

SOUTHWESTERN UNION

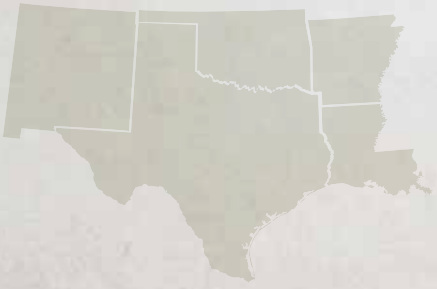
# Record

MARCH 2016



*Sowing Seeds for the Kingdom*

SPECIAL ISSUE ON CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES



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**On the Cover**

Ministering to children is the work of every member. Linda Knutson "sows seeds for the kingdom" as she welcomes the Tiny Tots class to Sabbath School and invites them to pray with her at the Burleson, Texas, church. [Photo by Jessica Lozano]



# Point of View»

BY SONIA CANÓ » SOUTHWESTERN UNION CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES DIRECTOR



## Working Together for Our Children

**W**hen we think of children's ministries, we mainly think of children's Sabbath School, but children's ministries is much more than that. Children's ministries is Sabbath School, child evangelism, Vacation Bible School, teaching about stewardship, protecting our children, children's church, children's choir, and, my favorite, child preachers.

The mission of children's ministries is to reach out to children and draw them into a loving, serving relationship with Jesus Christ and with their church.

The North American Division has been working on empowering our children with a new VBX (Vacation Bible Experience) for 2016, and here in the Southwestern Union, we will continue "equipping and empowering" our children.

There are three vital roles in children's ministries. The first is *you*, the parents! You are on the front lines for your children! The second is *you*, the children's ministries leaders. You are also unique and

necessary! Together we will work for our precious children, who play the third vital role. Our goal for all of the children here in the Southwestern Union is to meet Jesus Christ and live with Him for eternity.

In order for that to be accomplished, children need to be nourished at home. They need to have the support of the entire church body. They need to be guided by every children's ministries leader. They need *you*!

God gave you a heart for children's ministries, and all you need to do is to become equipped. The Southwestern Union's children's ministries team is ready to equip and empower you. On the following pages you will find inspiration and resources for children's ministries. Please pay close attention to the article on page 12 in regards to protecting our children.

I praise God that I am able to serve Him by serving His children together with you!

Sonia Canó





# To Your Health

BY MARCIA VANHORN

## Kid's Health Expo:

### HAVING FUN WHILE LEARNING TO MAKE HEALTHY CHOICES!

**P**raise the Lord that children are very important to God! To give our children a head start on lifelong health and fitness, the Houston Berean church hosted its first annual free Kid's Health Expo. The expo was sponsored by the Southwestern Union Conference and facilitated by Sonia Canó and Jacquelyn Martin. Approximately 40 children and youth from the church and community were able to discover fun and simple ways to grow smart and healthy. The eight natural health laws were introduced with fun activities, crafts, and games so children could learn to practice them.

The expo was designed so that the children could rotate



through the eight stations (nutrition, air, sunshine, exercise, rest, temperance, water, and trust) in a two-and-a-half-hour period. The stations were set up with colorful banners depicting the eight natural health laws. As the children arrived, they were registered and organized into small groups. They were each given a participation sheet to be stamped at each station. The children smiled, laughed, asked questions, and enthusiastically participated as they learned the importance of taking care of the beautiful bodies given to them by their Creator. At the end of the expo the children turned in their completed sheets and were thrilled to receive a kid's expo T-shirt, stuffed animal, bottled water, a healthy snack, and a certificate showing participation and completion of each station.

The Kid's Health Expo, a ready-to-use concept with easy to use materials, is a wonderful and innovative way to teach chil-

Children learned about the eight laws of health in a fun and interactive way at the Houston Berean Church's first annual Kid's Health Expo.

dren about the importance of living a healthy lifestyle and how simple choices make it possible to do so. Why not host a kid's health expo at your church? For

more information, contact the Southwestern Union Conference Children's Ministries director, Sonia Canó.

Marcia VanHorn

## The Way I Felt When I Was Telling the Children's Story

**ONE SABBATH, WAY BEFORE I DID THE CHILDREN'S STORY FOR CHILDREN'S CHURCH,** I thought about if I would be able to tell the children's story. I thought, What topic would I do? I thought of a time when I was dehydrated. I thought about the lesson that, just like liquids are important to me, God's love is important to all of us.

Even though I found a lesson in that, I didn't really think I would be able to tell the children's story. Then, one Sabbath, our church's pastor asked me to do children's story for children's church.

I was really nervous, because when I play the opening song for church, I can barely bow without being shy. Telling the children's story seemed very frightening, but I accepted. I practiced what I was going to say over and over again. When the day came that I had to tell the children's story, I was super nervous, but my parents said everything was going to be all right.

In first service there weren't that many kids, so I wasn't that nervous. But in second service there were a lot more kids, so I was a lot more nervous. When I asked for a volunteer, no one raised their hand,



Alexandra Pollock recently told the children's story at her church in Burleson, Texas.



so I got worried that no one was going to raise their hand. Finally, a girl named Mia raised her hand. I was so relieved that it went well. After I was done telling the children's story, I was still a little nervous but glad it was over. I learned that even though we're sometimes nervous, God is always there for us.

**Alexandra Pollock** is a nine-year-old student at Burleson Adventist School in Burleson, Texas.



# Pass it On...

A Monthly Focus on Evangelism in the Southwest

BY GABBI SIMPSON

## The Ministry of Children

The words of Matthew 25 are one of the first that come to mind with the thought of serving as Christ would have us serve. “For I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’ Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you did *it* to Me’”(Matthew 25:35-40, NKJV).

Earlier in Matthew, Jesus said, “Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for such is the kingdom of Heaven” (Matthew 19:14). Even little children have a work they can do for Christ and we are not to forbid them from this work.

In the Cherokee Rockets Adventurer Club, children are encouraged to do that work for Christ; from Little Lambs to Helping Hands, each has a work suited to their age and ability.

Wishing to start the year with the right mindset, the first time the Adventurers gave was at Induction on November 7, 2015. After Induction was over and while we were waiting for potluck to be ready, we made holiday Chemo Care Kits for Kids for the children of Oklahoma University Children’s Hospital. These kits included pre-approved items, such as: crayons, activity books, toy cars, simple crafts, and similar items. We asked members of the church to bring sets of items to help us fill the boxes and therefore included everyone in giving. An assembly line was set up and each Adventurer went through and filled a box with each item. The boxes were prayed over and mailed the next week.

In December 2015, the Adventurers went caroling. This being the Cherokee Rockets’ first year as a club, they were unsure if the caroling would be well received. Would songs of our Saviors coming be welcomed at the door in today’s day and age? Nonetheless, the Adventurers buttoned their jackets and strapped on their guitars and headed door-to-door to sing for their neighbors. Not only was it well received, but those neighbors made requests for the Adventurers to visit other loved ones nearby and sing to them



The Cherokee Rockets Adventurer Club made Chemo Care Kits for Kids for the children at Oklahoma University Children’s Hospital and helped to bag meals for children in an orphanage in Haiti.

as well. Many neighbors made comments that door-to-door caroling is an activity not seen anymore and how much it is missed. The Rockets rejoiced at the opportunity to spread some holiday cheer and fill the hearts of those listening with the love of Jesus.

Also during the holiday season, the Adventurers ran a toy drive in Cherokee. A few months earlier, our much-loved pastor’s six-year-old son had fallen from a three-story window and had to be helicoptered away to Oklahoma City. This ordeal met such a place in our hearts that we wanted to find more ways to give. The toy drive was for the OU Children’s Hospital.

During the same time, a local family member who was pregnant had gone into premature labor. This was quite a scare to the Adventurers and they wanted to find a way to give to her. The Adventurers picked out cards and a present to send to that family member during her bed rest.

In January of 2016, the Rockets met another opportunity to give by going on a field trip to “Stamp Out Starvation” where the club and a few church members bagged meals for children in an orphanage in Haiti. This is a much-loved ministry in our area and the Adventurers were glad to participate. When the opportunity arose a few weeks before, the Adventurers and their church sent out an invitation to neighboring churches to join together on the same day to bag and box meals for Haiti. Two churches, Alva and Okeene, obliged. Between all three churches and the Adventurer Club, 14,000 meals were assembled. Praise God!

There are more opportunities on the horizon to serve as Christ served to our greatest capacity. We look forward to these opportunities and highly anticipate them. When the Adventurers were called, they stepped forward ready to serve. Christ has called all of us to serve. Are you ready?



## El Ministerio de los Niños

Las palabras de Mateo 25 son las primeras palabras que llegan a mi mente cuando tiene que ver con servicio. “Porque tuve hambre, y me disteis de comer; tuve sed, y me disteis de beber; fui forastero, y me recogisteis; *estuve* desnudo, y me cubristeis; enfermo, y me visitasteis; en la cárcel, y vinisteis a mí. Entonces los justos le responderán diciendo: Señor, ¿cuándo te vimos hambriento, y *te sustentamos*, o sediento, y *te dimos* de beber? ¿Y cuándo te vimos forastero, y *te recogimos*, o desnudo, y *te cubrimos*? ¿O cuándo te vimos enfermo, o en la cárcel, y vinimos a ti? Y respondiendo el Rey, les dirá: De cierto os digo que en cuanto *lo hicisteis* a uno de estos mis hermanos más pequeños, a mí lo hicisteis”. (Mateo 25:35-40, RVR 1960).

Anteriormente en Mateo, Jesús dijo, “Dejad a los niños venir a mí, y no se lo impedáis; porque de los tales es el reino de los cielos”. (Mateo 19:14). Hasta los niños pueden trabajar para Cristo y nosotros no los debemos de impedir de hacer ese trabajo.

En el Club de Aventureros de Cherokee Rockets, a los niños se les alienta hacer ese trabajo para Cristo; desde Little Lambs hasta Helping Hands, cada uno tiene un trabajo asignado adecuado a su edad y habilidad.

Deseando empezar el año con la mentalidad positiva, la primera vez que los Aventureros demostraron la dadivosidad fue en la Inducción el 7 de noviembre de 2015. Después de la inducción mientras preparaban la comida que íbamos a disfrutar juntos en la iglesia, nos juntamos para hacer unos paquetitos de cariño para los niños que reciben tratamientos de Quimioterapia en el hospital de La Universidad de Oklahoma. Estos paquetes incluían

artículos pre-aprobados, tales como: crayones, libros de actividades, carros de juguete, manualidades y artículos similares. Les pedimos a los miembros de la iglesia que trajeran artículos y



El Club de Aventureros de Cherokee Rockets hicieron paquetes de cariño para los niños que reciben tratamientos de Quimioterapia en el hospital de La Universidad de Oklahoma y ayudaron a empaquetar bolsas de comida para niños en un orfanato en Haití.



que nos ayudaran a llenar las cajas y por lo tanto todos fueron incluidos en dar. Una línea de ensamblaje se creó y cada Aventurero pasó y lleno cada una con cada artículo. Oramos por cada caja y se enviaron por correo la siguiente semana.

En diciembre de 2015, los Aventureros salieron a cantar villancicos. Siendo el primer año de los Cherokee Rockets como club, no estaban seguros si iban a ser bien recibidos los cantos. ¿Será que los cantos de la venida de Cristo iban a ser bien recibidos en ese momento? Sin embargo, los Aventureros se abrigaron y alistaron sus guitarras y salieron puerta por puerta cantando para sus vecinos. No solo los recibieron con alegría, sino que esos mismos vecinos les pidieron que fueran los Aventureros a visitar y cantar a otros familiares cercanos. Varios vecinos hicieron comentarios que ir puerta por puerta cantando villancicos es una actividad que ya no se practica y se le extraña. Los Rockets se regocijaron en haber tenido la oportunidad de esparcir un poco de alegría navideña y de haber llenado los corazones de aquellos que escucharon con el amor de Cristo.

También durante la temporada navideña, los Aventureros hicieron una colecta de juguetes en Cherokee. Unos meses antes, el hijo de seis años de edad de nuestro querido pastor se había caído de una ventana del tercer piso y tuvieron que llevarlo por helicóptero a Oklahoma City. Esta prueba llegó tanto a nuestros corazones que queríamos encontrar más formas de dar. La colecta de juguetes era para el hospital de niños OU. Durante el mismo tiempo, un miembro de una familia local que estaba embarazada había entrado en parto prematuro. Esto les asustó a los Aventureros y querían encontrar una manera de ayudarlo a ella. Ellos escogieron una tarjeta y un regalo para mandarle a este miembro de familia durante su reposo en cama.

En enero de 2016, Los Rockets encontraron otra oportunidad para dar yendo a una excursión a “Stamp Out Starvation” donde el club y algunos miembros de la iglesia empaquetaban comidas para niños en un orfanato en Haití. Este es un ministerio muy querido en nuestra zona y los Aventureros estaban felices de haber participado. Cuando la oportunidad surgió algunas semanas antes, los Aventureros y su iglesia mandaron invitaciones a otras iglesias vecinas para unirse el mismo día para empaquetar las comidas para Haití. Dos iglesias, Alva y Okeene, aceptaron. Entre las tres iglesias y el club de Aventureros, 14,000 comidas fueron ensambladas. ¡Gloria a Dios!

Hay más oportunidades en el horizonte para servir como Cristo sirvió a mayor capacidad. Esperamos estas oportunidades y las anticipamos altamente. Cuando los Aventureros fueron llamados, ellos dieron un paso adelante listos para servir. Dios nos llama a todos a servir. ¿Estás listo?

Por Gabbi Simpson

# CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES: EVERY MEMBER HAS A PART

Sonia Canó, children's ministries director, Southwestern Union

*"I will teach all your children and they will enjoy great peace" (Isaiah 54:13).*

**T**he knowledge of God as revealed in His word is the knowledge to be given to our children. From the earliest dawn of reason they should be made familiar with the name and the life of Jesus" (*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 320).

We often hear the phrase, "It takes a village to raise a child." I like to apply that principle to the church. It takes all of us—the whole church—to educate a child for the Kingdom of Heaven. We need everyone's help, the families, churches, and conferences of the Southwestern Union, in order to equip and empower our youngest members.

We in the Southwestern Union are very encouraged by the number of children giving their hearts to Jesus through baptism and by their participation in each and every one of the programs that their local churches provide for them.

How can we continue this momentum? How do we teach, train, and motivate them in the Lord's work? It's amazing what kids today can do with the help of technology. I'm sure you've seen the young toddlers who are better at using smart phones than their parents!

How can we take advantage of technology to reach these tech-wise kids? Following the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, we will unite to use the best methods to equip and empower our children.

**First**, we have organized to create a union children's ministries team across the five conferences. Each conference has a coordinator, area coordinators, and bilingual coordinators, as needed, who voluntarily

collaborate in the various areas of children's ministries, which include: Sabbath School, Vacation Bible School, evangelism, children's ministries leader certification, children's stewardship, protecting children, and assistance to local churches in their different needs. Let's meet the team:

## Southwestern Union Children's Ministries Team

### Arkansas-Louisiana Conference:

**Joyce Fortner**, coordinator  
**Debbie Burghart**, Central Arkansas assistant area coordinator  
**Lanette Bieber**, assistant area coordinator  
**Soledad Prieto**, Spanish assistant coordinator



### Oklahoma Conference:

**Chrystal Flerchinger**, coordinator  
**Carol Chadwick**  
**Adelita Armenta**, Spanish assistant area coordinator



### Southwest Region Conference:

**Charles Sanders**, director  
**Cheryl Harris**, coordinator



### Texas Conference:

**Barbara Craft**, director  
**Rosy Mata**, Valley Grande area coordinator  
**Seneth Lopez**, Houston area coordinator  
**Mandy and Geraldo Alonso**, San Antonio area coordinators  
**Sandra and Delmon Tucker**, Fort Worth area coordinators



### Texico Conference:

**Josie Green**, coordinator  
**Lisa Clifford**, assistant area coordinator  
**Silvia Miranda**, Spanish assistant area coordinator



### Southwestern Union Area Assistants and Presenters

**Jackie Martin**  
**Yuniva Reyes**



We recognize the need for our Spanish-speaking churches to have bilingual volunteers. If your church needs assistance in any area, please contact us, we are here to serve!





**Second**, pray, pray, pray! Please, help us with your prayers! Pray for the families at your local church. Pray for the children’s ministries leaders. Pray for the children, and take the time to pray with them, too! Visit their Sabbath School class, and when you pray, mention each of them by name, and ask for specific blessings in their lives.

Parents: I pray that the Lord will bless you with wisdom and patience to train your children in the Lord’s ways. Set aside special time at home to have worship with your kids, read the Bible, pray, and sing. Share with them what God does for them every day. Fathers, when your children see you praising God, they know it is important, but if you don’t take time for God, the message you’re sending is that God and church are not important, not worth it. Please make a special effort to bring them to church on time. Do your best to involve them in all the church activities and programs for children.

Children’s ministries leaders: I praise God for you all. You are called by the Holy Spirit. Thank you for saying “yes” to God. Thank you for collaborating in the great work of empowering our children. They are ready to do great things for our Lord, but we must train, guide, and love them.

**Third**, take advantage of the resources available for children’s ministries. There are many resources for your ministry, and many activities and programs for all ages.

- VBS Training—Every spring the Southwestern Union conducts training for the upcoming VBS program in each conference. Check our Web site for the latest information and dates: [www.southwesternadventist.org/children](http://www.southwesternadventist.org/children). The 2016 program, Vacation Bible Xperience “Kidsville,” is highlighted on page 14.
- Children’s Sabbath (July 23, 2016) is a day that children are es-

pecially invited to be involved in the church services. More information about Children’s Sabbath is available at [www.gcchildmin.org](http://www.gcchildmin.org).

- Children’s Health Expo—The Southwestern Union has been working to develop this wonderful evangelism tool. It is a program where children can learn in a practical but fun way about the eight natural remedies, as well as the importance of knowing how their bodies work. The program reminds them that health care is a way to honor God, because He is our Creator. If your church is

interested in having a children’s health expo, please let us know! We have materials, ideas, and instruction manuals to assist you in using this form of child evangelism.

- See the sidebar for even more children’s ministries resources available online.

## Children’s Ministries Where You Are: Focus on Conference Work

### Arkansas-Louisiana Conference

Our children’s ministries leaders are reaching out in our communities to share the gospel with our neighborhood children while continuing the effort of reaching our own children.

We provide Vacation Bible School, children’s evangelism meetings, fall harvest parties, a puppet ministry, Adventurer and Pathfinder Clubs, children’s church, story time, children’s hospital ministry, parenting classes, and more.

During October, which is the North American Division’s Children’s Emphasis Month, we place extra awareness on the importance of the church involving their children in the activities of the church, as they are the church, too. Many of our churches create

special fall parties that include a variety of activities such as bonfires, hotdog roasts, games, hayrides, and “search in the hay” games for prizes and candy. The intention of these parties is to provide an awareness of the evil forces that the month presents (during Halloween), and give other choices for activities. Our emphasis is for each child to build a stronger relationship with Jesus.

Joyce Fortner

## Oklahoma Conference

What’s been happening in children’s ministries in Oklahoma in 2015? Let’s take a peek!

**FirstTulsa:** This church supports a vibrant church school.

First Tulsa children frequently lead out with church services, music programs, outreach projects, and Sabbath School programs. This year, the church hosted a block party—a community outreach to connect with families in close proximity to the First Tulsa church.

**Yukon:** With nine children coming to church, Carol Chadwick knew they needed a program to minister to them, so the church has started a new Adventurer Club.

**Bristow:** “Our children are involved in many ways at our church. They lead out with song service for the divine service. We have a monthly vespers service that is geared for the kids. The kids play the piano for the song service as well as lead out in the singing.

The junior deaconesses help with the ordinance of humility for Communion. The junior deacons are often called upon to help pick up offering. One junior deacon in particular is on the roster to run the PA system and is also on the mowing schedule. We have a yearly VBS that is held at our school, and children from a nearby low-income housing addition are invited to come (where they are fed supper).



**Muskogee:** Muskogee is a vibrant church filled with people who love children! Sabbath schools and church services often feature their children doing Scripture readings, offertory, special music, mission stories, praise teams, and sometimes, even sermons! The Adventurer and Pathfinder Clubs meet twice a month during the school year. Muskogee is reaching their children with a great VBS program every summer, and gather resources to sponsor as many children as they can to attend summer camp. Their church school is growing with 11 children this year in attendance. Just recently Muskogee began a nursing home singing group involving our children once a month.

**Porter:** This is a brand-new branch Sabbath school/company. This tiny congregation involves their children as part of the church family from the start. A new AY program has begun in Porter! Youth run the PA system, and the church implemented a VBS program just this past summer.

God has blessed our children with wonderful leaders with great ideas and willingness to be used wherever He leads. I can’t wait to see what’s in store for God’s kids in 2016!

Chrystal Flerchinger



## Southwest Region Conference

“When you walk, your steps will not be hindered, and when you run, you will not stumble” (Proverbs 4:12). How many times have you observed a child running after a ball into the busy street, or so caught up playing tag and running without thought for their safety to dodge and avoid being caught? In these situations, you were probably amazed at how their swiftness and adeptness helped to keep them from tripping or falling into potential harm or oncoming danger. Right before our eyes we beheld the invisible forces of discharged angels keeping them from peril. Invisible yet mighty superpowers dispatched 24/7 to watch over those in their custodial care.

As an adult, consider yourself that visible force that God has entrusted the duty of watchful guardianship and imparting wisdom to the young. Every encounter

with a child is an opportunity to minister. That is the motive behind children's ministries: We gently teach a child how to respond with good manners, and how to never give up on loving themselves after they have been bullied. We patiently instruct a child how to ride a bike, tie their shoelaces, or put their toys away neatly.

Even when you think you're not involved in ministering to children, you are. Children are always observing and cognizant of their environment and surroundings. They see you interacting with others and pick up on acceptable or unacceptable verbal and non-verbal cues. They notice that new suit or new car and without you realizing, they become your secret admirers. Every one of us are ministers assisting our young to not stumble. And don't think for a moment that your duty is without its reward for "as you did it to the least of these, you did it unto Me."



Cheryl Harris

## Texas Conference

The title of the song, "Jesus Loves the Little Children" gets straight to the heart of what we do for the children of Texas. There are so many hurting children who need to know how much Jesus loves them. We need to be His hands, feet, and heart for all the children in Texas, inside our churches, and in our communities.

Our team in Texas has been active in training local church leaders all over the state. We have Vacation Bible School trainings, Sabbath School trainings, and a children's evangelism track during the Texas Conference's evangelism trainings. In 2015 we were also involved in the children's program for the General Conference Session.

We would like to see as many churches as possible in the Texas Conference hold an evangelism event for children in 2016. Along with participating in the evangelism trainings, we are also planning a Vacation Bible School spotlight on April 3 at the San Antonio Laurel Heights church.

Barbara Craft

## Texico Conference

What is happening in children's ministry in the Texico conference? We have been training in different churches in our conference. One of those churches is in Odessa, Texas, where we have given a children's church training with classes that included: Understanding Our 21st Century Child, Learning Styles and Modes, Bring Stories to Life, and Planning and Choosing a Curriculum. We were invited back to Odessa and covered Jesus Loves Me 28 Ways, where we teach the importance of providing our kids with a firm foundation in our beliefs in a kid-friendly format. In Midland, Texas, we shared with the church the importance of teaching our children how to personally adore God. On the same day we had a Sabbath School training class for the children's divisions. In El Paso, we have had more certification trainings, including health expo certification. After a few more lessons we will be

ready for a graduation for the participants who have completed the basic track. We have had a Vacation Bible School training day for adults in El Paso, and look forward to having another one this year at El Paso Central church on March 13, 2016, where we will be promoting our Adventist Vacation Bible School curriculum.

Josie Green

## Children's Ministries Resource Links

[www.gracelink.net](http://www.gracelink.net)

The General Conference's official Children's Sabbath School Curriculum

[www.adventistVBX16.com](http://www.adventistVBX16.com)

North American Division's Vacation Bible School Program

[www.kidsministryideas.org](http://www.kidsministryideas.org)

North American Division Children's Ministries

[www.juniorpowerpoints.org](http://www.juniorpowerpoints.org)

A Bible study guide for juniors

[www.shieldthevulnerable.org](http://www.shieldthevulnerable.org)

Training and information about protecting our children

[www.adventsource.org](http://www.adventsource.org)

Children's ministries resources

[www.helpimarent.org](http://www.helpimarent.org)

Christian parenting in the real world

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

The online resource for books and resources published by the Adventist church

# SHIELD THE VULNERABLE

By Sonia Canó, children's ministries director, Southwestern Union

*“And the King will say, I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me” (Matthew 25:40).*

In order to protect our precious children and children's ministries volunteers from all types of abuse, we turn to the guidance of Adventist Risk Management's training programs and manuals. Because of our world today, where children, women, adults, and the elderly people suffer from all kinds of abuse, the North American Division Children's Ministries Department have put together videos, PowerPoints presentations, manuals, and booklets to teach everyone how to prevent and become aware of all types of abuse.

The Southwestern Union Children's Ministries Department has a specific training called: “Protecting the Children” and is part of the children's ministries certification training. In coordination with the local conferences, we have been training our children's ministries leaders, teaching that *any and all individuals* who work with children must obtain a certificate. They can take the free course, Shield the Vulnerable, online. All pastors and children's ministries coordinators are encouraged to promote and apply it in the local churches.



## Resources offered by Adventist Risk Management include:

- **Shield the Vulnerable:** PREPARED background screening and training program that is being implemented across the North American Division since 2012.
- **END IT NOW:** Understanding and preventing Child Abuse in the Adventist Church. Please help us to share this campaign.
  - Child Protection Plan Model-local church

- Local Church Implementation Plan
- Volunteer Information Form
- Volunteer Reference Check Form
- Child Protection Resources Guide
- Giving Our Best for God's Children

Parents, pastors, and children's ministries leaders: I plead with you that we educate ourselves in this area, that we put our maximum efforts into implementing these plans into the local churches. Together with God's blessings we can protect our children and leaders.

Every conference in the Southwestern Union will help you to become trained in the area of protecting the vulnerable. Contact your local children's ministries coordinator or visit [www.adventist-riskmanagement.org](http://www.adventist-riskmanagement.org) for more information.

# CHILDREN SHOW COMPASSION

By Joyce Fortner, children's ministries coordinator, Arkansas-Louisiana Conference

Teaching children about compassion is very important, as this is the way Jesus taught. Compassion is defined as the desire to help someone who is in distress. Compassion, in other words, is a feeling *and* an act. The best way to teach compassion is to put it into action.

As leaders we need to show an example of compassion by volunteering. We must first give to others, which should be as natural as providing for oneself.

**First**, let's look at how we teach our children to become compassionate:

- Show them how to volunteer by helping the child donate his clothing that is now too small or toys that he is not playing with.
- Clean up a small area of a park where children play.
- Visit a nursing home or a church member who is homebound.
- Take flowers or something the child would like to give to someone.

**Second**, hands-on experiences help children develop a sense of kindness and instill in them the desire to help others. Just get the children involved.

**Third**, education and experience are two important factors in getting children to volunteer. Arouse their awareness of the world around them.

If you want your child to grow into a compassionate young adult, start teaching compassion early in life. Marilyn Mitchell, PhD, says "Children who participate in programs that teach kindness, respect, empathy, and compassion and who have families that reinforce these strengths at home develop the muscles they need to become civically engaged adolescents and adults." Putting compassion into practice early can set precedents that last a lifetime.

During the teen years, they reach deep within themselves and act on the developed emotion of compassion. They exercise social,



spiritual, and civic identities that they have experienced earlier in life. They recognize how and when to take care of themselves. This allows them to make right decisions for the future.

Every child is different, so recognize the unique ways children exercise compassion. Children should be aware that others prefer to receive compassion in different ways. One person might appreciate a hug, while another may simply want a few kind words. Different situations require different types of compassion. Children must understand how to adapt to different situations, whether they are comforting a friend or donating clothes to someone in need.

As parents, teachers, and leaders we can discuss ways to show compassion:

- Use active listening during conversation.
- Say encouraging things to cheer others up.
  - Do nice things for others without expecting anything in return.
  - Respect the privacy of others (avoid gossip).
  - Show interest in others by reaching out.

The list is endless as to what you can do to show compassion to others of all ages, cultures, and need: provide and serve at soup kitchens; prepare food baskets, help at food banks; collect socks, hats, school supplies, gloves, coloring books, and canned foods; read to the elderly; develop singing groups/programs; or clean up a yard, park, or road side!



# VACATION BIBLE XPERIENCE:

## Kidsville *Where Jesus loves others through you*

By **Chrystal Flerchinger**, children's ministries coordinator, Oklahoma Conference

**S**ome of my fondest childhood memories take me back to a charming little church in windy Wyoming. There, after a few weeks of summer vacation, our family and friends from our neighborhood would gather for a long-anticipated event: Vacation Bible School! The first day we opened the doors and entered the foyer, the sights, sounds, and smiling faces would draw us in. Every activity, every room carefully decorated, every prize spoke of Jesus' affection for us.

When the program would close each day, we couldn't wait to come back and continue the fun! My three siblings and I would go home and beg our mom, "Can we bring more of our friends? Pleeeeease?" By the time the week was over, our mother's yellow Ford Pinto would transport children, stuffed like sardines any-

where they'd fit, for there was no way we could turn down anyone who wanted to go! Sometimes, she'd make two or three trips around the town just to get us all there!

That's a picture of the finest kind evangelism! It happens in some form every summer, everywhere VBS is utilized. Children meet and experience the love of Jesus, then they leave each day so excited, that they go and invite others so they can come too! That's what VBS is all about—evangelism!

This summer, your church and children are given an opportunity to reach out! Kids in your own churches and neighborhoods are ready to find an activity for the summer. Why not invite them to the one designed just for them to experience an eternity with Jesus Christ?



Imagine what you can do this summer with NAD's new 2016 Vacation Bible Xperience (VBX):

Kidsville—Where Jesus loves others through YOU!

As your church members greet them, children will be drawn into Kidsville, a charming community neighborhood. There, in the Playground Opening Program, they meet three playground friends, like themselves, who introduce the daily Bible Key Verse and

Action Point.

These kids encounter problems, then turn to Jesus to solve them. Each day, a new neighborhood dog interacts with children to teach and reinforce the day's lesson. They'll laugh with Mr. Wacky, who loves to discover the world through scientific experiments and projects. They'll learn to look for sightings of their peers demonstrating the lesson of the day, then affirm others as they write them on the Wow Wall.

The children rotate in small groups to Bible Adventures with Dr. Luke where Dr. Luke brings to life the experiences and teachings of Jesus. The Clubhouse is a favorite destination to engage in real-life applications of the Bible Action Point for the day. At the Snack Shack, the children taste healthy foods that reinforce the Bible Story. Each day's Bible Key Verse comes to life with each game at the Play Station. Creation Station gives children the opportunity to create their own Kidsville "town" that they can share with others long after VBX is finished. The discipline of prayer is hands-on at the Connection Station, a place where each child experiences unique opportunities to walk and talk with God.

Upon returning to the Playground Bounceback Closing Program, the day's Bible Story and Bible Action Point are reinforced. Children experience the thrill of making a difference in the lives of other children in a Mission project: Operation Shoebox. They fill up the Wow Wall, make new friends, and eagerly anticipate the next day's adventures. Off they'll go, telling their friends and neighborhood. And, oh, you may just have to squeeze a few more kids in that vehicle of yours, too!

# VBS Training Schedule

VBS Training will be hosted in each Conference on the following dates and locations:

## Arkansas-Louisiana Conference

**MARCH 20**—New Orleans, LA (Location TBD)

## Oklahoma Conference

To register, call Carol Chadwick at 405.721.6110, Ext. 118

**FEBRUARY 28**—Oklahoma International SDA Church, 11120 SE 29th St., Oklahoma City, OK

**APRIL 17**—First Tulsa SDA Church, 920 S New Haven Ave., Tulsa, OK

## Texas Conference

**APRIL 3**—Scenic Hills SDA Church, 11223 Bandera Rd., San Antonio, TX

## Texico Conference:

**MARCH 13**—Central Church, 1801 McRae Blvd., El Paso, TX



## Children's Ministries: **A Line of Defense**



ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

Madison is four years old. She is our youngest grandchild. She is wired with 100 Energizer batteries! Everything she does is done at a high pace, fast motion, high volume, and her conversations are delivered at lightning speed! As compared to other children her age, she is not necessarily unique, but to us, she is uniquely special. We want to see every possibility and advantage given to her to develop into a young lady who is committed to following and serving Jesus.

A few weeks ago, Madison was one of three children in her Cradle Roll Sabbath School class who were promoted to the Kindergarten Class. My wife, Micki, and I were not able to be there for the occasion, but we received a video clip of the event.

We were so proud of her. She stood with her fellow classmates dressed in a small graduation cap and gown. Even though she had a little trouble keeping the cap on her head, she reveled in the moment! Following a special prayer that was offered up for the "graduates," the service was over, robes and caps were removed, and they headed for their new Kindergarten classroom.

I am so thankful for a group of people who are deeply committed to patiently working with our children and providing for them an environment conducive to their spiritual development and growth. Children's ministries is the arm of the church that puts that special accent on children. However, this focus is not just realized in Sabbath School, but through Vacation Bible School, Adventurers, Path-

finders, church school, and many other spiritual activity aimed at children. It is people who make this happen. It is people who are willing to give their time, talents, and effort. People who value and love children and desire the very best for them are the backbone of Children's Ministries.

It is assumed that parents and grandparents will give of their best in raising children. Yet the ministry of other loving and caring Christians goes far in providing role models and support as buffers to a world that is corrupted by all kinds of evil, vice, and depravity. I want Madison—and my other four grandchildren—sheltered from those influences, and, after the home, the church must be the next line of defense.

**Stephen Oran**, president

## New Community Services Center Opens

**WEST HELENA, ARK. »** The West Helena and Forrest City churches have a new Community Services Center. Marjorie Babcock and Sharon Carpenter have done a great job setting up the center to serve the community. Donations of clothing, kitchen supplies, and household items have come in to help those in need.

One family lost their home to a fire. A young mother fled from an abusive husband with her children and had just the clothes they were wearing. Another family with two little girls were in need of school uniforms. These and many others have all been helped.

One woman donated several large bags of clothes. Sharon asked her, "Is it alright if we sell some of these to buy food for those in need?" The woman replied, "I don't care what you do with these, as long as it is helping someone."

A rummage sale is held once a month and the proceeds are used to buy food and



◀ Volunteers and community members mingle at the rummage sale.

▼ The center is organized and ready to be used in serving others.



items for the families that need help. We appreciate Marjorie and Sharon and all the volunteers for their community outreach.

**Betty Latimer Hoag**



# Monticello's Good Samaritans

**MONTICELLO, LA. »** The Monticello church introduced its new Good Samaritans Adventurer Club on October 31, 2015. We could not find any records of ever having an Adventurer Club in Monticello before. Angela Grant, the Adventurers area coordinator, led out in their induction ceremony. The church celebrated with a hayride and a bonfire that evening. During the next few weeks, the Good Samaritans went out collecting cans and then prepared and delivered three food baskets for people in their community. With nine children and nine adults, the club is very full of life and talents. Before Christmas, two of the Adventurer staff parents led out



**Top right:** The Adventurers learn about can collecting.

**▲** Adventurer hay ride

**Middle right:** Passing out food baskets

**▶** Monticello Adventurer Club induction ceremony

in a carpentry class. The children made a birdhouse together with great enthusiasm, and a much-needed and appreciated cabinet was also made for the church. The Lord is blessing and we thank Him for all He is doing.

**Debby Bush**



# Youth Make a Stand for Christ in Bentonville

**BENTONVILLE, ARK. »** In these last days, God gives us reason for hope! The recent baptism of four youth into the Bentonville church is one example, and so are the eight teenagers who held an evangelistic meeting that resulted in the four youth being baptized.

On Sabbath, December 5, 2015, Jeff Villegas, Arkansas-Louisiana Conference youth director, baptized Easton Jones, Micah Pritchett, Shacurious Broadus, and Christopher Broadus after they proclaimed their acceptance of Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. It was at the conclusion of a two-week evangelistic crusade hosted by the Bentonville Adventist Youth (AY) that these young people answered the call to be baptized.

The meetings were presented by eight young people, ranging from 15 to 18 years of age. Under the direction of their youth leader, these young people adopted evangelism as their mission and focus for the year. To prepare for the meetings, they attended the Texas Conference and Southwest Region Conference's Glad Reapers Evangelistic Training Series at Lone Star Camp in Athens, Texas. The speakers for the Bentonville event were

Daniel Garcia-Carvajal, Sheldon Glasgow, Jade Jones, Veronica Garcia-Carvajal, Chyna Holley, Delisa Polk, DaQuita Howard, and Adrian Broadus, Jr.

Each night, these young



▲ The youth who attended the "Glad Reaper" program learned to present Bible truths.

Far left: Four youth were baptized following an evangelism campaign presented by teens at the Bentonville church.

◀ Jeff Villegas baptized Christopher Broadus at the end of the evangelistic campaign.

people presented a topic from the New Beginnings evangelistic series. It was these presentations, along with the lessons they learned in AY, Sabbath School, Adventurers, at home, and at school that led Easton, Micah, Shacurious and Christopher to make

an informed decision to follow Christ.

Pricilla Glasgow

# Live Broadcasts for Batesville, Mountain View, and Heber Springs

**BATESVILLE, ARK. »** The Batesville, Mountain View, and Heber Springs churches have been broadcasting live over the Internet for one year now. This online broadcast has had some interesting benefits. The sick can watch the church service online. An unexpected blessing came during an ice storm last winter. No one could get out, so we had an online Sabbath School where the lesson was broadcast and church members responded via text or e-mail. The Batesville and Heber Springs churches have archived

the evangelistic meetings that we had in the past year, which means they are available on demand. The setup is quite simple consisting of a camera, an interface, and Internet access. The archives can be accessed at: [www.batesville-sda.org](http://www.batesville-sda.org), [www.hs-sda.org](http://www.hs-sda.org), and [www.mv-sda.net](http://www.mv-sda.net).

Laurie DeWitt



The Batesville, Mountain View, and Heber Springs churches broadcast their services online and also has a variety of programs archived on their websites for on demand viewing.

# The Significance of a Child



It was one of those transition times in Israel. The younger citizens could never remember a time when David was not the king. There had been good times and bad times during his reign (especially in his personal life), but now things were looking good for the future. Young Solomon had been named by the old king to be the next king to sit on the throne. They had watched him through his growing up years, and must have been pleased with the choice that God and David had made for the future of the kingdom.

Very early in his time as king, Solomon realized that his success depended on his connection with Heaven, and while this thought was pressing on his mind, he had

a dream.

“At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, ‘Ask! What shall I give you?’ And Solomon said: ‘You have shown great mercy to Your servant David my father, because he walked before You in truth, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with You; You have continued this great kindness for him, and You have given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. Now, O Lord my God, You have made Your servant king instead of my father David, but I am a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in’” (1 Kings 3:5-7, NKJV).

Ellen White makes an interesting statement concerning his request. “Solomon was never so rich or so wise or so truly great as when he confessed, ‘I am but a lit-

tle child: I know not how to go out or come in” (*Prophets and Kings*, p.30). I understand that to mean that while he was not childish, he did have a childlike faith.

Jesus affirmed this concept when He said, “Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it” (Mark 10:15, NKJV). It seems to me that God is telling us that the greatest among us are those who are often ignored. A very important part of our mission should be to nurture them, serve them, and perhaps learn from them.

“Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God” (Mark 10:14, NKJV).

**John Moyer**, president

## Oklahoma Welcomes New Health Ministries Director

**OKLAHOMA CITY** » The Oklahoma Conference executive committee recently elected Sherry Fisher to be the health ministries director for the conference.

Fisher brings a rich background in healthcare to the position. She has been employed in the healthcare industry for many years. She has a passion for health and wellness, and has voluntarily used her healthcare skills at various functions of the conference, including taking on the role of nurse at summer camp and camp meeting.

Fisher looks forward to helping members around the Oklahoma Conference and their communities to not only live a healthier life now, but wants to also encourage them to look forward to enjoying a healthy life for eternity. She firmly believes that spiritual health



and physical health go hand in hand. Fisher recalls once seeing a DVD that outlines how to live to 120 years. She found the concept intriguing but finds eternal life even more appealing. “We have been given a wonderful health message, and as a church we have been given the mission to show people how to live eternally,” Fisher says. “Let’s make it a mission to make people’s lives better here on earth *and* prepare their souls for heaven!”

We are excited about Sherry Fisher’s new responsibilities and look forward to her leadership and ministry to all our constituents in Oklahoma.

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

Sherry Fisher has been elected as health ministries director for the Oklahoma Conference.

# News Notes from Summit Ridge

**HARRAH** ► The Harrah church, located at the Summit Ridge Retirement Center, had played skillfully on the harp. Shaffer also sang "Our Father in Heaven" as a solo, accompanied by the orchestra. These four talented young people all attend the Choctow church. It is hard to describe the joy these precious young people brought to the hearts of all of us at Summit Ridge.



▲ Betty Reynolds (right) with Linda Cavanaugh, a reporter with KFOR news in Oklahoma City.

► Betty Reynolds celebrated her 90th birthday in December 2015.

the joy of hosting some very special events in the past year. On Saturday, December 5, we were honored to host the Performing Arts Academy's Symphonia, from Oklahoma City, for a wonderful Sabbath-evening concert. What joy they brought to those of us who seldom, if ever, get to attend such a wonderful celebration of music. Much of it was Christmas music, which kept us spellbound with its continuity and beauty! Adventist young people who perform with the prestigious group include Emily and Daniel O'Conner, and Tanya Shaffer, who are very accomplished violinists, and Mindy Farley, who



On Sunday, December 6, we had the joy of surprising one of our very special residents, Betty Reynolds, on her 90th birthday. This was another very special time, as Betty is a very worthy and deserving individual, who does so much. Talk about a "master of all trades!" Betty, who is not five feet tall, is gifted in ways that defy the imagination. She does more at age 90 than most any woman I know or have ever known! She wears so many hats, and the delightful thing is, she wears them all so well! I begin to wonder, if there is anything that Betty cannot do, since if she can't do something, she works at it until she can do it, and always to the highest peak of perfection! She is a former school teacher, missionary, and caregiver to her husband of almost 40 years, who received merciless and life-altering wounds at the hands of terrorists while serving the Lord in Pakistan. Her talents are many! She is a photographer (taking all the pictures of new residents), and she edits and puts together the book that is given to every new resident. She visits each one, learning all she can in order to make every new person feel welcome. She is proficient on the computer, and has all the necessary equipment to copy, scan, print, and/or do any other multitude of tasks which she is called upon to

do. She is great at designing and printing wedding announcements and programs, making lasting memories for those of us who have been blessed to be the recipients. I had the privilege of nominating Betty for a "Pay it Forward" award. The nomination was accepted, and she appeared on our local channel 4, KFOR, on December 30, receiving the much deserved \$400, from First Fidelity Bank.

One other little bit of exciting news is that during the last few weeks, we have

welcomed several new residents into our little community! Jerry and Myrta Beem, Larry and Yvonne Blewett, Jean Estell, Kathy Higgins, William and Donna Hults, Winnie Janes, Emily Lopez, Martha Parks, Beverly Pierce, Kim Syrus, and Robert and Katheline Syrus, all have joined our very special Summit Ridge family, and we are very excited to have them all! Two new homes are in the process of being built, and Summit Ridge is expanding in every direction! We also had memorial services

for Richard Barrett, Margaret McNitt, and Norma Miller, who each laid down their burdens within the last two months, and now await the coming of our blessed Lord! Life is interesting here at Summit Ridge, and we certainly have lots to be thankful for! We are looking for a great year ahead, since every day is precious, and we live each day with great joy and anticipation, knowing that Jesus is coming soon!

Alice Thompson

# Belize Mission Trip

**BROKEN ARROW** » Recently, the principal of Tulsa Adventist Academy, Mark Griffin, and his wife, Marilyn, vice principal and homeroom teacher for grades 11 and 12, presented the benefits of a Christian education to the Broken Arrow congregation. They were assisted by their son, Brendon Griffin, and Sarah Moon, daughter of long-



Mark and Marilyn Griffin recently presented about a Belize mission trip with the help of their son, Brendon Griffin, and Sarah Moon.



time Broken Arrow church members Mike and Angela Moon. Both Brendon and Sarah are students at Tulsa Adventist Academy.

Sarah and Brendon, along with six other students and two adult sponsors representing Tulsa Adventist Academy, had joined with

members of other churches in Oklahoma and traveled to Belize on a mission trip. Their mission was to assist in the building of two churches and to conduct three Vacation Bible Schools. We are so proud of our students who attend and have attended our Christian schools. Please pray for all our students that volunteer for these mission trips and for the people they assist in Belize and in other countries.

Judy Marquette

# Take One For the Team



There's an old African proverb that says, "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together," and that would assure you that you reach your destination.

No matter where you live—a little town in Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, New Mexico, or in beautiful Arkansas—you are part of the great team of Southwest Region. We don't have any farm teams that play in the minor leagues; all of our churches are part of the major leagues. All of our members play first-string; they are not benchwarmers. There are no super stars and no franchise players, because we all work for one objective together: the building and restoring of the Kingdom of God.

Every team must have an objective. For football it is to win the Super Bowl, for hockey it is to win the Stanley Cup, for soccer it is to win the World Cup, for basketball it is Championship, in the Olympics it is the Gold Medal. But in the church of God, the objective is to recruit new soldiers for the Kingdom. Our team objective comes from our Owner—to change our city, our state, our community, and spread the Three Angel's Messages. How do we do this?

1. By being committed to the task
2. By staying focused on the mission
3. By unselfish loyalty to the King
4. By selfless labor
5. By corporation

In baseball, there are moments when a homerun hitter is asked to strike out, to bunt in order to move the runner to second base. He has to make the sacrificial bunt in order to move the runner from first to second base. His homerun numbers may be affected by his sacrificial bunt; however, he will do it for the team. It is often called taking-one for the team. As we approach a new beginning, my call to all is this: Let's take one for the Kingdom by making a personal sacrifice in order to grow God's Kingdom. And remember, no matter what position you serve in, your contribution is needed in order for the team to win.

**Calvin Watkins**, president

## Stuck in the Library

**ROUND ROCK, TEXAS** » Every now and then my wife—who is a teacher—tells me of some of the happenings of her day. Well, a funny thing happened at school the other day.

As pastor, I sometimes perform small maintenance duties (cutting the lawn, changing bulbs, repairing locks, putting out garbage) around our small church and our three-teacher school facility. It so happened that I had been repairing the door handle on the library door, removing broken parts, when I unconsciously failed to remove the latch, which functions as a manual lock when the knob is turned. I unintentionally left the latch in place, while at the same time removing the knob, which turned the latch, thus creating a situation where, if you shut the door without the knob, you are locked in the room with no way of entering or exiting without the use of maintenance tools.

Lesson learned: never leave unfinished maintenance jobs of this nature around



teachers with small kids because the inevitable will happen.

Guess what happened—the inevitable! Three students along with the upper-grade teacher entered the library (where the broken knob is located) and inevitably shut the door unintentionally locking it behind them. They were in the library for about 20 minutes, not knowing they were now locked in the room and could not get out

without maintenance tools.

Well, if you have ever worked in small settings around kids, this can really be drama—the teacher and students are locked in the library and cannot get out! Call the fireman! Call the police or—in this case, call the pastor!

After attempting to open the door with no success—one teacher frantically on the inside, the other on the outside with excited kids inside and outside looking on—freedom finally came when the locked-in teacher and students exited through the small window in the library.

But what was eye-catching in the midst of this small, church school drama? Six small students, ages 5-10, standing in a circle holding hands having a prayer vigil for the teacher and locked-in students. I would imagine God smiling on this incident. This is what *Christian education* is all about—learning to make God a part of everyday experiences, big or small.

**W. B. Stanley**

# Heritage

**BATON ROUGE, LA. »** In the tradition of the holidays, the Baton Rouge Berean church recently hosted its annual Christmas concert. The brainchild of minister of music Henry Jones, an elder and recording artist himself, this year's musical talent consisted of 35 members of the 50-member non-profit professional chorale ensemble Heritage. According to Jones,



▲ The event's organizer Henry Jones with Heritage director Clarence Jones (left).

Top: The group Heritage, which provided the Christmas program for the Berean church.

◀ The group Heritage performing at the Berean church.

“Considering the season of year coupled with the demand of the group, Heritage’s availability and willingness to come to Berean was a blessing.” Founded in 1976 by director Clarence Jones, the ensemble began with nine members with five of the original members still performing with the group. The ensemble’s mission is “To perpetuate the Negro Spiritual as a distinctive art form...It is committed to educate, elevate and enhance the cultural level and appreciation for the Negro Spiritual.” The group has presented concerts throughout the United States as well as in Paris, London, and Rome.

Clad in holiday dress, ensemble marched in singing “Walk together, children, don’t

you get weary; there’s a great camp meeting in the promised land.” After introducing the group, Jones stated, “Most of the ensemble’s selections are by African-American writers because they are the ones who can identify with the struggles.”

Their repertoire for the Christmas concert fittingly included “Round the Glory Manger,” “Rock in Jerusalem,” “Behold the Star,” a ladies’ only rendition of “Mary Had a Baby,” “She Rock’d Him in a Weary Land,” and “Glory to God,” with soloists Barbara Eames, Francis Slack, Janice Stewart and Terrell Jackson leading out in many of the spirituals. The ensemble’s rendering of Handel’s “Hallelujah Chorus” summoned the audience to its feet. Their grand

finale invoked the participation of the congregation as it joined in the hand-clapping singing of the familiar and popular “Jesus, Jesus, Oh What a Wonderful Child.” This concert marked the ensemble’s final performance of 2015.

Manager Wanda Washington, a member for the last 11 years, stated that “Having been a part of this group has rewarded me with the opportunity to do my part in continuing the mission and preserving the legacy of the Negro Spiritual.” The Berean church applauds Henry Jones’ vision for still another venue to celebrate our Lord’s gift to all of humanity—no longer a babe in a manger, but our Redeemer.

**Evelyn M. Edwards**

# Baton Rouge Berean Breaks Bread Together

**BATON ROUGE, LA.** » Perhaps it was the lyrics of the African American spiritual “Let Us Break Together,” or perhaps just the need for fellowship of like believers. Whatever the reason, for the second consecutive year, members of the Faith church and the Berean church united for New Year’s Eve communion service. The first year saw Berean church members travel across town to the Faith church, where the fellowship/communion took place. This year it was the Berean church’s time to host. The invitation went out and Faith church members responded. It didn’t hurt that their pastor Michael Bailey would deliver the communion message.

As is the practice, the men reported to the adjoining annex while the women gathered in the multi-purpose room for

shoes on my feet—even once loaned me a tie for my neck” (eliciting a bit of laughter from the audience).

“We’ve pretty much preached in the same churches. It’s good to be back home; this is where it all started,” a reference to Baton Rouge and Berean being his home and first church respectively. Bailey’s message “Water into Wine” had as its scripture John 2:1-10. As familiar as the story of the wedding

losing their minds because of struggles in relationships; plans going wrong in public and putting your ‘dirty’ laundry on display are just some of those instances. Just as Jesus performed the miracle of new wine at



Robert Davis (left), pastor of the Baton Rouge Berean church, and Michael Bailey (right), pastor of the Faith church, led a joint communion service on New Year’s Eve.



the Ordinance of Humility—commonly known as foot-washing, a practice instituted by our Lord at The Last Supper. Next, with everyone assembled, the service began with Robert Davis’ introduction of Bailey, who was quick to acknowledge his gratitude to Davis. He said, “Your pastor is the most generous man I know; having put

feast at Canaan is, his approach presented it from a different angle. “At the wedding, plan A never came to fruition; therefore, the host’s plans went awry because there was no plan B.” He continued with the analogy between the Canaanites and God’s people who many times find themselves in situations they never expected. “People

the wedding in Canaan, He can bring the church new wine in the form of new blessings, but we have to remember that our rituals can go just so far.” We would take away the lesson that there must be spiritual meaning in our ceremonies. Now it was our turn to partake of the sacred bread and wine. Pastors Davis, Bailey, Albuja of our Hispanic ministry, Berean’s first elder Robert Landry and Faith’s elder Cheryl Moore led out as baptized members of each congregation approached the front and were served. Singing and testimonies of God’s goodness followed, bringing the joint service to a fitting end. It truly was “good and pleasant for us to (have) dwelled together in unity” (Psalm 133:1).



# Children's Ministries



Renowned preacher Chuck Swindoll tells the story of a young man he met while in seminary. The young man had a very large birthmark across his face that stretched from one eyelid across part of his lips and mouth and on down to the neck area. Swindoll asked him on one occasion how he was able to overcome that mark. How was he able to carry on a vibrant public ministry with that birthmark? His response was priceless. He said: "Oh, it was my dad! You see, my dad told me from my earliest years: 'Son, that's where an angel kissed you, and he marked you out just for me! You are very special, and whenever we are in a large group of people, I'll know exactly which one you are. You're mine!'" The young man went on to say that he even grew up feeling sorry for people who didn't have that red mark of distinction across their face.

As a church, we are compelled to ask ourselves just what mark we are leaving upon the children who have been given into our trust. As parents, teachers, pastors, and spiritual adults, are we profoundly and positively impacting the lives of children for the Kingdom of Heaven? The Bible

plainly teaches and promises in Proverbs 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Children's ministries are just as important as evangelism, church growth, stewardship, or any other ministry.

According to a study done in 2003 by the Barna Group, a child's (individual's) moral foundations are laid by the age of nine! Most people make a decision, either for or against Christ, by the age of 12. And in most cases, people's spiritual beliefs are irrevocably formed while they are preteens. The Bible is filled with stories of kids who didn't turn out that well. We can start with Cain, continue with Esau, there's the conniving brothers of Joseph, and the horror story of Absalom. But a closer look at these biblical accounts often reveals that parents failed to be proper spiritual guardians. Whenever we leave the spiritual development of our children to happenstance, the devil takes full advantage of the circumstances and wreaks havoc in their lives and in our homes. Once again, quoting the wise man in Proverbs 1:7, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline."

There are three main principles empha-

sized continually throughout the book of Proverbs to both parents and children. 1. Fear God. 2. Remember what has been taught. 3. Be extremely careful who you hang out with and who exerts influence in your life.

William Willimon, in his book *The Upper Room* writes about a certain godly mother who had a teenage son in high school. On weekends as he would leave home to go out on a date, her parting words to him were, "Don't forget who you are." She did not mean that he was in danger of forgetting his name or the address where he lived. She simply meant that in the midst of a seducing world and untrustworthy strangers, he might lose sight of the values with which he had been raised. Therein lies the entire purpose of children's ministries: to instill in young hearts the values that are capable of weathering and withstanding the pressures of this world. Our purpose should be to see all of God's children safely into the Kingdom of Heaven. Pray for it, work toward it, and may the Lord add His divine measure of success to that end!

Carlos J. Craig

## God's Amazing Grace

**HOUSTON** » This fascinating story was told to me by Sharon Picard Burk, one of the daughters of Louis and Jeanette Alberti of Houston, Texas. It began with Sharon's great-grandmother, Viola Rogers, who was introduced to the Sabbath by a neighbor. Some time later, Fordyce Detamore, a General Conference world evangelist, came to conduct an evangelistic series of meetings in the Houston/Harrisburg area and was searching for a piece of property to set up his large tent for this series. Viola offered him a place on her property. During this series her 12 children were baptized and joined the church. One of Viola's daughters, Della (Sharon's grandmother),

taught her own daughter, Jeanette, about the Sabbath and the truths of God's Word. Jeanette attended one year in a Seventh-day Adventist church school in Luling, Texas, and was baptized while in school there. Louis Alberti had known Jeanette since childhood. Louis and Jeanette married in 1938 and the Lord blessed them with 13 children.

When Sharon was 10, she attended the Pecan Park (now Gulfhaven) Seventh-day Adventist Church in Houston, Texas. She heard a story told about Jonah and the Whale. She had never heard such a story before and she felt that it was just made up. Her sister, Peggy, assured her the story

was true, but she never went back to the church. Peggy was sent to Keene, Texas, to attend high school at Southwestern Junior College, a Seventh-day Adventist school. Their grandmother, Della, left the church for a time but on her sick bed, she returned and was baptized before her death.

In November of 1970, during an ingathering campaign, Martha Williams, then a member of the Pecan Park church, happened to knock on the door of the family of Louis and Jeanette Alberti. She told them what she was doing and asked for a donation. At first they told her they did not have any money, so she thanked them and went her way. Then, Jeanette remembered

from her childhood that she had done this same thing. This incident reignited a spark where there was still a little fire that had been kept burning by the grace of God. They immediately gathered up some money, went a few houses down, found Martha, and gave her the money.

Soon after this incident, Sharon and her brother and sister, Rocky Alberti and Margie Alberti Gendke, began attending the Adventist church on Fresa Street in Pasadena, Texas (the Pecan Park church and the Pasadena Church later merged and became the Gulfhaven church).

Bob Thrower, Texas Conference Hour of Prophecy evangelist, conducted an evangelistic service at the Pasadena church. Sharon, her husband, Curtis Picard, Rocky Alberti, Vivian Alberti, Peggy Alberti Sheffield, Margie Alberti Gendke, Joel Alberti and his wife, Susan, were all baptized and became members of the church. This was May 1971. Sharon's sister, Donna Little, was living away from Houston and the Lord was wooing her heart as well. None of the family knew that the Lord had been working to convert Donna along with the rest of the family. This was another amazing intervention by the Holy Spirit.

Soon afterward, Peggy and Sonny Sheffield and Sharon and Curtis Picard went to a camp meeting in Keene, Texas. Sharon's sister, Donna Little, was there along with their brother Freddie and his wife Alice. The minister was J.J. Millett. They were all so impressed with Millett's message and began to pray for their mother and father, Louis and Jeanette, that they could hear the messages by Millett.



Louis and Jeanette Alberti

The next Sabbath at church it was announced that J.J. Millett was coming to the Gulfhaven school gym (the Gulfhaven church had not been built yet). They knew that this was the answer to their prayers. During these meetings, Louis and Jeanette Alberti took their stand and began Bible studies to prepare for baptism. Also included in the Bible studies were Sharon's brother, Jimmy and wife, Patsy, and brother, Freddie and wife, Alice. They were all baptized in January, 1973. A little later, the last brother and member of the family, Weegee Alberti, came to the Lord. Now, all their children were baptized and in the church.

Margie's husband, Mike Gendke, was later baptized and



Della Rogers Seber and James Seber

Seventh-day Adventist Church. Joel Alberti also became a minister of the church. He is out now, but we are praying that he will return.

Many of their children and grandchildren, and even now, great-grandchildren,

have attended Southwestern Adventist University. Their son, Rocky, is currently the chief of police in Keene.

After Donna's faithfulness for some 30 years, her husband, Bill, joined the church. Two of their grandsons are Adventist ministers.

Louis Alberti became first elder of the Gulfhaven church for many years. He dearly loved ingathering, community service, and Christian education. Louis was presented with a beautiful plaque from the church for his outstanding collection of over \$2,200 for ingathering in 1980. Louis and Jeanette sold boxes and boxes of chocolate candy for at least two years. He used

the money earned to build a huge chain link fence and gate for the Gulfhaven Adventist Christian School. This was such a great service to the school for the welfare and safety of the children and staff. His faithful service also had a strong effect on coworker Rueben Aulds. After years of prayer Rueben surrendered his life to the Lord and is still a faithful member of the Gulfhaven church.

The most amazing point of the story is how God used ingathering and Martha Williams to reignite a flame that had long ago dimmed. God used that event to bring the entire Al-

berti family to have a relationship with the Lord and to become members of the Adventist church.

May God be praised for His amazing grace towards the Alberti family and all His children.

Jean Hagen

# Big Changes at Scenic Hills Christian Academy

**SAN ANTONIO** » “I need to tell you something,” the man said to me. He was one of several construction workers on site that day at Scenic Hills Christian Academy in San Antonio. Our students were carrying box after box from the Sabbath School rooms where our classes have been cramped for the past few years into the various classrooms of our brand new school building behind the church in preparation for its opening.

“Sure,” I said, directing him into an empty classroom, thinking he was probably upset with all the students in the way.

“I don’t have a lot of money,” he said, “and I was working in one of the rooms over there where your students have been coming in and out all day. I didn’t realize until a little while ago that I had lost some money out of my pocket while I

was working in there earlier. I went back in there and was amazed to find my money exactly where I had dropped it. Not one cent was missing, yet your students were passing right by it time and again. You must be doing something right at this school.”

I was relieved and very pleased. It is not often you get such positive feedback, but it is nice to know someone outside the system can see the results of the blessings we have seen firsthand in San Antonio.

The Scenic Hills Seventh-day Adventist church has operated a small school within the church building for many years, but it had been the dream of the membership to build a separate school facility. San Antonio is a fast-growing metropolitan area and our church and school have seen rapid growth in the past few years. Scenic Hills Christian Academy had 54 students at the start of the 2013-14 school year. This year that number has increased to 104. A new school build-

ing quickly became a necessity rather than just a dream. That dream became reality on January 30 when the official dedication took place. The completed building, featuring 6 classrooms, kitchen, library, and offices, is not the end of the dream, however. Phase two, the addition of a gymnasium and chapel, is already in the planning stages.

Yet it is not simply population growth that explains the increase in enrollment.

the school would be devastating to the future of the church. Not only does our church fully support our school, our school fully supports our church. Our staff is actively involved with the church and its activities. The church and school benefit from each other, resulting in growth for both. This year we are challenging our students to lead healthier lives through the NEWSTART essentials: nutrition, exercise, water, sunshine, temper-



Last year a beautiful new charter school was opened across the street. Several members expressed concern that we would not be able to attract new students to our school when the charter school’s facilities were so attractive. That has turned out to be another blessing for our school. A few families from that school noticed our school across the street and decided to check us out. Not only have we gained several students, we have even had some students and their families baptized into our church!

That’s a great example of how God works things out if we commit ourselves to following His plan. The leadership in our church believes in our school and are its most vocal supporters. It takes an enormous chunk of the church budget to help subsidize the school, but our church gives with enthusiasm. Why? Because our church members realize that evangelism begins with our young people and that the cost of not supporting

ance, air, rest, and trust in God. Each month, participating students adopt a new lifestyle habit based on one of these elements. For instance, in September we emphasized nutrition and students gave up dessert for the month. This month is temperance and students are giving up their electronic games! Educating students beyond the classroom is the goal. We want the lessons learned in the classroom to be reinforced by the lessons learned at church and vice-versa.

Of course, enrollment growth cannot happen without parents who believe in the product. Communication with parents and involvement of families in the school creates a positive environment that attracts others to the school. When church, school, and home all work together toward the goal of educating their children for the kingdom, God *will* bless their efforts.

**Jon Dickerson**

TEXAS CONFERENCE

# Children's Ministries



TEXICO CONFERENCE

Some may children's ministries consider a "glorified babysitting" job, but it is definitely not for the weak and fainthearted. If you are in children's ministries, you may be dealing with nursery and child care for worship services and other church events. However, children's ministries is so much more. In today's children's ministries, you must be a preacher, teacher, babysitter, referee, event planner, counselor, caterer, garbage collector, and coach.

It requires the patience of Job, the wisdom of Solomon, the endurance of Paul, and the love of Jesus. You have to have a heart for God and a heart for children. If you have this heart, everything else is learned. We don't want to spend all our time preparing children to be good Christians when they grow up; instead we want to spend our time and energy helping them

be like Christ right now!

In instructing our children in the ways of the Lord, Deuteronomy 11:19 tells us to "Teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your home, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up."

Children's ministries is like airfare; it's constantly changing. A program must be organized, yet flexible for those times when a teachable moment arises. It is not just about playing with children. Every activity must be safe, well organized, planned, and theologically sound. Remember, it is not baby-sitting. We are helping children live their faith today, as well as, preparing them to be the spiritual leaders of tomorrow.

Some of our duties include having a child-protection policy in place, working with parents, choosing a curriculum, working with committees, planning special events, and recruiting and training

leaders and volunteers.

Believe it or not, children's ministries does not begin with children. Children's ministries begins with their parents. They are the ones that are going to take the time to get their kids to your program. We must develop a strong relationship with the parents to have an effective ministry. Partnering with parents is paramount. It is important to realize that they know their children better than anyone else. Parents also want to be informed and included. Be sure to communicate with them. Help them understand the overall mission of the ministry and keeping them informed of all activities.

Remember, children's ministries is not about you or me, but about God working through you to help parents and children learn to grow in their faith.

**Josie Green**, children's ministries director

## Everyday Miracles

**SANTA FE, N. MEX.** » I work at a very small school. We have two teachers, 20 students, and not many resources. This year, we have been working to slowly fulfill the needs of our school as we receive donations. Recently, the printer in my classroom has been "acting up". It was already an old machine, but lately it has been taking longer to print and has been slowly dying.

I had been eyeing printers for a while, but knew that it just wasn't in our budget. I started to worry about our financial situation, but remembered that I should just put it in God's hands. I began praying for someone to either give us a new printer or to donate the money for us to be able to purchase one. The only people I

told were my parents and the other teacher at our school. Elisa Hernandez, the lower-grade teacher, and I added my printer on our staff prayer list for worship. I decided to let my chairperson, Allen Steele, know that I was looking for a printer or a donor.

I texted him in the morning and about thirty minutes later, he responded with, "Well, you must've been praying."

Someone had donated a printer specifically for me that morning! The most interesting thing about the situation is that

it was exactly what I needed.

This story might not seem like a huge deal to you, but for me, it was a sign that God is looking out for our school. It was such a huge miracle, the timing of it all was perfect. This event reminds me that even though we might worry about things and forget that God is always taking care of us, He is always there. He is even there in the "little" things.

**Melissa Chacon**



Adventist Academy of Santa Fe teacher Melissa Chacon (far left) saw her prayers for a new classroom printer answered in an amazing way that shows how God is looking out for her school (lower grade teacher, Elisa Hernandez, far right).

# The Caged Bird

**ABILENE, TEX.** » It wasn't the first time I had gone to prison, and I was so excited to be there. There was anticipation as I filled out my paper work to be processed. I couldn't wait to meet the other men that I would be spending time with. While I have been working in full-time pastoral ministry, God has also called me to volunteer as a prison chaplain.

These opportunities have become personal ministries that have been very rewarding. When Bill Morris, our prison ministries leader in Abilene, asked if I would be interested in becoming a volunteer chaplain at the local prisons, I felt the Holy Spirit tug at my heart. It took some time to get processed through the State of Texas.

I finally had the opportunity to attend a training class and sometime after that, I was able to make a pastoral visit to some of the men who had been interested in joining the church. During that first visit, I spent time with a man who had been incarcerated since the 1980s. I thought about what it would be like for him, and how he would have to adjust, as he would soon be finishing his sentence. There have been many changes in the world since he has been in prison: there's Internet, cell phones, and the Texas Rangers have been to the World Series. He is excited to get out and even more excited to become a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The next person to come and talk with me was a young man covered in tattoos. He had begun, through Bible study, to see the truths in Scripture that we hold dear. He had previously been baptized by immersion and desires to become a Seventh-day Adventist by profession of faith. Bill had told me that the Holy Spirit was moving in the prison, and now I was witnessing it firsthand. I knew that Bill had been working with these men and showing them the love of Christ.

The next man that I would meet was another key to what was happening in this

place. This man had been a Seventh-day Adventist before being arrested, indicted, and convicted. He was embarrassed by his situation and asked to be removed from membership. But recently things started to



change. He began to share the faith that he still clung to with the prisoners that were willing to listen. He lovingly and patiently started showing them the Sabbath, the state of the dead, and promises from God's Word. These men were being convicted by the Holy Spirit. These three men were excited when Bill came to minister in their unit.

Some other men, including myself, began preparing to be involved in this exciting ministry opportunity.

The next time I went to the prison was to worship on the Sabbath with these men that had discovered the truth of the Lord's Sabbath. These men were so joyful that they practically glowed. They sang songs of praise as loudly as they could and I listened to a sermon on Abraham and Sarah that was very moving. I couldn't wait to preach and I got my wish as Bill asked me if I would say a word or two. It was a wonderful way to close the Sabbath, and I longed

for the next time I would go behind those bars. As we go to minister and bless others, we are amazed at how we ourselves are abundantly blessed.

Some men wanted to be baptized, and

we finally had the opportunity to allow them to publicly profess their faith. I was beyond excited when on November 28, 2015, I went to the prison to baptize three men. We sang, I preached, and then I baptized my brothers in Christ. There were hugs and tears all around. It is undeniable what is happening in these men's lives.

As I drove home, I thought of Maya Angelou's poem, "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings." On Fridays, many of us prepare for the Sabbath as we clean our houses, prepare dishes for potluck, set out our best clothes, and have evening worship. We wake up on Sabbath morning and get ready to go to church. Many times we take it for granted and as we sing there is sometimes little to no emotion as we offer those praises to God. We can go through the motions of the divine service and say "Happy Sabbath" to each other. Although these inmates have very limited freedom, often

don't have much, and they peer through bars as they wake up in the morning, they show more joy and enthusiasm in Sabbath worship than those of us who don't need permission to go to church.

I knew that I had been in the presence of God while worshiping with these men. Their response in worship was a great en-

couragement and blessing to me. We sing the song "Dare to be a Daniel," and yet we forget that we are exiles in a pagan land. We do not appear to have limited freedom and yet this world is not our home. We all need to be more like Daniel. While we are exiles in this sinful world, the hope of going to our heavenly home must drive us in

all that we do. Then we might sing like the caged bird as we look forward to mounting up on wings like eagles and claiming the sky, which has been promised to us by a loving Heavenly Father.

Joshua Ellis

# 100 Years and Counting

**ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.** » A very special birthday celebration took place last October as Callamay Kindred, member of the Albuquerque Central church, turned 100 years old. A great milestone indeed! Three separate events were held at different churches in the Albuquerque, area. She was surrounded by loved ones who came to show their support and congratulations. Special musical guests included Michael Harris, Andre Arrais, and others. During the programs, Callamay shared highlights from her life story.

She was born of Cherokee Indian and French Canadian descent (her maternal grandmother, a nurse and teacher, was full Cherokee Indian and her father was French Canadian) on October 6, 1915, in Cincinnati, Ohio, to parents, Frank and Alma Shelton, the third of five children. She and her younger sister, Alma, are the current survivors of the family.

Growing up, she enjoyed a variety of activities, including dance, ballet, piano and organ, swimming, roller skating, running track, volleyball, tennis, baseball, basketball, climbing rope, and walking on stilts. Her brothers, Frank and Jean, always involved her in the boys' activities.

Tragedy struck their family when her beloved father passed away at the age of 51. This was a terrible shock and a great loss for 16-year-old Callamay. She immersed herself in school activities at Hughes High School, where she ac-

companied the music class on the piano, and became pianist of the French Club and Men's Glee Club.

From an early age she was interested in becoming a nurse. As it turned out, her mother and she pursued this course together and both graduated as practical nurses at the same time.

In 1938, Callamay married her first husband and moved to Brooklyn, New York, then on to St. Albans on Long Island.

While in New York, she was blessed with good jobs, first with the State Health Department, then the Motor Vehicle Department, then on to being the administrator

of the Personnel Office for the City of New York.

One of the most important years of her life was in 1967, when she first learned about the Sabbath and wanted to follow it. A Bible instructor from a local Seventh-day Adventist church studied God's Word with her, which resulted in her baptism. Later, she took a Bible instructor course and began giving Bible studies to her neighbors and friends. Since joining the church, she has played the piano and organ for seven or eight different congregations.

It was in 1980 that she moved to Rio Rancho, a suburb of Albuquerque, and began her nursing career working in the Westside Hospital and making home visits.

In 1998, she married John Kindred and they enjoyed many wonderful years together before he passed away in 2010.

Now in her 100th year, Callamay still lives in the home they built together and enjoys helping others. She feels so blessed by God, who has been her constant Friend, Comforter, and Father. Her prayer is that all will be saved in God's eternal kingdom and live together forever in the earth made new!

Sue Hinkle, communication director



At three separate events held at three Albuquerque area churches, Albuquerque Central church member Callamay Kindred celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

# The Value of Experience

An effective college experience is much more than attending classes from great professors. Classes are enriched by real-world experiences. At Southwestern Adventist University, internships and practical experience are a part of the culture.

Tristan Mikesell, a communication major with an emphasis in Radio, TV and Film, recently had the opportunity to obtain valuable working experience as a production assistant on a major movie set. Mikesell worked as an intern for eight weeks, half of which took place during pre-production.

"I did so many things. Being a production assistant may be the least glamorous job on set, but it was a great thing, because I could see the film as a whole." Mikesell said, who can't go into further details yet because of a non-disclosure agreement. To him, the abbreviation "P.A." didn't stand for "production assistant," but for "pretty awesome."

One day during filming the production had to move to a pasture in order to capture a certain sequence. Before the actors could begin their work, Mikesell had to go out and clear the area of cow manure. This

wasn't the brightest moment on set, but Mikesell had a positive attitude about it. According to him, "At rock bottom you can only go up."

With that kind of attitude, Mikesell's supervisor quickly saw they could entrust him with more responsibilities. By the end of the internship, he was assisting with research and procurement of major purchases. He served in any capacity the film crew needed, and enjoyed every minute of it. With time he also was able to be an extra on the film, an experience that only

helped to make the internship much more enjoyable.

"[This] has affected my career path immensely. Before, I thought working in the film industry was just a dream. Now I know it's something that's actually possible," said Mikesell.

Ashley Riddle, a marketing major, recently completed an internship in public relations for Civitas Senior Living, a local senior healthcare company. Riddle had already been refining her design and public relations skills through various roles and jobs she has held on campus. According

to Riddle, the job took on several different manifestations, which really helped her

learn. "This company really stood out to me because of their passion," says Riddle. "They genuinely care and they want their residents to be not just comfortable, but happy. It really taught me something new

about myself. I discovered that I wasn't so picky on the where and who, as long as the company I work for is genuinely passionate about what they do and how they care for clients and employees."

While the two-month internship was over too soon for Riddles' preference, she didn't have to break ties with the company. The company decided they appreciated her work so much that they continue to contract with her for design work. "Continuing to work for Civitas was unexpected, but wow! What an honor. I've just really loved the whole experience."

Isai Ramirez is the student pastor at the Richardson Spanish Seventh-day Adventist Church through Southwestern Adventist University's theology internship program. There are 16 theology majors doing internships in churches across north Texas. And the department boasts a 100 percent hiring rate for recent graduates.

"This experience has helped me see and plan ministry in a real way," says Ramirez. "I can apply the things I learn in my theology classes in a practical way. I've learned and grown a lot because the pastor and the members are so supportive. It has really affirmed God's calling in my life."

Internships are a fundamental part of the career path, and Texas is one of the fastest-growing states in the nation for job availability. The Dallas area is ranked third on Forbes' list for best cities in which to find a job (four major Texas metroplex areas made the list of top 10). This gives Southwestern Adventist University students unique and valuable opportunities to network and find future jobs.

Andrew Austin, senior journalism major



▲ Tristan practices his camera skills on a new set at Southwestern.

◀ Ashley with her Civitas supervisor, Amy Vittitow

## News Note:

Southwestern Adventist University has the highest Spring enrollment since 2010!

## LEGAL NOTICES

### Southwestern Adventist University

Notice is hereby given that Southwestern Adventist University will hold its constituency meeting on Monday, May 2, 2016, in the Keene Seventh-day Adventist Church, 114 S. Fairview, Keene, Texas. The meeting is called for 10:00 a.m. or at the conclusion of the Southwestern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Session.

*Larry Moore, President | Ken Shaw, Secretary*

## LEGAL NOTICES

### Southwestern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

Official notice is hereby given of the 30<sup>th</sup> regular session of the Southwestern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists to be held in Keene, Texas, May 1-2, 2016. The first meeting is scheduled for 3:00 p.m., Sunday, May 1, in the Keene Seventh-day Adventist Church, 114 S. Fairview, Keene, Texas. Regular delegates to this session are appointed by the local conferences of the Southwestern Union Conference.

*Larry Moore, President | Buford Griffith, Jr., Secretary*

### Southwestern Union Conference Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists

Official notice is hereby given of the 30<sup>th</sup> regular constituency meeting of the Southwestern Union Conference Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists to be held in Keene, Texas, May 1-2, 2016. The first meeting is scheduled for 3:00 p.m., Sunday, May 1, in the Keene Seventh-day Adventist Church, 114 S. Fairview, Keene, Texas. The constituents for this corporation are the delegates to the 30<sup>th</sup> session of the Southwestern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

*Larry Moore, President | Buford Griffith, Jr., Secretary*

# Adventists File Lawsuit Against U.S. City for Banning Literature Evangelism

**WHITE HALL, ARK.** » The Arkansas-Louisiana Conference and two of its members filed a lawsuit against an Arkansas city on Jan. 19 over a local ordinance that prevents door-to-door literature evangelism.

The lawsuit asks a U.S. district court to declare the ordinance enacted by White Hall, population 5,500, to be unconstitutional and a violation of the first amendment right to free speech.

City regulations restrict all forms of door-to-door solicitation and the expression of ideas unless those wishing to share their religious or charitable beliefs obtain a permit from the city, then pay permit fees, share significant personal information and

pass a “satisfactory” investigation and review, the Seventh-day Adventist Church said in a statement.

“If allowed to stand, the type of restrictions White Hall seeks to impose would stop door-to-door literature evangelism,” said Todd McFarland, associate general counsel at the world headquarters of the Adventist Church. “Paying a \$50 fee for every municipality we visit would be a great burden for any program.”

Even after the application is made, the ordinance does not explain the standards or time frames needed to obtain the permit, the church said. The decision whether to grant a permit is solely at the discretion

of one city official, with no opportunity to appeal this decision.

Courts routinely have rejected similar government efforts that seek to impose this kind of prior restraint on protected speech, the church said.

The lawsuit comes after Ouachita Hills College, a supporting ministry of the Adventist Church that works in partnership with the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference, sought permission for its students to share their beliefs in Jesus and the gospel in White Hall.

“They asked for an exemption from the ordinance on religious freedom grounds,” the church statement said. “The police chief responded that he spoke with the



mayor and city attorney and no exemption would be granted. No opportunity was given for an appeal. While the city said it was open to having a meeting to discuss the issue, repeated attempts to schedule such a meeting went unanswered.”

The statement added, “The church regrets that it must file a lawsuit to protect

its religious rights.”

One of the primary tenets of the Seventh-day Adventist faith is to follow the “Great Commission” in Matthew 28:18-20, where Jesus says, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to

obey everything I have commanded you.”

The lawsuit is asking for the courts to protect the rights of people to practice their religion. No financial damages—only a symbolic \$1—are being sought in the case. The church is asking the court to make a decision before April 6, 2016.

## Drill or Die: Why Your Church Needs Safety Sabbath 2016

It’s Sabbath morning at your local church but one person in attendance did not come to worship. The gunman enters your sanctuary and pulls out a weapon.

When Carlos’ mother comes to pick him up after Sabbath School, the other children say he left with a woman they had never seen before.

The church electrical system catches fire on Sabbath morning and most members and guests make it out, but Tessa is one of the last to exit because no one stopped to help her with her wheelchair.

### Do You Know What To Do?

Responding appropriately in emergency situations is vital to minimizing loss. Does your congregation know what to do if an active shooter enters your church? Do your children know what to do if lost or if someone attempts to abduct them? Is your church prepared for an emergency evacuation in the event of a fire?

“Every church member and every local church needs to be prepared for any emergency,” says Daniel R. Jackson, president of the North American Division. “Unfortunately situations do happen, but we need to do our best to be prepared for them.”

Safety Sabbath is a great way to get prepared for emergencies. Mark your calendar for March 26, 2016. Sponsored by Adventist Risk Management, Inc. and the North American Division, Safety Sabbath will feature three drills you can use to prepare your church for emergencies.

- Active Shooter Drill
- Fire Drill
- Missing Child Drill

Choose your drill and start learning more now at [SafetySabbath.com](http://SafetySabbath.com).

### Safety is a Team Effort

Whether you are a local church leader, church member, or child, everyone should be involved in keeping themselves and each other safe in an emergency.

evacuate. Evaluate what risks your church may face, and practice your emergency response plans with your congregation regularly so everyone is prepared to respond safely in an emergency.

**Church Members**—Study the emergency exit plans posted in your church and know two or more ways to exit the building. Know what you will do personally in an emergency, including how you will evacuate and help those around you evacuate. Participate in your church’s emergency practice drills and be prepared.

**Children**—Parents, make sure your children know their full name, the full names of their parents or guardians, and emergency contact phone numbers. Talk with your child about what might happen during a drill and how they should act and respond. Make a plan with your child of what they should do and where they should go in an emergency so they are prepared.

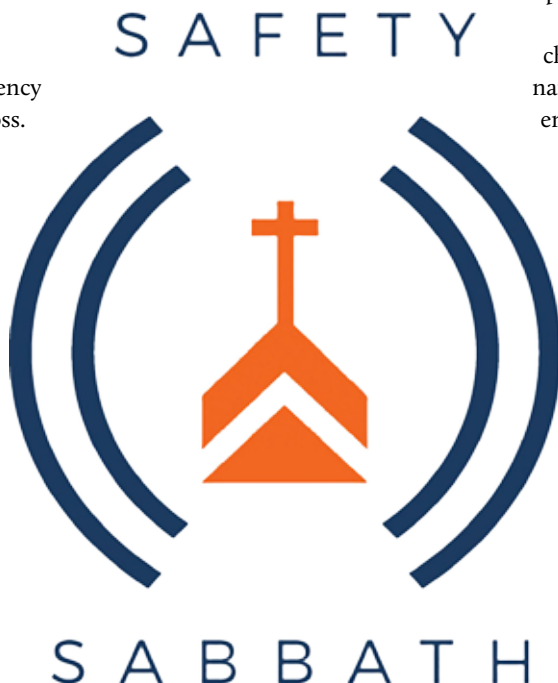
### Get Ready with Safety Sabbath 2016

Holding annual practice drills prepares your church family to respond to emergency situations in the safest way possible.

Get everything you need to hold your own emergency drill on Safety Sabbath, March 26, 2016, including emergency drill guides, posters, resources for children, and more!

Choose your drill and learn more at [SafetySabbath.com](http://SafetySabbath.com).

**Anna Bartlett**, writer and education specialist, Adventist Risk Management, Inc.



**Local Church Leaders**—Be prepared with a church emergency plan and crisis response team. Have a plan in place to help children and those with disabilities

## Classified Ads

### REAL ESTATE/HOUSING

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but close to Oklahoma City medical facilities and shopping. Made up of mostly individual homes, the village has fellowship you'll enjoy. On-site church, independent living, nursing home, and transportation as needed. Web site: <http://www.summitridgevillage.org>, or call Bill Norman at 405.208.1289.

### EMPLOYMENT

**Southwestern Adventist University** seeks Development Officer/Grant Writer. Responsibilities include grant writing, donor relations, event coordination, and data entry. Exceptional written and verbal communication skills are essential. Candidates must have a bachelor's degree with strong consideration given to those with experiences in grant writing and donor relations. Submit cover letter and CV/resume to: [sgrady@swau.edu](mailto:sgrady@swau.edu).

**Union College** seeks Vice President for Student Services beginning in July 2016. The VPSS leads out in the vision, strategy, and execution of the college's student services goals. Qualified SDA candidate will be student-centered and an experienced leader in higher education. See <https://www.ucollege.edu/staff-openings>. Send resume to Dr. Vinita Sauder, [visauder@ucollege.edu](mailto:visauder@ucollege.edu).

**Pacific Union College** is seeking a Controller in the Accounting Department to begin immediately. Ideal Candidate will possess a bachelor's degree in Accounting and a Master's degree in Business Administration. CPA license preferred. Progressive management and supervisory responsibilities desired, as well as experience in managing financial operations for colleges/universities. For more information or to apply, call 707-965-6231, or visit <http://www.puc.edu/faculty-staff/current-job-postings>.

**Pacific Union College** is seeking two Co-Generation Plant positions: Supervisor/Operator and Technician, to begin immediately. Preference is for candidate with electrical/mechanical systems experience. Civil Engineering License or higher preferred. Supervisor will oversee the operation and maintenance of Co-Gen plant, boilers, and steam distribution. Technician will oversee and train student employees and contract workers. Both participate in campus utility master planning. For more information or to apply, please call 707.965.6231, or visit <http://www.puc.edu/faculty-staff/current-job-postings>.

**Southwestern Adventist University** seeks qualified and visionary professional to serve the Department of Music as Director of Keyboard and

Theory Studies. Responsibilities include teaching keyboard, theory, and church music classes. Ideal candidate will possess a doctoral degree, be an accomplished performer, and have professional experience as a church musician. Send CV and cover letter to Mr. Jonathan Wall at [jwall@swau.edu](mailto:jwall@swau.edu).

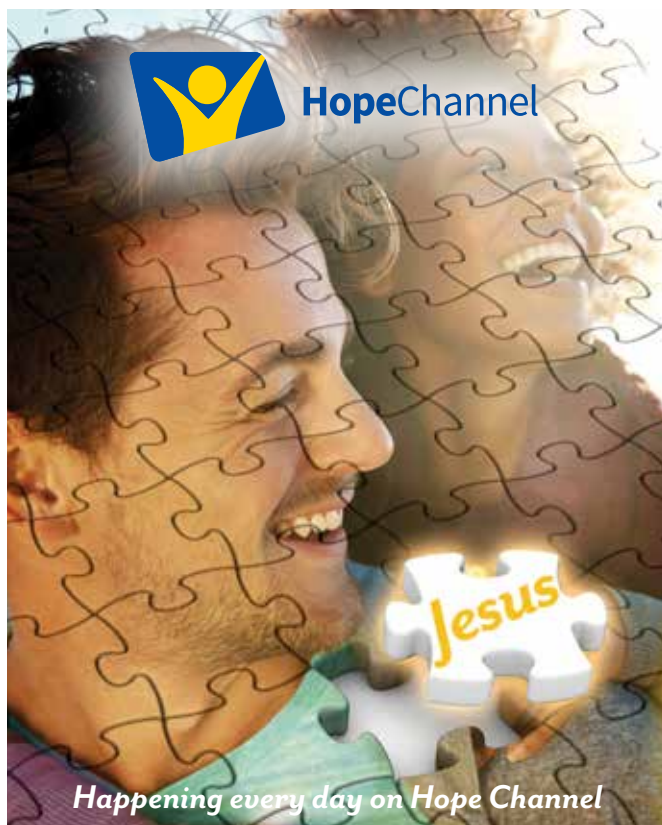
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Do you know where the  
nearest exit is located?



FIRE



MISSING CHILD

It's worship time!  
Where is your child?



ACTIVE SHOOTER

Gunfire erupts during  
Sabbath School.  
Do you know what to do?

SAFETY SABBATH



MARCH 2016

GET READY

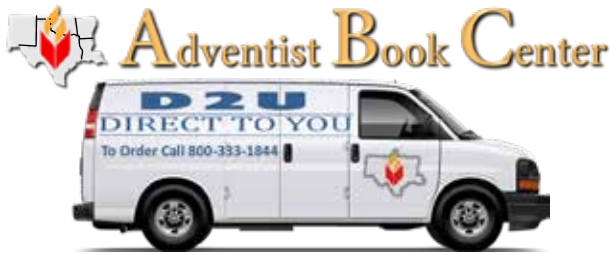
Join Adventist churches across North America in conducting a safety drill designed to keep you and your church family safe during an emergency. Learn about your church's safety plans. Volunteer to join the emergency response team. Become a safety officer.

Get ready for Safety Sabbath.

Learn more at [www.SafetySabbath.com](http://www.SafetySabbath.com)

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*Our ministry is to protect your ministry.*





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

### West Texas / Southern New Mexico Route

*We will remain at each stop for 30 minutes*

Monday, March 21			
		Arrive	Depart
Brownwood	2211 Avenue D, Brownwood, TX 76801	10:30 AM	11:00 AM
San Angelo	110 E 18th St, San Angelo, TX 76903	12:45 PM	1:15 PM
Big Springs	4319 Parkway Rd, Big Spring, TX 79720	3:15 PM	3:45 PM
Midland	3114 Travis Ave, Midland, TX 79701	4:50 PM	5:20 PM
Odessa	201 E 91st St, Odessa, TX 79765	6:00 PM	6:30 PM
Tuesday, March 22			
		Arrive	Depart
Van Horn	700 W Desert, Van Horn, TX 79855	10:40 AM	11:10 AM
El Paso Central	1801 McRae Blvd, El Paso, TX 79925	12:25 PM	12:55 PM
Las Cruces	240 S Crosses Ave, Las Cruces, NM 88005	2:05 PM	2:35 PM
Alamogordo	1000 S Canyon Rd, Alamogordo, NM 88310	4:00 PM	4:30 PM
Wednesday, March 23			
		Arrive	Depart
Ruidoso Downs	212 Parkway, Ruidoso Downs, NM 88346	8:00 AM	8:30 AM
Roswell	2915 S Union Ave, Roswell, NM 88203	10:00 AM	10:30 AM
Carlsbad	101 N 12th St, Carlsbad, NM 88220	12:00 PM	12:30 PM
Hobbs	6620 N Grimes St, Hobbs, NM 88242	2:30 PM	3:00 PM
Lubbock	5302 Elgin Ave, Lubbock, TX 79413	6:00 PM	6:30 PM
Thursday, March 24			
		Arrive	Depart
Abilene	2542 E Overland Tr, Abilene, TX 79601	10:45 AM	11:15 AM
Weatherford	201 Eden Rd, Weatherford, TX 76085	1:15 PM	1:45 PM

**Order Deadline for the West Texas / Southern New Mexico is Thursday, March 17. Call 800-333-1844 to Order.**

### Eastern Oklahoma / NW Arkansas Route

*We will remain at each stop for 30 minutes*

Monday, April 4			
		Arrive	Depart
Gainesville	3411 N Weaver St, Gainesville TX 76240	10:00 AM	10:30 AM
Ardmore	828 Locust St, Ardmore OK 73401	11:20 AM	11:50 AM
Davis (Arbuckle View)	5500 Highway 7 W, Davis OK 73030	12:30 PM	1:00 PM
Moore (Hope Adventist Fellowship)	9309 S I 35 Service Rd, Moore OK 73160	2:45 PM	3:15 PM
OK Conference Office	4735 NW 63rd St, Oklahoma City, OK 73132	3:55 PM	4:25 PM
Enid	1501 W Purdue Ave, Enid OK 73703	6:10 PM	6:40 PM
Tuesday, April 5			
		Arrive	Depart
Bristow	401 E 6th Ave, Bristow OK 74010	10:15 AM	10:45 AM
Sapulpa	201 S Linden St, Sapulpa OK 74066	11:25 AM	11:55 AM
Tulsa (Adventist Fellowship)	15303 E 21st St S, Tulsa, OK 74134	1:05 PM	1:35 PM
Bartlesville	4811 Nowata Rd, Bartlesville OK 74006	2:35 PM	3:05 PM
Ketchum	35369 S Highway 82, Vinita OK 74301	4:20 PM	4:50 PM
Claremore	20555 S 4170 Rd Unit B, Claremore OK 74017	5:40 PM	6:10 PM
Wednesday, April 6			
		Arrive	Depart
Gentry	21090 Dawn Hill East Rd, Gentry, AR 72734	9:30 AM	10:00 AM
Springdale	4001 W Don Tyson Pkwy, Springdale AR 72762	10:45 AM	11:15 AM
Harrison	4877 Highway 392 W, Harrison AR 72601	1:30 PM	2:00 PM
Clinton	125 Skyhill Drive, Clinton AR 72031	3:45 PM	4:15 PM
Russellville	511 E Aspen Ln, Russellville, AR 72802	5:45 PM	6:15 PM
Clarksville	2514 W Main St, Clarksville AR 72830	7:00 PM	7:30 PM
Thursday, April 7			
		Arrive	Depart
Sallisaw	2080 W Lenington Rd, Sallisaw OK 74955	8:50 AM	9:20 AM
Muskogee	170 N Country Club Rd, Muskogee OK 74403	10:15 AM	10:45 AM
McAlester	620 E Delaware Ave, McAlester OK 74501	12:45 PM	1:15 PM
Denison Sherman	3409 S Eisenhower Pkwy, Denison TX 75020	1:55 PM	2:25 PM

**Order Deadline for the Eastern Oklahoma / NW Arkansas Route is Thursday, March 31. Call 800-333-1844 to Order.**

### UP-COMING 2016 D2U Routes

Arkansas/East Texas	April 18-21
Western Oklahoma/N New Mexico	May 2-5
Austin/San Antonio/Valley Route	May 16-19
Houston Route	May 30-June 1

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**Free Adventist TV** on high quality StarGenesis satellite system, complete system with a self-install kit is only \$99 plus shipping or can be picked up at Sunnydale. Many other free channels available also. Discounted shipping/delivery on multiple systems. \$9 donated to IA/MO refuge

relief fund. Call Micky Burkett at 1.877.687.2203.

**Walla Walla University:** New online graduate degree in Media Ministry. Concentrations available in media/cinema and web/interactive media. To apply, visit [apply.wallawalla.edu](http://apply.wallawalla.edu), or call 800.541.8900.

**NATIONAL FAMILY RETREAT 2016:** March 30-April 3. Practical messages // Breakouts // 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](http://restoration-international.org/nfr), or 918.827.7012. Look for our ad on page 36.

# NATIONAL FAMILY RETREAT

**MARCH 30 – APRIL 3, 2016**  
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TO REGISTER CALL LESLEY: (918) 827-7012

## 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](http://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](mailto: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 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](http://www.advent-source.org).

**Southwestern Adventist University's Homecoming weekend** is April 8-10, 2016. More info at [swau.edu/alumni](http://swau.edu/alumni) or [licci.zem@swau.edu](mailto: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](http://wallawalla.edu/touringchoir), [Facebook.com/WallaWallaUniversityMusic](https://Facebook.com/WallaWallaUniversityMusic), [music@WallaWalla.edu](mailto:music@WallaWalla.edu), or 509.527.2561. Homecoming schedule at [wallawalla.edu/homecoming](http://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](mailto:jean081246@gmail.com). For other inquiries, email [alumni@laurelbrook.org](mailto:alumni@laurelbrook.org)

**The Denton First SDA Church will be relocating** its premises after approximately 38 years. We are in the process of selling the property because we have outgrown the facility. We will be temporarily worshipping at another location. The Lifeline Church in Denton is leasing their property to us. The new address effective, March 1st, 2016 will be, 2800 Pennsylvania Drive, Denton, TX, 76205. Telephone: 903.445.2793

## Obituaries

**ALZAYAT, Heather Rene**, born March 19, 1979, in Killeen, Texas, and died December 15, 2015 in Georgetown, Texas. She attended Killeen Adventist Junior Academy and graduated from Valley Grande Academy in 1997. She graduated with a B.S. degree in biology from Southwestern Adventist University in 2001. She pursued graduate school earning her Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) degree from Loma Linda University School of Dentistry in 2005. Heather joined her father, Wayne Pundt, at his practice, Pundt Family Dentistry, in Killeen, working alongside her father, her husband, her brother, and other associates throughout the years. She had a passion for sharing the love of Jesus Christ by serving others through the mission of dentistry that took her to a variety of countries, including Belize

and multiple trips to Nicaragua. After a long relationship with Sameh Alzayat, the two were married on April 1, 2011 in Austin, Texas. They enjoyed traveling and spending time with friends around the country. They also enjoyed a passion for dentistry together. They were blessed with their son, Ramses Samuel Alzayat, on May 1, 2015. She enjoyed many fun interests including singing, dancing, shopping, traveling, snowboarding, SCUBA diving/snorkeling, 4-wheel motorcycles, boating/wakeboarding, but most of all time with friends, family, and her beautiful son, Ramses. Survivors: husband, Sameh Alzayat; son, Ramses Samuel Alzayat; parents, Wayne and Mary Ellen Pundt, of Killeen; brother, Gary Pundt; sister-in-law, Steffanie Pundt; niece, Elayna Pundt, of Nolanville; her parents-in-law, Fikri and Marie Alzayat, of Sundland, Calif.; brother-in-law, Shady

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Alzayat, of San Francisco, Calif.; her aunt and uncle Cindy and Ron Pundt; cousins, Che and Cari Gwin, Craig and Ashley Pundt, Elizabeth Pundt, Deanna and Art Rodriguez, and Carrie Crawford; and aunt, Kathie Kimbrough.

**ANDERSON, Robert C., Sr.**, born December 3, 1953, in New Orleans, La., and died November 4, 2015, in Baton Rouge, La. He was a member of Zion Temple Seventh-day Adventist Church in Woodville, Miss. An avid scholar, Robert graduated from Meharry Medical College School of Dentistry in Nashville, Tenn., in 1980. He then joined his late father in their family dentistry practice where together they would give more than 70 years of dental and civic services to the Eden Park community. Upon his father's death, Robert took over the practice, which he fervently served in until the final weeks of the disease which ultimately claimed his mortal body. Robert was preceded in death by his father, Dupuy H. Anderson, Sr., and his brother Ralph Waldo Anderson. Survivors: wife, Denise; son, Robert, Anderson Jr.; son, Aaron Anderson, and wife, Jessica; daughter, Sara, and husband Dedric Clarke; mother, Inez Anderson; sister, Freya, and husband Griffin Rivers; brother, Dupuy Anderson, Jr., and wife Michele; cousin, Helvius Thompson; and three grandchildren.

**BLACKWELL, Robert S.**, born February 13, 1928, in Winchester, Ky., and died October 21, 2015, in Biloxi, Miss. He was a member of the Slidell, La., church. Survivors: wife, Betty L. Blackwell; sons, Earnest R. Blackwell and Brian Blackwell; and daughter, Melanie Manna, all of Slidell.

**BROWN, Loretta Jane**, born February 20, 1930, and died October 2, 2015. She was a

member of the Monticello, Ark., church. She was a graduate of the the University of Arkansas at Monticello. She was a remarkable woman of faith and love. She was preceded in death by her brother, Jesse James Dodson of Fayetteville, N.C.; sister, Lillian Jean Pratt, of Chidester, Ark.; her husband, Herbert E. Brown, a WWII veteran and retiree of the Union Pacific Railroad of Gurdon, Ark.; and one granddaughter, Loretta Michelle Henry, of Shreveport, La. Survivors: children, Harold Joseph Joffrion, Jr., of Winfield, La.; Loretta A. Little, of Dodson, La.; Billie Jean Brown of Chidester; Jesse Earl Atchley of Chidester; Everett J. Brown of McGehee, Ark.; and Annette Henry of Waskom, Texas; 10 grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren, and three great-great-grandchildren.

**ESPINOSA, Joe**, born October 31, 1922, in Maxwell, N. Mex., and died September 29, 2015, in Siloam Springs, Ark. Joe served in the Texico Conference after completing his theology degree at Union College in 1949. In 1963 he completed his MDiv from Andrews and became the evangelist for the Spanish work in Southwestern California Conference. In 1972, Joe and his wife, Dina spent three years in the Dominican Republic, serving as president of the Central Dominican Conference. In 1979, Joe was called to the General Conference, where he held various offices until his retirement in 1990. Survivors: wife, Dina Espinosa, of Siloam Springs; one sister and three brothers, Arlene Wagoner, Clyed Espinosa, William Espinosa, and Richard Espinosa, all of New Mexico.

**FISCHER, Mary L.**, born August 7, 1927, in Waurika, Okla., and died October 30, 2015 in Marietta, Okla. She was a member of the Ardmore church. Survivors: son, Harold Dean;

and daughters Shirley Newman and Marilyn Thurman.

**JEFFERSON, Leola Joseph**, born April 12, 1915 and died January 13, 2016. Leola Jefferson became a member of the Ephesus Seventh-Day Adventist Church in New Orleans, La., when she accepted the Three Angel's Message in 1930 and was baptized by Elder L. Bland. She was affectionately called "Mother Jefferson" by her church family. Her early education began at Ephesus Jr. Academy when the tuition was twenty-five cents per month. She served as a deaconess, usher, and other positions where she was needed in the church. Survivors: two children, nine grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren, 12 great-great-grandchildren and many family and friends.

**JOHNSON, Donald D.**, born February 22, 1943 in Paynesville, Minn., and died December 21, 2015 in Cleveland, Tenn. He was a member of the Killeen, Texas, church. Donald met met his wife while attending San Diego Academy. While at the academy he worked as a mes-

senger service for Paradise Valley Hospital. After graduating in 1965, with a BA in business from Pacific Union College, he returned to PVH to work as a patient's business manager. He moved his family to Arizona where he was an accountant then CFO for Tempe Adventist Hospital. From there they moved to Killeen, Texas, where he worked as CFO for Metroplex Hospital. For 22 years he served AHS in this way. Later, they moved to Virginia and then Tennessee. At the many churches he attended, he often gave sermons, when needed. He was very committed to doing a good job and people responded well. Also, he served as treasurer for many of the churches and the church schools wherever he was. Survivors: wife, Carol Johnson; daughter, Maelyn, and husband, Matt McMillan, of Knoxville, Tenn.; daughter, Sharolyn Bromell, of Roswell, Ga.; son, Scott, and wife, Traci Johnson, of Ringgold, Ga.; eight grandchildren; sister, Marilee Simmons, of Eugene, Ore.; and sister, Marvella Johnson, of San Diego.

SABBATH SUNSET CALENDAR						
	Mar 4	Mar 11	Mar 18	Mar 25	Apr 1	Apr 8
Abilene, TX	6:38	6:44	7:49	7:54	7:59	8:03
Albuquerque, NM	6:04	6:10	7:16	7:22	7:28	7:33
Amarillo, TX	6:45	6:51	7:57	8:03	8:08	8:14
Brownsville, TX	6:33	6:37	7:40	7:43	7:47	7:50
Dallas, TX	6:26	6:32	7:37	7:42	7:47	7:52
El Paso, TX	6:06	6:11	7:16	7:20	7:25	7:30
Fort Worth/Keene, TX	6:29	6:34	7:39	7:44	7:49	7:54
Gallup, NM	6:13	6:19	7:25	7:30	7:36	7:42
Galveston/Houston, TX	6:23	6:27	7:31	7:36	7:40	7:44
Gentry, AR	6:15	6:21	7:28	7:34	7:40	7:46
Little Rock, AR	6:08	6:13	7:19	7:25	7:30	7:36
Muskogee, OK	6:19	6:25	7:31	7:37	7:43	7:49
New Orleans, LA	6:01	6:06	7:10	7:14	7:19	7:23
Oklahoma City, OK	6:28	6:34	7:40	7:46	7:51	7:57
Roswell, NM	5:57	6:03	7:08	7:13	7:18	7:23
San Antonio, TX	6:35	6:40	7:44	7:48	7:52	7:56
Shreveport, LA	6:14	6:20	7:25	7:30	7:35	7:40
Tulsa, OK	6:21	6:27	7:33	7:39	7:45	7:51

**Note:** Daylight Savings Time begins at 2:00 a.m. on March 13.



# On the Record »

BY PAT HUMPHREY » COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR, SOUTHWESTERN UNION

## They Are Sowers of Seeds

**IF YOU ARE A REGULAR READER OF ON THE RECORD** (and I hope you are!) you'll likely recall reading that I did not grow up in the Adventist Church. Though I had some religious upbringing, and my family attended church sporadically (mostly on holidays), I have only a vague recollection of my experiences in Sunday School and Vacation Bible School—none of which really made a lasting impression on me. But when I joined the Adventist Church, got married, and had children of my own, and I became acquainted with the various children's programs in our church, it was like stepping into a whole new wonderland of ministry. My very first experience with Adventist-style children's ministries was in Sabbath School.

I was amazed when I stepped into a Cradle Roll room for the very first time. It looked like a child's wonderland filled with huge stuffed animals and a child-size replica of Noah's Ark that the children could walk into and experience. The entire room was beautifully decorated, colorful, and kid friendly, and every visual aid in the room seemed to be purposefully and artfully placed to turn the viewer's eyes and mind toward Jesus and heaven. I had never seen any children's room so elaborate or visually appealing!

But I think what impressed me the most about children's ministries in the Adventist Church was the dedicated people behind the ministries. Now I'm not

just referring to the engaging visual aids and sensory experiences these people created—as important as those might be for impressing truths on children's hearts and minds. No, it's much deeper than that.

Over the years I've come to appreciate children's ministry leaders as very special people—people who are thoroughly committed, self-sacrificing, and immersed in ministry with a passion that just won't quit. These are people who have a special penchant for reaching the hearts of children. They are people from every walk of life, but they all have three things in common—a love for Jesus, a love for children, and a desire to see them saved in God's kingdom. I've only begun to touch

on the many wonderful qualities exhibited by the extraordinary people who work with children in our churches.

When I think about the children's ministries leaders I've known and observed over the years, I am reminded of the way Jesus related to children. Here's what Ellen White says about His ministry to them: "In teaching, He came down to their level. He, the majesty of heaven, answered their questions and simplified His important lessons to meet their childish understanding. He planted in their minds the seeds of truth, which in afteryears would spring up and bear fruit unto eternal life" (*Evangelism*, pp. 579, 580).

I hadn't really thought about it this way before, but actually, children's ministries workers are kind of like farmers whose job is to sow seeds of truth in little people's minds. This is a very important work indeed. Let's honor them by valuing their most important work and by holding up their hands as they sow seeds for eternity.

*Pat Humphrey*

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