentative form of church governance. This simply means that the authority in the church comes from and is derived from the membership of the local churches. It is one of the many positive aspects of how our church functions. Structure in any organization is crucial, and being that we serve a God of order, His work must be conducted in order. It was fascinating for me at General Conference Session in San

experience! Administratively speaking, our world-wide church has 13 divisions. Just ponder that for a second. Virtually every corner of the world, represented by an entity of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In my 54 years of life, I have truly come to understand, respect, and now admire the structure of our church. Church organization is based on God's principles.

Ellen White exhorts in *Testimonies*, vol.

5, p. 274: "Never allow anyone's ideas to unsettle your faith in regard to the order and harmony which should exist in the church. The God of heaven is a God of order, and He requires all of His followers to have rules and regulations, and to preserve order."

In our church manual we read: "When God called the children of Israel out of Egypt and chose them as His peculiar people, He provided for them an impressive system of organization to govern



Antonio to observe the way that the Lord leads His people from the ground level. The democratic process that led to God-given decisions was something to behold! I found myself feeling proud to be a Christian and a Seventh-day Adventist Christian at that! There in the Alamodome there was representation, voice, and vote from churches, conferences, missions, unions, and divisions.

People from every corner of the earth sat together, worshipped together, dined together, and prayed together for direction from above! What an amazing feeling and

their conduct in both civil and religious matters" (*Church Manual*, p. 26) Accountability is an awesome thing, especially in sacred matters such as the work of God. In my role, I find it extremely helpful to serve one Master (Christ), and two other bosses, the conference executive committee and my union president. There is comfort in knowing that no man or woman is an island, able to function on their own arbitrarily without the rudder of a system. Praise God from Whom all blessings flow!

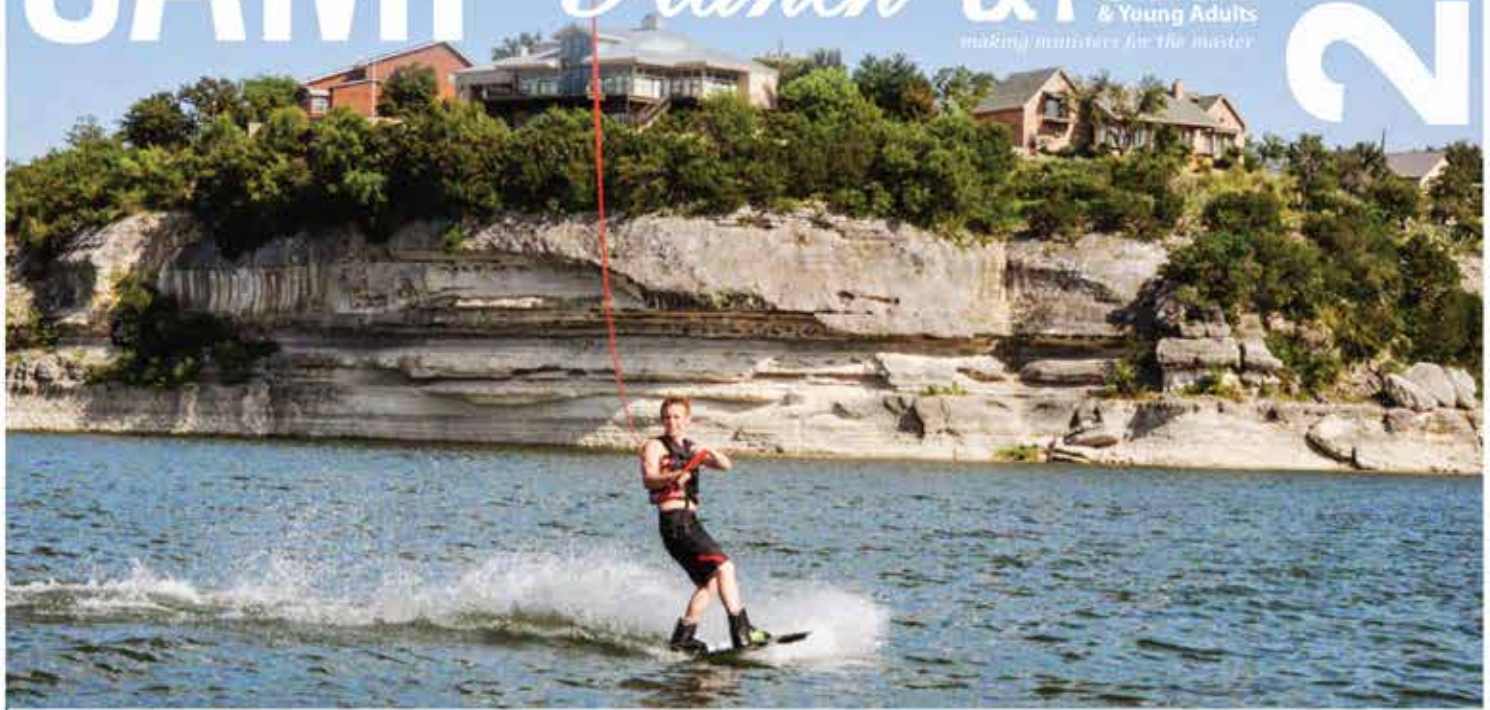
Carlos J. Craig, president

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For more information and registration:
YoungTexasAdventist.org or call 817.790.2255 ext. 2201

Gulfhaven Revival Series

HOUSTON-GULFHAVEN » Mansfield Edwards, president of the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, presented an inspiring weekend revival series at the Gulfhaven church on October 2-3, 2015, entitled "Go Light Your World for Jesus." Edwards began his first series on Friday evening with a fascinating message called "Four Faithful Friends." Then, on Sabbath morning for the worship hour, he presented another thought provoking sermon entitled "Salvation," which impacted our minds and hearts. After the worship ser-

vice, the deaconesses and others provided a beautiful fellowship lunch for all to enjoy. On Sabbath evening, we met again for the last of the series, which was truly magnificent. This message was entitled "Your Candlestick," and included his life story of how God had lead in his life. This powerful story was so awesome that it kept everyone glued to their seats until the end. Edwards made an altar call at the end of his message and everyone present in the sanctuary came forward to rededicate their lives to the Lord.

Among the crowd of people were some new attendees who committed their lives to Christ and baptism. It was an incredibly inspiring weekend and all who came were blessed! Edwards has been a pastor for more than 25 years and is the founder of Discover the Power, a TV program, which sends messages of hope to people all around the world. He is a recipient of two mayoral awards for outstanding contribution to city life and community leadership. He also recently authored a book, *Worship Matters*, which he graciously signed at the end of the last meeting. His timely messages inspired and challenged all who attended to be ambassadors for Christ, to reignite their faith, and revive their passion for missions in our city of Houston and beyond!

Jean Hagan

Mansfield Edwards, president of the Ontario Conference, presented a revival series at the Gulfhaven church October 2-3, 2015.



For youth and young adults who are hearing God's call to work the harvest in these last days!

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It's Really All About Mission

TEXICO CONFERENCE

Do you remember that catchy little “finger play” that many of us did in Kindergarten Sabbath School? It’s the one that goes like this:

*“Here is the Church,
And here is the steeple.
Open the doors
And see all the people.”*

What fun it was to get to the end and have all the “people” moving around as we wiggled our fingers.

We often refer to the church as a building, but really the Church is not a *place* it’s actually a *people*. There are various names for this group of believers such as “the Body of Christ,” or “the Community of Faith,” and what the apostle Paul calls the Church, “a Chosen People and a Royal Priesthood.”

But whatever we call it, the Church is a group of people united in purpose, called to represent the lovely Jesus to a world in desperate need of Him.

As is the case with every group who wishes to see their purpose experience success, it becomes necessary to develop an organization. This is seen in first agreeing on the mission, then developing policies to help guide decisions and actions to accomplish this mission, and then identifying members as leaders to help facilitate the interests of the group.

For about 150 years now, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has experienced

both the blessings and the challenges of a developing organization. This is the result of a shared value that our structure and organization should always seek to serve the mission of the Church. This organization requires significant and continuing effort as policies are made and then modified, and organizational components are established and then re-structured.

Yet, at the heart of the organization there must always be the sense that mission is the greater value. What we are doing to advance and enlarge the mission of the Church must always take precedence in the debate for the use of resources. We must remain totally committed and carefully focused on “being about our Father’s business.”

Through careful planning and prayerful discussion, the organization of the Church has taken shape. Since the Church is actually people, our structure begins with the local church, which must remain focused on the collective mission of the Church to their specific community(s); to love and serve their neighbors using the model of Jesus, mingling with people “as One Who desires their good.”

The structure continues with the local conference, as the local churches within a particular state or region are joined together to provide a broad support for the mission of these churches. Conferences are collectively organized as parts of union conferences to assist in facilitating the

mission to an even greater territory. Union Conferences are then united as components of the General Conference, which is then divided into 13 Divisions of the world church. Around the globe the Church functions with a united mission and a unique structure.

Yet, we must never lose sight of the importance that whatever the Church *is* and *does*, it really is all about Jesus. Like the lyrics of that old hymn, “The Church has one foundation, ‘Tis Jesus Christ her Lord,” therefore we rest fully on the call of Jesus to follow Him as we call others to do the same. That is His mission and it must be ours as well!

Paul defines both our mission and our organization with this counsel to the Ephesians, “We will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of His body, the Church. He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love” (Ephesians 4:15,16, NLT).

It is my prayer that each of us will “sign-on” to Jesus’ mission as we “open the doors and see all the people” who need to know of His love and promise to come again soon.

Phil Robertson, executive secretary/treasurer

Trick-or-Truth? GLOW in the Dark

RIO RANCHO, N. MEX. » Each year on October 31, there are people who observe Halloween. Opposed to popular thinking, Halloween is more than just a night of child’s play. Instead, this holiday is an opportunity for the forces of darkness to win billions to their side in this ultimate war between good and evil. Yet, we have nothing to worry about; God is stronger than the enemy.



If you think about it, Halloween is one of the best opportunities to witness for Jesus and to push forward His kingdom.

Allow me to elaborate on how Halloween is a great opportunity to witness for Jesus. Every year

Church members of all ages came to the Rio Rancho church eager to be a part of the GLOW in the Dark event.

people spend more than 2 million dollars on candy to keep trick-or-treaters happy. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are nearly 41 million trick-or-treaters that go door to door each Halloween. So, if the people at the doors are expecting you to come, why not go? This is exactly what the Rio Rancho Seventh-day Adventist Church did. On Halloween 2015, 44 individuals, 70 percent of them young adults, rose to the occasion to go out and spread GLOW tracts into the homes around their community. What was the result of their efforts, you may ask? The participants realized that on this day people more willingly accepted the tracts than any other day. David Benitez shares with us that as he was passing out tracts with his friends, a woman told them that they would not be receiving candy because that they were not wearing costumes. David's friend responded by saying "It is OK. We are actually here to give you something instead." They then handed her a GLOW tract titled "Myths about Hell." The woman took a look at the tract and asked, "So is this good or bad?"

They replied, "It is good."

She then proceeded to ask David what were his beliefs about hell. David then gave her a quick Bible study on the state of the dead, the millennium, and hell. The woman then mentioned that she believed similarly and requested more tracts so that she would be able hand some out.

The Bible tells us in Isaiah 52:7, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.'"

Rio Rancho church members went out not looking for an earthly reward, like candy, but to help plant a harvest that will be ready for Jesus at His return. In a span of an hour 1,629 GLOW tracts were distributed on that night of festivity where Christ is not remembered. But thanks to these faithful church members, Christ was lifted up and the results of this work will be seen soon, either here on this earth or at the return of Christ.



GLOW in the Dark participants handing out pamphlets containing messages of Bible truth at a door.

The inspired pen tells us "more than a thousand will soon be converted in one day, most of whom will trace their first convictions to the reading of our publications" (*Evangelism* p. 693). Why not pick up some GLOW tracts and start distributing?

Carlos Interiano

The Navy Taught Me Three Valuable Lessons

DALHART, TEX. » As Veterans' Day approached, I was reminded that ten years ago I retired from the U.S. Navy. Most people, when they retire from a job, leave that life behind and become something different. Maybe they go to work for a different company, learn to play golf or just start a new phase of their life.

For a service member, it's not like that. A retired service member has a special bond with our nation and with other military comrades. Maybe the Marine motto, 'Once a Marine, always a Marine,' says it best. I am not sure that when Marine Corps Master Sergeant Paul Woysner said that when a U. S. Marine has earned that title it is retained throughout the Marine's life, he was speaking of Marines only. Just as there are no ex-Marines or former Marines, there are no ex-service members. They just move into a new category. They now become retired service members or United States veterans. Once one has earned that title, he or

she remains a service member for life.

I am very proud of my time in the Navy because it taught me three valuable lessons



▲ Bobby Harris during his time of service in the Navy.

◀ Pastor Harris and his wife, Maria, minister in the Clayton/Dalhart/Pampa/Raton district.

that I now use as a pastor. The Navy taught me honor. As a pastor, I have come to understand that honor originates with God. It grows in our hearts and refers to the value we personally place on something or someone. In Deuteronomy 5:16, we are commanded to honor our fathers and mothers.

Leviticus 19:32 tells us to honor the elderly and in 1 Peter 2:17, we are told to honor those who rule over us. When we honor God, we are demonstrating the high regard we have for Him, as well as, what He has done for us.

The Navy also taught me the meaning of commitment. As a Christian I understand that each of us must make a commitment to Jesus and hold on to it. In Romans 5:8, we read that Christ has made a commitment to us, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." As Jesus has made a commitment to me, I intend to

keep my commitment to Him.

Courage is the third thing I learned about in the Navy. This may be the hardest one of all because many times this will put you in direct opposition with the world where we live. Too many times what the world around us defines as normal or acceptable is not in accordance with God. Because of this, we must make a choice to follow man or God. Just as Joshua says in Joshua 24:15, "...But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." I too will have the courage to stand for God.

In our little church in Dalhart, Texas, we want to let all service members know, past

and present, that we stand for them as they stand for us. We do this by sending care packages to the brave men and women who are serving overseas. I cannot tell you how much a simple package from home means to that service member as they open it and see that someone cares enough to stop and think about them.

I hope that each of you will let people know that you too stand for each member of the armed forces, even if it is just saying, "Thank you for your service."

Bobby Harris

Waterflow Mission Trip

WATERFLOW, N. MEX. » Six Sandia View Academy students, along with two students from Crestview Adventist Academy and two from Sandia View Christian School, had the privilege of taking a one-day mission trip to serve the Waterflow Adventist School in Waterflow, N. Mex.

The school is connected to the Waterflow Seventh-day Adventist Church and currently has 13 students. The idea for this trip was to develop an attitude of service among Texico students, while building the relationship between the area Adventist schools. The project consisted of constructing a



▲ Texico students help construct a porch on the Waterflow Adventist School.

► Anna, a member of the Waterflow Church, receives a supply of books to distribute in her community.

porch along with sundry work around the school. The Navajo young people were so excited to have our students there and they, too, were happy to be of service. It was a very positive experience for all involved.

Our students never asked when we would go home, they and returned

from the trip wanting to do more outreach. One girl was reluctant about going to serve, but afterward said, "If this is what it's like to take a mission trip, I want to do it again."

A supply of *Steps to Christ* and *The Desire of Ages* was left with a Navajo couple who will distribute them in their community. The Waterflow school was very appreciative of the work that was done. We hope to return and be of continued service to this school in the future.

Gary Brown, Sandia View Academy principal





Educating for Compassionate Service

“It is as we give ourselves to God for the service of humanity that He gives Himself to us,” wrote Ellen G. White in *Welfare Ministry* (p. 301). That is my favorite quote. It also describes why I chose nursing as a major at Southwestern Adventist University. I am grateful for this University, as it incorporates service into everything it does.

When I was deciding on a career choice, I realized that a nurse’s main job description is service. Nurses are called to be compassionate, patient, knowledgeable, and enduring—much like Jesus was as he sought to heal the sick physically and spiritually. Because of this enormous task laid before nurses, I think it is extremely important to support places such as Southwestern as they seek to educate nurses that serve the community and the world.

I would not be a few months from graduating if it wasn’t for the amazing professors and staff that have guided me through my education. It is an intense and information-packed journey that requires support. Not only has this program sustained me in my academic endeavors, but in my personal ones as well. My professors encourage me to not only finish strong but to follow my dream of getting my doctorate in nursing practice.

I only have one regret for the nursing program. I believe Southwestern Adventist University produces compassion-

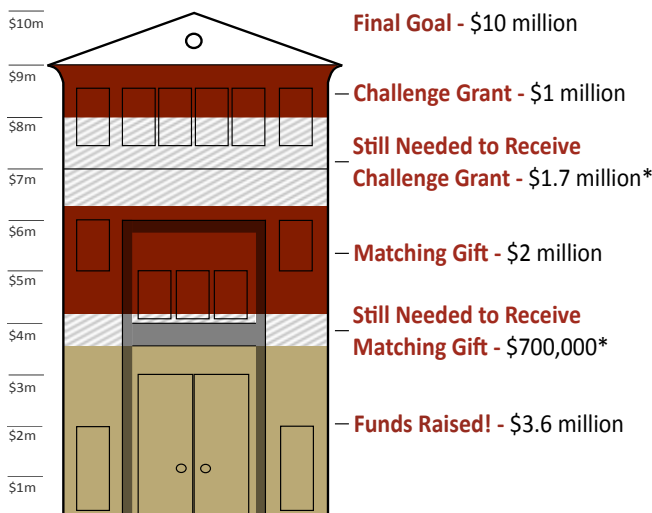
ate, service-oriented nurses but sometimes the facilities haven’t matched my professors’ passion and enthusiasm. To fix that problem, the University is in the middle of a campaign to build a new nursing building. Even though I’m a senior, I’m very excited about how this will help the nursing program grow and flourish.

Our classrooms and skills labs are cramped. Texas Health Huguley Hospital provided us with a simulation building that houses our practice manikins (see *Record* issue June 2014) but we’ve already outgrown it. The new building will include a state-of-the-art simulation and skills center, and will provide the space we need to grow and accommodate different needs for which we are now too small. For instance, more space for skills labs and simulation will help us learn how to serve in a mass casualty event, large health fair, or a large trauma in the emergency room.

As a student, I’m really excited about the support Southwestern alumni and friends have already shown. They’ve donated \$3.6 million to build our new nursing building! The Southwestern Union pledged a matching grant of \$2 million.



Tiffany Falcon, senior nursing major, practicing her skills during a simulation lab.



*Goal of \$2,400,000 needed by April 15, 2016

\$2,000,000 matching gift from the Southwestern Union, we need to raise an additional \$1,700,000 or a total of \$2,400,000 by April 15 to obtain the \$1,000,000 from the Mabee Foundation, bringing our total to \$9,000,000, or 90% of our goal. That means a gift given now, regardless of its size, will more than double in value as it helps us reach these goals.

The ability to give to those around me is extremely important and that is a trait that Southwestern Adventist University helped me develop. Your gift to help us build the nursing facility will create a better environment for Southwestern to grow competent, compassionate nurses. Your gift will help us reach our full potential.

More information about the nursing program and the new building can be read in the *Record’s* June 2015 issue or discovered by contacting us at 800.433.2240 or advancement@swau.edu.

Tiffany Falcon, senior nursing major

An Invitation to Be the Hands and Feet of Jesus

Would you like to have an experience of a lifetime blessing and meeting the needs of others while being blessed at the same time? If so, here's your opportunity. This coming July 14 and 15, a free health clinic will be held in Killeen, Texas, the first in a series of future free health clinics around the union. JUMPSTART Free Health Clinic is a project sponsored by the Southwest Chapter of ASI, and the Killeen event will be held in cooperation with the Southwestern Union, Metroplex Adventist Hospital, the City of Killeen, the Texas Conference, the Southwest Region Conference, local businesses, and several other entities. This project is modeled after Your Best Pathway to Health, but provides free health care for smaller cities within the Southwestern Union with fewer than 500,000 inhabitants.

Set-up day for the JUMPSTART clinic will be on July 13. The free clinic will run all day Thursday and through early afternoon Friday, followed by a special program on Sabbath, July 16. Special guest speaker Duane McKey, General Conference director of Sabbath School and Personal Ministries, will speak during the Thursday- and Friday-evening worship programs for

JUMPSTART volunteers and for divine worship on Sabbath morning. On Sabbath afternoon the city officials and others will be honored during a special recognition ceremony.

Volunteers are needed for optometry services, dental services, nursing, and most medical specialties, as well as physical therapy, occupational therapy, audiology, chaplaincy, lifestyle counseling, mental health, medical massage, and hydrotherapy. Helpers are needed for food service to prepare sack lunches and for cooking demonstrations. Other essential services for which volunteers are needed include child care, hospitality, translation, security, engineering, and set-up and tear-down.

Here's what others have said about their experience as a volunteer at previous free health clinics:

"What a week! This was such a life-changing experience for me. I feel like I have a different direction in my life now. Thank you and Barb for letting me know about this ministry! It has blessed me so very much."

-Sam, Dental Volunteer

"Pathway to Health changed my life. I've been to mission trips to Costa Rica, Panama, El Salvador, but coming to Your Best Pathway to Health taught me that every single person is valuable and should be treated with dignity. Praise God!"

-Elsa, Volunteer

"I can't wait to do this again next year! Count me in!"

-Steve, Volunteer

"This is the best thing I've ever done!"

-Volunteer

Thank-you for allowing us to do this!"

-Janet, Volunteer

The need is great, and now is the opportunity to be the hands and feet of our Master. Won't you volunteer to join us in this mission effort to bring comfort, healing, and salvation to the residents of Killeen and surrounding areas? To sign up as a volunteer, or to donate funds toward this worthy project, please visit the ASI website at www.asisw.org.

Jumpstart
Free Health Clinic

Medical and Non-medical
Volunteers Needed
for Free Health Clinic
to Serve 1,500 Patients

July 13-15, 2016
Killeen, Texas

Registration and more information:
www.asisw.org

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Jessica Furr, a dental hygienist from Waco, Texas, volunteered for a recent health clinic in San Antonio.

Robert Folkenberg Passes Away

Robert S. Folkenberg, an innovative church administrator and mission advocate who led the Seventh-day Adventist Church for nine years, died December 24 after a lengthy struggle with cancer. He was just days from his 75th birthday.

Folkenberg felt that Adventists had an exciting message to share and the Internet was a great way to expand the church's reach. The Adventist Church, he believed, could use the Internet to provide information, training, and experiences that better demonstrated the global aspect of its mission.

He pushed the church forward with new technology during his tenure as president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists from 1990 to 1999 and brought CompuServe, a precursor to the World Wide Web, into use within the church, making Seventh-day Adventists the first denomination to use such technology.

"Elder Folkenberg was filled with creative and innovative ideas regarding church work and evangelism," General Conference president Ted N.C. Wilson said. "As president of the General Conference, he strongly nurtured the media aspect of outreach for church activities and evangelism as well as pioneered the use of Internet for communication within the church structure."

Folkenberg also had a great passion for mission, the driving force of his ministry. During his time as world church president, he helped start the Global Mission initiative, which has been responsible for establishing thousands of new congregations around the world.

"We could have not asked for a greater

support than Folkenberg for Global Mission," said Michael L. Ryan, the first director of Global Mission and a former general vice president of the General Conference.

Ryan said he remembers Folkenberg often saying, "Participation in Global Mis-

sion is not optional."

"Elder Robert Folkenberg was visible, involved, and passionate about proclaiming the hope of the gospel in places where Jesus name was not known," he said. "It mattered to him personally that the church was organized and focused on mission and that every member made being Christ's ambassador their top priority."

As president, Folkenberg also promoted the Net Evangelism series with Mark Finley and Dwight Nelson and worked to get the Hope Channel started.

A Life of Mission

Robert Stanley Folkenberg was born on Jan. 1, 1941, to missionary parents in Sanurcee, Puerto Rico. He went to school in Puerto Rico until the fourth grade before finishing elementary school in Cuba. He entered high school in California and graduated from Milo Adventist Academy in Oregon in 1958.

Folkenberg first attended Atlantic Union College in Massachusetts and then Newbold College in England before graduating from Andrews University in Michigan with a degree in ministry in 1962. In 1963 he completed a master's degree in New Testament theology at Andrews University.

Folkenberg was an avid pilot. He secured a single and multi-engine airline transport pilot rating, commercial helicopter and sea rating, and flew more than 2,000 hours, the majority of which were in Central America and the Caribbean.

Folkenberg dedicated much of his life to service in the Inter-American Division. Serving first as a pastor in Panama (1966-68), he later became stewardship director of the Panama Conference (1968),

president of the Honduras Mission (1970), secretary (1974) and later president of the Central American Union (1975). In 1980 he became assistant to the president for the Inter-American Division. He served in North America as president of the Carolina Conference (1985-90) before being elected General Conference president in 1990.

Andrew McChesney, *Adventist Review*,
with ANN staff



Robert S. Folkenberg, an innovative church administrator and mission advocate who led the Seventh-day Adventist Church for nine years, died December 24 after a lengthy struggle with cancer.

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EMPLOYMENT

Adventist Health System

is seeking a Summer Associate to work in their Corporate Legal department for at least six weeks in 2016. Candidate must be in top 25% of class. Interest/experience in health-care industry preferred, but not required. Duties include legal research and other projects, totaling 40 hours per week. Pay is \$20-\$25 per hour; reasonable relocation expenses

will be reimbursed. Please send transcript and resume to manuela.asaftei@ahss.org.

Walla Walla University is looking to fill several full-time tenure-track faculty positions in the areas of Educational Psychology, English Education/Children's Literature, Industrial Design, Nineteenth Century British Literature, Research Services Librarian, Music, Psychology, and Social Work. For a detailed description of each position and to apply, please visit: <http://jobs.wallawalla.edu>.

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-Stephan, Listener in Ukraine

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Andrews University seeks Academy Principal. The Principal is Andrews Academy's leader and is responsible for ensuring that the school fulfills its mission and goals. The Principal provides leadership for Andrews Academy by ensuring the continuation of Andrews Academy as an excellent Seventh-day Adventist secondary school and positioning the school for a successful future. He/she administers the school consistent with the policies and procedures adopted by the Operating Board and will be responsible for all faculty and staff of Andrews Academy. For more information or to apply visit: <https://www.andrews.edu/admres/jobs/743>.

La Sierra University is seeking College of Arts & Sciences Dean candidates. Should hold earned doctorate or terminal degree, preferably in the arts and sciences; be a member of the SDA denomination; and have demonstrated effectiveness as a teacher, scholar, and administrator. Additional details and application instructions available at <https://goo.gl/ZTQrY2>. Position open until filled.

Southwestern Adventist University seeks Development Director. Responsibilities include fundraising, special events and donor recognition. Exceptional communication skills are essential. Bachelor's degree and previous fundraising experience required. Submit cover letter and CV/resume to Human Resources at denise.rivera@swau.edu.

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D2U is a delivery service. If you do not place an order, it will not be on the truck. Each order will be charged a \$5.00 delivery fee

Houston Route

We will remain at each stop for 30 minutes

	Monday, February 22	Arrive	Depart
Round Rock	4 Applegate Circle, Round Rock, TX 78665	10:45 AM	11:15 AM
Austin Stonehill	4301 Kelly Lane, Pflugerville, TX 78660	11:45 AM	12:15 PM
Austin Spanish First	100 W Rundberg Ln, Austin, TX 78753	1:25 PM	1:55 PM
Elgin	225 Lexington Rd, Elgin, TX 78621	2:40 PM	3:10 PM
Bastrop	3300 HWY 21 E, Paige, TX 78659	3:50 PM	4:20 PM
Victoria	3103 E Mockingbird Ln, Victoria, TX 77904	6:20 PM	6:50 PM
	Tuesday, February 23	Arrive	Depart
Rosenberg	1501 Dyer Ave, Rosenberg, TX 77471	9:30 AM	10:00 AM
Katy	1913 East Ave, Katy, TX 77493	10:45 AM	11:15 AM
Houston West	2390 W Sam Houston Pkwy N, Houston TX 77043	11:45 AM	12:15 PM
Houston World Harvest	10800 A Scott St Houston, TX 77047	1:45 PM	2:15 PM
Houston Gulflhaven	10716 Sabo Rd, Houston, TX 77089	3:00 PM	3:30 PM
Houston Spn Magnolia Park	7318 East Fwy, Houston, TX 77020	4:30 PM	5:00 PM
Houston Spring Creek	2190 Spring Creek Dr, Spring, TX 77373	6:00 PM	6:30 PM
	Wednesday, February 24	Arrive	Depart
Conroe Spanish	115 Silverdale Dr, Conroe, TX 77301	8:45 AM	9:15 AM
Huntsville	7660 State Highway 75 S, Huntsville, TX 77340	10:00 AM	10:30 AM
Bryan/College Station	1350 Earl Rudder Fwy S, College Station, TX 77840	11:45 AM	12:15 PM

Order Deadline for the Houston Route is Thursday, February 18. Call 800-333-1844 to Order.

Louisiana / East Texas Route

We Will Remain at Each Stop for 30 Minutes

	Monday, March 7	Arrive	Depart
Athens New Beginnings	511 Chase St, Athens, TX 75751	10:10 AM	10:40 AM
Tyler	2935 S Southeast Loop 323, Tyler, TX 75701	11:40 AM	12:10 PM
Longview	2800 Airline Rd, Longview TX 75605	1:40 PM	2:10 PM
Marshall	159 Standpipe Rd E, Marshall, TX 75670	2:55 PM	3:25 PM
Jefferson Academy	3000 FM 728, Jefferson, TX 75657	3:55 PM	4:25 PM
Shreveport - Conf Office	7025 Greenwood Rd, Shreveport, LA 71119	5:25 PM	5:55 PM
	Tuesday, March 8	Arrive	Depart
Minden	108 Harveys Way, Minden, LA 71055	9:00 AM	9:30 AM
Monroe Macedonia	2300 Lee Ave, Monroe LA 71202	10:45 AM	11:15 AM
Central Louisiana Church	298 Mary Hill Rd, Pineville, LA 71360	1:30 PM	2:00 PM
Baton Rouge	4455 Jones Creek Rd, Baton Rouge, LA 70817	4:30 PM	5:00 PM
Hammond Emmanuel	1401 Harrell Ave, Hammond LA 70403	6:00 PM	6:30 PM
	Wednesday, March 9	Arrive	Depart
Covington Ephesus	923 N Florida St, Covington LA 70433	8:45 AM	9:15 AM
Mandeville	22337 Little Creek Rd, Mandeville, LA 70471	9:45 AM	10:15 AM
Slidell	2448 Gause Blvd W, Slidell, LA 70460	10:45 AM	11:15 AM
New Orleans -First	4201 W Esplanade Ave, Metairie, LA 70006	12:15 PM	12:45 PM
Lockport Spanish	504 Seventh St, Lockport, LA 70374	2:15 PM	2:45 PM
Houma	3342 W Main St, Gray, LA 70359	3:30 PM	4:00 PM
New Iberia	3608 Highway 14, New Iberia, LA 70560	5:20 PM	5:50 PM
Lafayette	119 Rena Dr, Lafayette, LA 70503	6:35 PM	7:05 PM
	Thursday, March 10	Arrive	Depart
Lake Charles	1537 Country Club Rd, Lake Charles, LA 70605	9:30 AM	10:00 AM
Beaumont	3175 S Major Dr, Beaumont, TX 77720	11:15 AM	11:45 AM
Lufkin	1209 S John Redditt Dr, Lufkin, TX 75904	2:30 PM	3:00 PM
Rusk	660 Euclid Ave, Rusk, TX 75785	4:00 PM	4:30 PM
Corsicana	3210 N Business 45, Corsicana, TX 75110	6:15 PM	6:45 PM

Order Deadline for the Louisiana / East Texas Route is Thursday, March 3. Call 800-333-1844 to Order.

UP-COMING 2016 D2U Routes

West Texas Southern New Mexico	March 21-24
Eastern Oklahoma/NW Arkansas	April 4-7
Arkansas/East Texas	April 18-21
Western Oklahoma/N New Mexico	May 2-5

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- End-time Events, LBGT Issues, and Christian Responsibility *by Ron Woolsey*
- Get Ready for the Mark of the Beast *by Steve Wohlberg*
- Three Angels Before the End *by Steve Wohlberg*
- Fools Before Earth's Final Crisis *by Steve Wohlberg*
- The Beast Within *by Steve Wohlberg*

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6-day Natural Remedies and Hydrotherapy Workshop: July 31-August 5 at Andrews University. Details: Andrews.edu/go/nrhw, janinec@andrews.edu, or 269.471.3541.

"New Testament Alive" Tour of Rome/Greece/Patmos/Turkey: June 1-12, 2016. Sites include Roman Coliseum and Forum, Catacombs, Mamerline Prison, Vatican, Revelation's Seven Churches, ferry to Patmos, Athens, Mars Hill, and Sabbath worship in Corinth. Co-led by Dr. Andy Nash and Dr. Greg King. \$2,150 plus flight. For info, email andy-nash5@gmail.com. (Israel tour June 12-22 also available!)

Butler Creek Health Center Victorious Living Seminar: A live-in lifestyle change program for those seeking victory over depression, stress, smoking, alcohol, drug-related dependencies, and lifestyle diseases. Included are hydrotherapy treatments, personal one-on-one counseling, cooking classes, personal fitness plan, and a lecture series on the physiology of change and developing will power. Programs are tailor-made for each individual guest. Beginning and ending dates are flexible. Register online or call: 931.213.1329. www.butlercreekhealth.org.

NATIONAL FAMILY RETREAT 2016: March 30 - April 3
Practical messages // Break-outs // Family recreation // Exhibits. Topics: Parenting // Family // Marriage // Youth // Young adult // Media. Speakers: Waters, Rayne, and Nebblett families and Scott Ritsema. Wewoka Adventist Center near Oklahoma City. restoration-international.org/nfr or 918.827.7012. Look for our ad on page 37.

Announcements

La Sierra Academy Alumni Weekend 2016 is April 22-23 on the LSA campus. Please update your mailing address and contact info: JNelson@lsak12.com, 951.351.1445, ex. 244. Honor Classes '56, '66, '76, '86, '91, '96, '06 and pre-50 year classes. Info: www.lsak12.com.

Broadview Academy Alumni Association: BVA Alumni Weekend is April 30 - May 1, 2016. All alumni are encouraged to attend. Mark your calendars. Call your classmates and start planning for this weekend now. Honor classes: 1946, 1956, 1966, 1976, 1986, 1991, 1996, and 2006. N. Aurora SDA Church, N. Aurora, Ill. Friday night Vespers, SS, Church, Lunch and afternoon music program. All ideas and information welcome. For communication purposes, we need your e-mail addresses, as postage is too expensive. Send it to: Ed Gutierrez at edjulie1@att.net; or call: 630.232.9034. More Information to come. Don't miss it!

Nonprofit Leadership Certification Program: The Nonprofit Leadership Certification program is sponsored by Adventist Community Services to equip and educate church

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MARCH 30 - APRIL 3, 2016
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leaders to play a vital role in their local communities. The wide range of seminars provides participants with a road map for effective, meaningful community change. \$200/person by March 28, 2016. \$300/person for on-site registration. Register with www.advent-source.org.

Southwestern Adventist University's Homecoming weekend is April 8-10, 2016. More info at swau.edu/alumni or licci.zem@swau.edu.

Choral Reunion: If you sang in a Walla Walla College/University select (touring) choir, you are warmly invited to attend the 50-year Choral Reunion, featuring the Lickey years through the present, during homecoming, Apr 21-24, Walla Walla University. For details and registration, access wallawalla.edu/touringchoir, Facebook.com/WallaWallaUni-

versityMusic, music@WallaWalla.edu, or 509.527.2561. Homecoming schedule at wallawalla.edu/homecoming.

Laurelbrook School Alumni Weekend: Alumni President, Phillip Walton '81 announces Alumni Weekend will be April 1-3, 2016 at the academy in Dayton, TN. Theme is "A Vision for Missions." All those that ever attend Laurelbrook (all students, alumni and current or former staff) are encouraged to attend this homecoming. Fun-filled activities are being planned. Mark your calendars now and also encourage your classmates to come. Honor Classes are 1956, 1961, 1966, 1971, 1976, 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996, 2001, 2006, 2011 and 2016. If you need housing on campus for this event contact Jean Talley 423.775.9448, or email jean081246@gmail.com. For other inquiries, email alumni@laurelbrook.org

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Obituaries

BLOUNT, Reggie Odell, born November 24, 1975 in Baton Rouge, La., and died November 10, 2015 in Denham Springs, La. He was a member of the Baton Rouge church. He was pre-deceased by his father, Jessie Wayne Blount. He owned his own business and loved life. He was very active in his church. Mountain biking, camping, boating, canoeing, and motor cycle riding were some of his favorite activities. He will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved him. Survivors: wife, Christy Blount; daughters, Brianna and Adrianna Blount; mother, Eleanor Rose Blount; brother, Kevin Wayne Blount, and sister-in-law, Denise Blount, of Denham Springs; brother, Keith Richard Blount, of Prairieville; sister, Connie DeAnn Ouro, and brother-in-law, Jean Magno Ouro, of Brazil; and many other family members.

JONES, Francis Jeanine, born October 17, 1934 in Lucedale, Miss., and died December 8,

2015, in Tulsa, Okla. She was a member of Adventist Fellowship in Tulsa. Survivors: daughters, Belinda Ruth Horn, Mary Beth Broach, and Laura Annette Polinka; and son, Henry D. Jones.

LANGLOIS, Norbert R., born February 16, 1930 in Baton Rouge, La., and died December 29, 2015 in Baton Rouge. He was a member of the Baton Rouge church. He was a member of the American Legion Post 38. "Mr. Buck," as he was affectionately called, was an avid scale model builder dating back to his teenage years. He was a pilot and enjoyed flying as often as he could. Always willing to lend a helping hand, he was loved and adored by many. He was preceded in death by a son, Bart H. Langlois. Survivors: wife of 60 years, Ina Guss Langlois; son, Brett T. Langlois, and fiancée Christine Moore; sister, Jaqueline McQueen; two granddaughters; two great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

SABBATH SUNSET CALENDAR

	Feb 5	Feb 12	Feb 19	Feb 26	Mar 4	Mar 11
Abilene, TX	6:15	6:21	6:27	6:33	6:38	6:44
Albuquerque, NM	5:38	5:45	5:52	5:58	6:04	6:10
Amarillo, TX	6:18	6:25	6:32	6:39	6:45	6:51
Brownsville, TX	6:15	6:20	6:25	6:29	6:33	6:37
Dallas, TX	6:02	6:09	6:15	6:21	6:26	6:32
El Paso, TX	5:42	5:49	5:55	6:00	6:06	6:11
Fort Worth/Keene, TX	6:04	6:11	6:17	6:23	6:29	6:34
Gallup, NM	5:45	5:53	6:00	6:06	6:13	6:19
Galveston/Houston, TX	6:01	6:07	6:13	6:18	6:23	6:27
Gentry, AR	5:47	5:54	6:02	6:08	6:15	6:21
Little Rock, AR	5:41	5:48	5:55	6:01	6:08	6:13
Muskogee, OK	5:52	5:59	6:06	6:12	6:19	6:25
New Orleans, LA	5:40	5:46	5:51	5:56	6:01	6:06
Oklahoma City, OK	6:01	6:08	6:15	6:21	6:28	6:34
Roswell, NM	5:32	5:39	5:45	5:51	5:57	6:03
San Antonio, TX	6:14	6:20	6:25	6:30	6:35	6:40
Shreveport, LA	5:50	5:57	6:03	6:09	6:14	6:20
Tulsa, OK	5:53	6:00	6:08	6:14	6:21	6:27

2016 Sunset Calendars are now available at
www.SouthwesternAdventist.org/sunset

On the Record »

BY PAT HUMPHREY » COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR, SOUTHWESTERN UNION



The Apple of God's Eye

I AM A PERSON WHO LIKES PLANNING, STRUCTURE, AND ORDER. (Though if you were to walk into my office around the *Record* deadline you might wonder if that's true!) This trait of mine manifests itself in several ways. Whenever someone makes a statement that seems to be unfounded, my response is usually, "What are you basing that on?" Or, "Where's the evidence?" And when someone invites me to be a part of an upcoming program or activity, I often ask, "What's the plan?" I like knowing what's ahead and what to expect (as far as possible), as well as being clear on what I need to do; and having a well-laid-out plan gives me a certain sense of assurance.

So it was interesting to me—and slightly amusing—when I read about some of the organizational struggles of the Adventist Church in *Tell It to the World* by C. Mervyn Maxwell. While some of the pioneers recognized the need to create an identity and name for the growing group of early Advent believers, as well as move toward establishing a formal organization, others pushed back from the idea, fearing that to do so would be like becoming Babylon. It's very hard for me to grasp that some didn't want to create a formal organization. (You can read more about this history in the chapter entitled "In Need of Gospel Order.")

But challenges such as the rise of

offshoot groups and how to deal with them, the demand for regular publications and communication tools, such as the *Review and Herald*, the need for a system for handling employment matters and the ordination of preachers, as well as the legal issues related to holding church property, made it clearly evident to the pioneers that formal organization would be essential to the church's continued growth and mission.

Since the Seventh-day Adventist Church was formally established in 1863, it has grown from a membership of 3,500 to more than 18.5 million people. I sincerely doubt that that kind of growth would have been possible had the early Adventist

pioneers chosen not to organize. Ellen White, in Letter 32a, 1892, reflects on this, saying, "The system of organization has proved a grand success. . . . Let none entertain the thought. . . . that we can dispense with organization. It has cost us much study, and many prayers for wisdom that we know that God has answered, to erect this structure. It has been built up by his direction. . . . Let none of our brethren be so deceived as to attempt to tear it down, for you will thus bring in a condition of things that you do not dream of. . . . Let everyone be exceedingly careful not to unsettle minds in regard to those things that God has ordained for our prosperity and success in advancing his cause."

The Seventh-day Adventist Church—God's church—isn't a perfect organization, but I believe it's the apple of God's eye and the instrument through which He will finish His work on earth. I'm thankful and privileged to be a part of it, aren't you?

Pat Humphrey

Record

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April 23

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May 7–8

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DCA | Feb. 2 @ 6:30pm

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