

Record

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Forgiveness and Grace
Accepting and Paying it Forward

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Forgiveness and Grace

Record

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Our Mission:

The Mission of the Southwestern Union is to equip and inspire the Southwestern Union territory with the distinctive Adventist message of hope and wholeness.

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Editor's Note

Forgiveness and grace are concepts that can be hard to grasp. To accept God's love and mercy and to understand Jesus' sacrifice as an act of redemption, of forgiveness for humanity, may take some time in prayer and scripture. Offering forgiveness and grace to others is an extension of our understanding of the forgiveness that has been freely given to us.

In this issue, we discover how following His example of forgiveness and grace has transformed lives and can transform yours.



Jessica L. Lozano

Forgiveness and Grace

Accepting and Paying it Forward



Larry Moore | President

Have you read Matthew 6 recently? Perhaps you have examined the Lord's Prayer in verses 9-13 in an attempt to enhance your prayer life. Maybe you have read this prayer aloud in a formal setting such as before a church congregation or heard it's musical rendition in one of many Christian songs.

However, have you read on in that chapter to verses 14 and 15? "For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins." Simply stated, if we do not forgive others, God will not forgive us. Not a lot a gray area here, is there? Nevertheless, I do not believe the verses are saying if you don't forgive others, "God is going to get you!"

I believe that a better description would be to consider that if forgiveness is a way of life for you, then you demonstrate that attitude to God and He extends His forgiveness to you.

In other words, forgiveness is a way of life for the Christian. It becomes a natural way of life to us. How much sweeter would our family lives be if we knew that our loved ones are quick to forgive and move on. There aren't any grudges in heaven!

These lyrics ring true in my heart daily. "How can I say thanks for the things you have done for me? Things so undeserved, yet you gave to prove your love for me; the voices of a million angels could not express my gratitude." In the song "My Tribute," singer and songwriter Andrae Crouch beautifully shares that it is God's grace that provides forgiveness for my sins and grants the privilege of being reconciled to my Creator and Redeemer.

The inspired writer, Ellen G. White, wrote in *The Desire of Ages*: "It would be well for us to spend a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ. We should take it point by point, and let the imagination grasp each scene, especially the closing ones." In those moments of meditation, we would begin to feel the magnitude of God's love and His desire to have His creation in a safe place where the consequences of sin cannot dismantle fellowship with God and our fellow man. The grace that is extended to us, individually, will result in us extending grace to those with whom we have contact with daily. Grace and forgiveness given to others becomes the litmus test for the grace and forgiveness given to us. How we relate and transfer God's grace to others becomes the barometer of our gratitude for all that God has done and will continue to do for us.



Buford Griffith, Jr.
Executive Secretary

When I think of forgiveness, several questions come to my mind. Does "some" forgiveness come easier than "other" types of forgiveness? How hard it is to seek forgiveness when we have done something wrong? How hard is it to go before God and ask Him for forgiveness?

In his book *Just Like Jesus*, Max Lucado says, "God loves you just the way you are, but He refuses to leave you that way. He wants you to be just like Jesus." I love how Jesus shows us how to live and treat others in each of the four Gospels. Jesus offers forgiveness, extends grace to us and then shows us how to live to be more like Him.

Jesus' words and actions demonstrate the power of forgiveness in a variety of ways. In the Lord's Prayer, Matthew 6:12: "And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors." In Luke 7:48: "Then Jesus said to her 'Your sins are forgiven.'" Then Jesus also gives us a responsibility in Matthew 6:14: "For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you." Even up to his last breath Jesus offers forgiveness for the people that were hurting Him. In Luke 23:34 Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." Forgiveness is powerful. When we ask and accept forgiveness from God, it can change our world. When we extend forgiveness to others it can change the world.



John Page | Treasurer



Freedom in Forgiveness

A Journey in Letting Go and Finding Peace

Asking God for forgiveness is one thing, but forgiving another person is different entirely. All at once, warm fuzzies are in limited supply. Justifications and rationalizations become our cozy companions instead.

Have you ever wanted a fresh new start? Not just a quick reset, but a major second chance—freed from the heaviness of failure. Asking God for forgiveness can be especially difficult when we’re weighed down with shame and feelings of unworthiness. But even though we might hesitate, we eventually recognize there’s nowhere else to go and desperately cry out, “Lord, please forgive me!”

In those sacred moments of approaching Jesus with a repentant heart, He showers us yet again with new mercies! The crushing weight of guilt is gone. We have been pardoned and given a second chance. Forgiveness fills us with hope. But what about the times when *we* need to forgive someone else? Suddenly, that feels like quite another story.

Asking God for forgiveness is one thing, but forgiving another person is different entirely. All at once, warm fuzzies are in limited supply. Justifications and rationalizations become our cozy companions instead. Reconciliation feels hard and painful—it seems best to avoid something so downright difficult and risky.

I get it. The stark contrast between me running to Jesus to ask forgiveness versus me running to forgive someone is as far as the east is from the west. Being forgiven offers waves of peace in one’s heart but the process of forgiving can create apprehension and fear.

Looking back, I can see where I have allowed pride, bitterness and a host of other reasons to oppose the restoration that God wanted to provide. But I have also heard Him gently call me beyond those missed opportunities to a new place of freedom.

Many years ago, a defining moment stared me straight in my face. My marriage had seen more bad days than good, and a terrible case of resentment and hostility set up in my heart. For years, I begged God to change my husband, but his drinking and drug use only grew worse.

I loathed the toll these habits took on our marriage and poured a torrent of angry accusations over his head, trying to force him to stop. Instead, he'd make his own cutting responses and we'd rip into yet another verbal battle—tearing each other down with words that sliced and diced.

Hopelessness overwhelmed me. I believed he would never change. I made up my mind to leave the marriage.

But, just to be sure, I approached God with one last, desperate prayer. I asked Him, yet again, for the seemingly impossible miracle of changing my husband. I felt this was the “Christian” thing to do, but I expected He would simply assure me that I was free to go. After all, He'd seen for Himself how impossible everything was.

I wasn't prepared for His answer. Instead of giving me the green light to start a new life, God asked me to stay and make a radical new covenant with *Him*. He called me to do something I'd never done before—to seek Him early every morning with my Bible and prayer journal.

In place of walking away, He wanted me to trust Him for a miracle. I was to pray and fast for my husband. I made the decision to take God at His word. For the first time in years, hope sprang up in my weary heart! I staked my claim on Ephesians 3:20, “God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that

I made the decision to take God at His word. For the first time in years, hope sprang up in my weary heart! I staked my claim on Ephesians 3:20, “God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.”



James Bokovoy Photography





we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.”

Early the next morning, I began an amazing journey of prayer. But, much to my surprise, the answers didn’t come in the way I expected. Instead, God redirected my prayers. He impressed me to stop focusing on how much my impossible situation needed to change, and to look only on Him instead. When I obeyed, He changed my life.

My bottled-up bitterness and accelerating anger vanished. By beholding Jesus, I no longer treated my husband the same. God gave me a new heart through the delicate journey of forgiveness. I’d initially planned to pray *my husband* into changing. But, instead, God transformed *me*.

Trusting Him enough to forgive and let go of my anger and pain was the best decision I ever made. God opened a flood-gate of blessings in my life. My husband couldn’t help but notice the changes in me. God used this to plant seeds in his heart that, within time, brought radical change to his life as well.

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Ephesians 4:31,32

Not only did God restore our marriage, He opened amazing doors that led us to baptism into the Seventh-day Adventist Church. A journey to wholeness was birthed through our new life in Jesus. Recently, my husband led our churches through a time of prayer and study using Ellen G. White’s book, *Christ’s Object Lessons*. We came to the beautiful chapter titled “The Measure of Forgiveness” based on Matthew 18:21-35. In this story, Peter asks, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?”

Christ’s Object Lessons tells how the rabbis limited forgiveness to three offenses. Peter supposes he will carry out the teaching of Christ by extending this to seven, the number signifying perfection. However, Jesus replies to Peter, “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.” (Matthew 18:22) Inspiration tells us that only Jesus shows us the true ground upon which forgiveness is to be granted—and also the danger of an unforgiving spirit.

My prayer is that God will use my story to encourage you. Finding freedom in forgiveness changed my life! We can trust God for the fresh new starts of both forgiveness and forgiving. He waits to shower us with grace and mercy in unlimited measure! **R**

By Cynthia Mercer. Mercer lives with her husband, Rick, in Siloam Springs, Arkansas. They have passionately served God in ministry for the past 13 years. They currently serve in the Springtown and Siloam Springs district in Arkansas.

Back to Eden

Unconventional Outreach Through Plant-based Food Truck

By Jessica Lozano, Editor and Southwestern Union Communication Director

The Hurst Seventh-day Adventist Church sits on a small plot of land along a busy highway in a mixed commercial, industrial and residential area of the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. Across the highway from the church is a used car dealership and a beauty salon; behind the church are residential homes.

James Milam was the Hurst church's new pastor when he gathered together with members in late 2017 to consider the church's mission, it's surrounding community, and the words of Ellen G. White in her book, *The Ministry of Healing*: "Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, 'Follow Me.'"

The group pondered how to creatively interact and impact the community


around the church and beyond. The church put together a plan that included a food truck, a church garden, a bee apiary, an artisan and farmer's market, community classes—and much more—but the first order of business was to get the food truck up and running.

"Our Back to Eden food truck serves what we call fast, comfort food, but it is entirely plant-based, from our 'meat' to our 'cheese.' I personally love the street tacos," says Milam.

The food truck employs two managers and has a dedicated group of volunteers who cook and serve from the food truck Monday through Friday outside of the church and during the church's twice-monthly artisan and farmer's market. They are available for events and catering and plan to venture to area business campuses in order to introduce the plant-based cuisine to a wider audience.

"Getting people to try this food gets

a foot in the door for them to try more plant-based, healthy food," says one of the truck's managers and Hurst member, Steve Garrison (pictured). Milam says that in addition to serving tasty food and introducing new health concepts, each meal comes with literature and a schedule of upcoming life enrichment classes at the church's newly remodeled kitchen and classroom building, "The Hive." These classes include basic family budgets, marriage enrichment, effective parenting, basic car care, reversing diabetes, and healthy and tasty meal preparation.

Milam says that he hopes to see all of the intended plan to interact with the community in action by the end of this year, and is ready to share the concept with other churches. To inquire about how your church can start a "Back to Eden" food truck and to learn more about the Hurst church's Hive concept, visit BackToEdenDFW.com 



Taking an Honest Look

The Practice and Process of Forgiveness

By Beverly and David Sedlacek. Beverly is a private practice therapist and David is a Professor of Family Ministries and Discipleship at Andrews University.



The power behind God's command to forgive one another is that He has first forgiven us (Ephesians 4:32). The ultimate expression and display of God's forgiveness is the death of his son Jesus on the cross. His death empowers us to forgive those who have hurt us. Forgiveness is an expression of agape love. Agape is a gift, as the Scripture makes clear in Galatians 5:22: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love" and Romans 5:5: "Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost" (KJV). In the same way, while forgiveness is a human decision, it is more fully a Divine capacity received from God.

There are times when we may believe that we have forgiven someone for how they have hurt us. We may have uttered the words, "I forgive you," but have not done the hard work of going through a process of forgiving. How can we tell if we are just parroting words or have genuinely forgiven?

Consider these realities when true forgiveness has taken place:

There is no longer disease in the relationship. When the person comes to mind, there is no discomfort that arises. Those feelings of bitterness and anger have dissipated.


There is peace in prayer. Have I made the person a subject of prayer? Can I pray God's richest and choicest blessing on that person, even when my blessing seems absent?

There is humility. Would I die for the person? Another way to ascertain the answer to this question is imagining the following hypothetical scenario.

If Jesus were to say to you, "All the spaces in heaven are taken except one (see how hypothetical this scenario is?). I am down to two people—you and the person who has hurt you the most. I want you to make the choice. Who will go to heaven—you or the person who hurt you?" What is the first answer that comes to mind? No cheating! If it is not the person who has hurt you the most, you can rest assured that you have not forgiven. If this scenario is too "hypothetical" for you to

answer, how about this: You and the person who hurt you the most are both in the kingdom. Can Jesus make you next-door neighbors or does the other person have to live across town?

These are serious questions. The purpose of forgiveness is the restoration of communion between two parties, if at all possible. There are toxic people with whom we have to set boundaries, for their sake as well as ours. It takes courage to embrace the truth of our stories of hurt and pain, but it opens the door to new resurrection living. Holding onto bitterness is a death sentence we put on ourselves. Forgiveness involves a change of heart from bitterness to genuine agape love.

Will you ask the God who died for you to give you the gift of love, by His Spirit, for the ones who hurt you (including yourself)? A more complete treatment of the topic of forgiveness can be found in our book *Cleansing the Sanctuary of the Heart: Tools for Emotional Healing*. 

Understanding Apologies

How to Communicate in the Right Language and Experience Healing

By Kristina Pascual Busch, Managing Editor and Southwestern Union Associate Communication Director

Apologizing is crucial to reconciliation. It is the first step in seeking forgiveness and it paves the way for reconciling relationships. Sometimes we are conflicted by an apology and find it difficult to move into forgiveness. Perhaps the apology didn't seem sincere to us, didn't acknowledge the wrong that was done or didn't actually include a request for forgiveness.

We explored the book *When Sorry Isn't Enough*, previously published as *The Five Languages of Apology* by Gary Chapman and Jennifer Thomas. Chapman is the famed author of *The Five Love Languages*, and in this book he teams up with Thomas to explore a similar concept: people communicate in five primary apology languages and while most appreciate each language to some degree, a person will usually speak one primary apology language. The book states, "For an apology to be accepted, you need to speak the language (or perhaps two languages) that conveys to the offended your sincerity. Then he or she will regard your apology as genuine and will likely accept it." These are a few snippets from each language. We encourage you to explore how you apologize to others (and they to you) as you seek to forgive and heal successfully.

Expressing Regret: I'm Sorry.

"Expressing regret is the emotional aspect of an apology." Saying the words, "I'm sorry," goes a long way in restoring goodwill. When the offender expresses remorse and verbally recognizes their role in causing hurt, they demonstrate to the offended that they feel their pain. The absence of that specific phrase may speak volumes to the offended, and offenders may not realize they have left those words out of their apology.

Specific and heartfelt expression is key.

Accepting Responsibility: I Was Wrong.

"At the heart of accepting responsibility for one's behavior is the willingness to admit, 'I was wrong.'" Admitting that can be perceived as weakness, so some avoid it. Accepting responsibility for our behavior calls for humility and vulnerability; for many this apology language is the primary means by which sincerity is communicated. There should be no attempt to excuse our behavior because regardless of the intention, we caused harm and the person needs to hear us admit that.

Making Restitution: How Can I Make it Right?

"A genuine apology will be accompanied by a desire to right the wrongs committed, to make amends for the damage done and to assure the person you genuinely care about them." Take Zacchaeus for instance. His apology included a promise to repay those whom he'd robbed and to help others. We may need to make repayment or restore something that was taken. An effective way to make amends in this apology language is to communicate restitution through the other's primary *love* language.

This may require discovering how that person experiences and feels love.

Genuinely Repenting: I Want to Change.

"Repentance means... an individual realizes that their present behavior is destructive. The person regrets the pain they caused and chooses to change their behavior." Communicating our sincerity in this language must include an intent to change. Express that desire and then work on it. Developing, implementing and committing to a plan is vital (even if we slip up along the journey). Change may not come easy and may require a lot of work, but with God's help transformation is always possible (Philippians 1:6, Ezekiel 36:26).

Requesting Forgiveness: Can You Forgive Me?

"Verbally requesting forgiveness after you have expressed an apology using some of the other apology languages is often the key that opens the door to the possibility of forgiveness and reconciliation... 'Will you please forgive me?' is the ingredient that convinces [the speaker of this language] that you are indeed sincere in your apology." This request says that you wish to see the relationship restored; you realize that you have hurt that person; and you are willing to put the future of the relationship in their hands.

Learning from the *Spiritual Lessons from the Writing Classroom*

The school year is over. As I close out one year and prepare for the next, I am doing what many teachers do: reflecting on what worked and what didn't last year; asking why; and wondering how I can improve. As a Christian teacher, I am also asking myself: Did I teach in a Christlike manner? And if so, why did some students in my class fear failure? Why did a few actually fail?

In thinking about why fear and failure happen in any class, I keep coming up with spiritual parallels. My best answer for why students fear failure or fail seems to echo two reasons why we may fear or fail on the spiritual journey. First, we may have misunderstood how the Good Teacher wants to work with us, coaching and gently correcting us. Second, we may have also mistaken the nature of our unique assignments as Christians, not understanding that God cares more about the process than the product.

Here's where some writing terminology can help us understand the spiritual journey.

Lesson 1: Think Process, not Product

Research in composition studies, and my own teaching experience, has shown that a process-centered approach to writing, as opposed to a product-centered approach, is the preferable method and the one that gets the best results. In my humble opinion, the process approach is also Christlike.

Think of how Jesus invites us to come to Him with our problems and roadblocks early on, when they are still in progress. Jesus ultimately wants us to succeed in our spiritual journeys, but He doesn't expect perfection. He knows that messes and mistakes are part of the process. He knows that this process of falling, asking for help and getting back up is crucial to success in the Christian walk.

In the same way, good teachers want success for their students, but they understand that success does not mean perfection. In my classroom, I invite my students to talk with me while their essays are in progress. I even invite "bad" or "messy" efforts: half-developed drafts, lists, chicken scratch. I tell my students just to produce something, whatever they can, so that I can help them develop it into something better. This is a process approach, and it produces good final results when students understand it and use it.

Some writing teachers focus only on the final product. These teachers want "error-free" essays in only one submission. This particular approach is a well-documented teaching method in composition history, called "Current-Traditional Rhetoric." As more research about the writing process appears, this teaching trend should be phasing out. However, students tend to see these teachers as "bad cops/grammar police"; and students will often avoid taking risks with their writing in order to avoid being corrected, or worse yet, shamed. This approach creates fear; it creates students who claim they "hate" writing. It is also, in my opinion, un-Christlike.

Abby (not her real name) entered my class this year claiming she hated writing. She was so worried about producing



Good Teacher

a clean paper that she bypassed her own writing process, and she bypassed seeking help from the teacher. Instead, she plagiarized.

Lesson 2: Intervene Early and Often

To Abby's dismay, for the first draft submission of the first essay assignment, I scheduled one-on-one conferences with each student. I was following some of the best teaching advice I have ever received: Intervene early and often in the writing process. But this concept of low-stakes drafting, conferencing with the teacher, and then revising, was foreign to Abby. She didn't understand that the point of a rough draft wasn't to produce a perfect paper; it was to show me her writing warts.

As you can imagine, our meeting was awkward. We both knew she had plagiarized, and there had to be a penalty. I told her, kindly, that what she had produced was unacceptable; I had to give her a zero (on the rough draft) for cheating. This brought her grade to an F. I tried to explain to her that, in the future, if she would just ask for my help, she would be okay. Turning away from me and taking matters into her own hands was the worst thing she could have done.

Ultimately, this early intervention was a pivotal moment for Abby. Right there in my office, and throughout the rest of the semester, she expressed surprise and gratitude that I took time to read through essay drafts, have face-to-face conferences, and give early feedback.

Over the next few months, I saw Abby slide from apathy to enthusiasm.



She started engaging with the process, writing me long freewrites filled with questions about how to proceed with her essays, which I always answered. By the end of the semester, she was producing some of the most original, engaging writing in the class. She also earned a well-deserved A.

On our last day together, she thanked me in a letter for being the first English teacher she had actually liked. She wrote, "Your class is one of the few college courses that truly affected me."

Lesson 3: Disciple, and Be Disciplined

When I question what made the difference for Abby—what brought her from failure to success, apathy to enthusiasm—I think it was the process-approach, an approach that, done right in the Christian classroom, is really about a gentle Shepherd leading His sheep.

Teaching is a discipleship process. For the teachers or leaders among us, and for all of us on the spiritual journey, maybe adopting the process mindset can help eliminate the fear and failure. Our walk may not always be easy, but, as Abby found, if given the chance to do its work, the writing process, the discipleship process, can be enjoyable. Finally, when we stay in constant consultation with the Good Teacher, He will give us the tools we need to succeed. **R**



By Lindsey Gendke. Gendke is a writing instructor at the University of Texas at Arlington where she is pursuing a Ph.D. in English. She lives with her husband, Marcus, and their sons, Sam and Seth, in Keene, Texas.

That Sinking Feeling

When I was a child, my father and all his friends and their families gathered to have a huge pool party. Tons of kids, including my siblings and me, were having a blast. Most of my friends and I couldn't swim, so my mom put huge floaties on my arms. That way, when I jumped into the water, I would pop to the surface.

Because of the faith I had in the floaties, I would leap into the water over and over again. I would creep to the edge of the pool, jump as high as I could, and make the biggest splash possible. Afterward, it was easy to just pull myself out.

Eventually I became bored of simply jumping in the shallow water. I wanted to jump into the deep waters. The problem was that my mother had told me I was only allowed to play in the shallow water of the pool because I didn't know how to swim. Despite my mother's stern warning, I decided I knew better.

I got out of the pool and walked to the deep end. Though I was somewhat scared, I trusted that my floaties would not fail me. I remember bending my knees as low as I could and springing up into the air. But as I hit the water, something terrible happened. Both of my floaties popped!

My heart fell right to my stomach. I had nothing to keep me above the water; I began to sink. My hope began to drown along with me because who was going to notice me? Everyone was too busy having fun, splashing and jumping into the water.

As I sank, I remember thinking that I should have listened to my mother. Soon, I began to believe that all was lost. I could no longer hold my breath, and the surface was traveling farther and farther away.

Then, I felt something. Two huge hands grabbed my tiny waist and pulled me out of the depths of the pool. Lifting me up from the very danger I had created, my father held me up and placed my feet on solid ground. Then, he looked at me... not with anger, but with concern. Even though it was completely my fault that I had almost drowned, my father forgave me before I could even say sorry.

Did you know that your heavenly Father does the same for us every single day, when we just ask? His eyes are always fixed on his children. Even though we are disobedient and choose to rely on our own strengths (or floaties), God is waiting to save us. Though you may be drowning in deep waters, cry out to your heavenly Father. Just as all seems lost, the next thing you will feel is those nail-pierced hands lifting you up to solid ground.

By Eliab Quinones



July Events:

4

Independence Day Holiday: Conference and Union offices closed.

12-13

Texico Conference:
2Pray Community Conference, El Paso Central Seventh-day Adventist Church
Texico.org

26-27

Arkansas-Louisiana Conference:
Prayer Conference
New Orleans Spanish Seventh-day Adventist Church
PrayerPowerLab@gmail.com

26-27

Arkansas-Louisiana Conference:
Prayer Conference
Zachary Seventh-day Adventist Church
PrayerPowerLab@gmail.com



August Events:

2-3

Southwest Region Conference:
Mountain States Federation
MySouthwestRegion.org

2-3

Texico Conference:
Asian/Filipino Convocation
Albuquerque Heights Seventh-day Adventist Church, Texico.org



4-7

Arkansas-Louisiana Conference: Ministries Convention, Ozark Adventist Academy, Gentry, Ark.
RBurton@arklac.org

9-10

Arkansas-Louisiana Conference:
Prayer Conference
Mountain View Seventh-day Adventist Church
PrayerPowerLab@gmail.com

12-17

International Pathfinder Camporee:
Oshkosh, Wis.
Camporee.org

19

Texas Conference:
Children's Ministries CHAT
Online Training
TXAdventistKids.org

23-24

Arkansas-Louisiana Conference: Prayer Conference, Central Louisiana Seventh-day Adventist Church
Alexandria, La.
PrayerPowerLab@gmail.com

30-Sep.1

Texas Conference:
SPARK Children's Ministries Retreat, Wimberly, Tex.
TXAdventistKids.org

30-Sep. 1

Southwest Region Conference: Singles Retreat
Lone Star Camp, Athens, Tex., LMassiah@swrgc.org

For more events and information, visit SouthwesternAdventist.org.

EPIC Men's Convention

More than 850 Men Attend Union-wide Convention

BURLESON, TEX. – More than 850 men attended the Southwestern Union's first bilingual men's spiritual retreat, themed EPIC, in Waxahachie, Texas, on May 31 - June 2.

Claudio Consuegra, NAD family ministries and men's ministries director, was a guest speaker at the event and was overjoyed at the responses of the men attending, saying "EPIC was absolutely awesome! The response was obvious in the high number of attendees and the joy which was visible on their faces."

The weekend began with a powerful description of what the weekend was all about: the ultimate triumph of good over evil, of God demonstrating His victory over death. His victory changes the way we live our lives today; it transforms

the darkest of situations and gives hope for even the most broken of people. It's the ultimate story of love and forgiveness. This message was repeated and reinforced through media presentations, through a powerful message by Dr. Minner Labrador, and through a dramatic presentation titled "Martyrs" that showed that no matter the situation, Christ is with us.

In addition to the weekend programs, men were able to take advantage of the Sanctuary Experience and visit the prayer tent that was open Friday evening and during the day on Sabbath.

Sabbath began with programs in English and Spanish, giving the men the opportunity to engage in their own language throughout the day. The English sessions were presented by Dr. Claudio

Consuegra, Dr. William Joseph Jr. and Dr. Bill Kilgore. The Spanish session speakers were Dr. Claudio Consuegra, Pastor Javier Donate and Dr. Samuel Peguero.

Ken Bevel, former U.S. Marine Corps officer and actor from the films *Courageous* and *Fireproof*, was the Sabbath evening keynote speaker. His message was timely and the men quickly connected with him. He made an altar call and several men came forward to rededicate their lives to Christ. Eight men made a decision to be baptized that very night.

Dr. Minner Labrador, Upper Columbia Conference president and former vice president for the Southwestern Union, also preached the joint final message Sunday morning.

Elton DeMoraes, vice president for



ministries and men's ministries director for the Southwestern Union, was thrilled by the enormous blessing the event became for so many men.

"It is my prayer that these men were

not only blessed here at these meetings, but that they can also return to their homes and be epic blessings in their churches, communities and families."

For those unable to attend the

meetings, they were streamed live on Facebook. These sessions can be viewed by visiting: SouthwesternAdventist.org/Men.

Photos by Israel Rodriguez

Emphasis on Evangelism

Following Jesus' Example

BURLESON, TEX. — On several occasions I have been asked, "Why does the Southwestern Union keep such an emphasis on evangelism?" Perhaps the easiest and simplest answer would be that we emphasize evangelism because Jesus put a big emphasis on evangelism. He linked His second coming to the preaching of the gospel in Matthew 24.

When we talk about evangelism, we talk about public evangelism and personal evangelism. When we look at the history of our church, we find that public evangelism has played a major role in the growth of our Church, both in the United States and around the world. In looking at the Southwestern Union, we can see that the five conferences within our territory are focused and very much committed to public evangelism.

There are some church members and some pastors, as well, who believe that public evangelism doesn't work anymore, and thus, have given up on public evangelism. Through the years, I have heard some say, "People in my city don't respond to the gospel."

But I am still convinced that the

gospel still has power to change lives and transform people! In most cases, what people are not interested in is actually the methodology that we are using to present the gospel. The gospel doesn't change. In 2019 the gospel is the same as it was 2,000 years ago when Jesus walked this earth preaching it. However, the methodology that we use to preach the gospel needs to change and needs to be adopted to the needs of the culture and the society in which we live. Because of that, we are promoting creative evangelism—methods that go beyond the traditional public evangelism. The idea is to meet the needs that people have in our communities and to win their confidence and then we can make the transition to present Jesus and the biblical doctrine. This was Jesus' method that we know from Ellen G. White's book, *The Ministry of Healing*, which states that "Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then

He bade them, 'Follow Me.'"

Notice that Jesus also said in Matthew 24:14, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations...." That means that as effective as public evangelism can be in our communities, you cannot substitute it for personal evangelism, telling others what Jesus has done for you, the one-to-one contact. I have found that when we combine personal evangelism with public evangelism, there are outstanding results. When I preach and end a sermon with a call for people to accept Jesus through baptism, those who come forward are usually those who are already attending small groups with relatives, friends, neighbors or coworkers. Those who are baptized tend to remain in the church because they have a support group in those small groups.

And so the answer to why we emphasize evangelism is simple: We want to do His work His way!

————— *By Eduardo Canales*
Vice President for Evangelism



Constituency Session

Texas Conference Elects Officers and Directors



BURLESON, TEX. – The Quadrennial Session of the Texas Conference of Seventh-day Adventist was held in Bryan, Texas on May 19, 2019. Delegates gathered to elect conference officers and directors for the next four-year term, as well as vote items pertaining to Adventist education and the Valley Educational Foundation (VEF).

The day began with a devotional by Carlos Craig, followed by a special recognition for John Hopps who recently retired after nearly 49 years of service in Adventist education. His 43 years in Texas include 11 as an Associate Superintendent and five as the Education Superintendent for the Texas Conference.

After officially adding six new churches to the sisterhood of churches, who were organized from April 2017 to April 2019, administration reports were presented from the offices of the president, secretary and treasurer.

Southwestern Union President Larry Moore introduced the Nominating Committee report to the delegates and the following positions were confirmed.

Officers: President, Carlos Craig; Secretary, David Montoya; Treasurer, Randall Terry. Departmental Directors: Undertreasurer, Efrain Murillo; Associate

Treasurer, Betsabe Cuevas; Associate Treasurer, Barbara Craft; Associate Treasurer, Francisco Pollock; Children’s Ministries Director, Alexis Rivera; Communication Director, Jason Busch; Communication Associate Director, Tamara Terry; Community Services Director, Marshall Gonzales; Community Services Associate Director, Julie Gonzales; Education Associate Superintendent, Raul Aguilar; Education Associate Superintendent, Ellen Thomas; Evangelism Director, Dan Serns; Human Resources Director, Renee Crawford; Human Resources Associate Director, Tatiana Meharry; ITS Director, Zeb Worth; ITS Associate Director, Ron Macomber; Ministerial Director, Nathan Krause; Family Ministries Director, Ruber Leal; Family Ministries Associate Director, Ketty Leal; Print Shop Director, Bo Gendke; Public Affairs/Religious Liberty Director, David Montoya; Publishing Director, Antonio Correa; Publishing Associate Director, Joshua Reyna; Vice President for Hispanic Ministries/Spanish Evangelism Director, Osvaldo Rigacci; Hispanic Ministries Department/Spanish Evangelism Associate Director, Ismael Castillo; Texas ABC Director, Mickey Johnson; Texas ABC Associate Director, Francisco Robledo; Transportation

Director, Dennis Habenicht; Transportation Associate Director, David Lambeth; Planned Giving & Trust Services Director, Roger Mekelburg; Planned Giving & Trust Services Associate Director, Lynette Ecord; Youth/Pathfinder Director, Paulo Tenorio.

Carlos Craig then shared about the work of the Texas Adventist Education Advancement Committee, a group of individuals tasked with studying and making recommendations regarding Adventist education. The minutes of the Education Advancement committee’s meetings had been shared to the delegates in their delegate’s packages. Craig shared the committee’s resolve to continue working throughout the next quadrennium to grow and strengthen Adventist education.

The meeting continued with the delegates entertaining items pertaining to Adventist education. After discussion and majority vote, the following items were approved: 1. To petition NAD to allow for a variance from 30% to 50% (sliding scale going up 3% each year) for teachers’ salaries. 2. A 5% tithe rebate of total tithe from each church to return to churches yearly (funds to be taken from working capital). When the working capital drops below 120% the rebate will be

limited to 1-5% (sliding scale). This will ensure safeguards for the working capital.

A number of teachers, parents and pastors spoke in favor of the motions, reiterating the importance of the ministry of teachers as co-laborers with pastors, stating that the largest field of evangelism is within schools. Teachers mentioned that they are issued credentials by the Texas Conference as Ministers of Teaching. Pastors shared that they believe in the ministry of teachers.

Valley Educational Foundation

The Valley Educational Foundation constituency session opened and the VEF Audit report for 2015-2018 was shared and accepted. Carlos Craig explained that the VEF had been established to manage funds from the

profits of Valley Grande Manor for Valley Grande Adventist Academy (VGAA), which closed several years ago. After discussion the delegates voted to approve the dissolution of the VEF. The VEF Constituency Session closed, and the Texas Conference Constituency Session reopened.

Randall Terry presented an appraisal of the VGAA property, which encompasses 17.75 acres in Weslaco, Texas, adjacent to the Weslaco Church. The property was appraised at \$3.45 million. Carlos Craig explained that the property still incurred significant costs through maintenance and utilities but had been deteriorating for some time. Based on VGAA's history, the prospect of having another boarding academy on the property was very unlikely.

After discussion the delegates voted to approve to sell the VGAA property, and have proceeds placed in a fund for Adventist education. Recommendations and requests were made to give the Weslaco Church consideration and priority regarding a portion of the property and that 50% of the proceeds from the sale of the VGAA property be given to Valley-area churches for Adventist education. The meeting came to a close and the administration thanked the delegates and staff for their work during the day and dismissed the meeting with prayer. Congratulations to those individuals elected to serve the Texas Conference for the next four years. We pray for God's guidance and blessing to be over them, their families and the ministry of the Texas Conference.

Caribbean Cruise

Space Still Available for Young Adult Cruise



BURLESON, TEX. — Youth and young adults are invited to attend the Southwestern Union's second young adult cruise on Dec. 13-18, 2019. The cruise departs from Galveston, Texas and will sail in the Western Caribbean visiting the ports of Costa Maya and Cozumel in Mexico.

This is a wonderful opportunity for fellowship, worship and relaxation. The group will meet for fellowship; practical life tips on such topics as dating and financial planning; and worship together each day with Helvis C. Moody, youth

and young adult ministries director and prayer ministries director for the Southwestern Union, as well as with youth and young adult leaders from the Oklahoma, Arkansas-Louisiana, Southwest Region, Texico and Texas Conferences.

“Our young adults are going to have a great time on this five-day cruise. There will be so many opportunities to get to know other young adults.

“They'll enjoy recreational activities and trying new things together with the benefit of having the opportunity

for group worship and fellowship,” says Moody.

To inquire about current prices and fees, please call Bruce at Royal Caribbean cruise line's group booking phone number (1.800.465.3595) and mention the Southwestern Union Young Adult group number: #6284782.

For more information, contact the Southwestern Union's Youth and Young Adult Department at 817.295.0476.

Prepared for the Future!

Southwestern Adventist University's Class of 2019

KEENE, TEX. – Graduating the Class of 2019, Southwestern Adventist University wrapped up its 125th year of providing knowledge, faith and service through Christ-centered education. As the newest alumni bid farewell to campus, many embarked on their professional journey of service and leadership equipped by their well-rounded experience at the university. Below we share three students' experiences.

"Southwestern Adventist University is where I found my passion for health-care," says Veronica Carvajal, who graduated from Southwestern Adventist University at the top of her business class. She has begun a career at AdventHealth through the hospital's finance and accounting residency program.

From the moment she first stepped onto campus, Carvajal felt cared about personally, academically and spiritually. Her professors often prayed with her and focused on her success.

Carvajal shares that classroom learning was transformed to hands-on experiences through her work in the President's Office, involvement in campus clubs and an internship with AdventHealth. "My experience at Southwestern Adventist University helped me realize that wheth-

er it be at home, work or school, I should always act with high character and be a shining example for His glory."

"I love Southwestern Adventist University because it gave me countless opportunities to make lifelong friends, get involved in spiritual programs and serve as a student leader." Some assume that mission work is meant for theology majors, but for Matthew Hanson, the desire to learn about communication from Southwestern Adventist University's Emmy award-winning professors didn't get in the way of his passion for service.

During his time at Southwestern Adventist University, Hanson took full advantage of the university's opportunities in and out of the classroom. He served as a student missionary, worked in the university's spiritual life office, took part in varsity sports and led as Student Association President. Hanson will use the experiences he gained inside and outside of the classroom as he begins his career. "Southwestern Adventist University prepared me for a life of service by giving me opportunities to learn through hands-on experience. I was able to gain many practical skills to bring to the next stage of service."

"My professors at Southwestern

Adventist University challenged me academically in order to best equip me for my future endeavors. They helped me learn the importance of serving others and empowered me to fully immerse myself as I fulfill my vocation." For Emily Hernandez, Southwestern Adventist University's caring faculty and staff guided her path to academic success and prepared her for a master's degree program through Baylor University.

The university's unique campus culture was evident for Hernandez through the professors who went the extra mile to ensure that she was not only successful in the classroom but also equipped for her future career and endeavors. Hernandez shared that the faculty and staff often stayed late to answer her questions and confirm that she understood the materials. Hernandez studied Biological Sciences and in the fall she will take what she learned at Southwestern to pursue a graduate degree in Public Health at Baylor University in Waco, Tex. "Southwestern Adventist University's caring faculty and staff paired with excellent curriculum and small class sizes allowed me to explore my passion and prepare for my future spiritually, personally and professionally."



The museum is free and open to the public with private tours available!

Home to a growing collection of over 30,000 dinosaur bones with more dug up in Wyoming each summer.

COME VISIT THE DINOSAUR SCIENCE MUSEUM

ON THE CAMPUS
OF SOUTHWESTERN
ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

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817-202-6560



If you can't visit us in person, you can view 360 degree images of each bone on our website.

swau.edu/dinosaurs



Southwestern Adventist University's Dinosaur Science Museum will be at the 2019 International Pathfinder Camporee (exhibit at the Pathfinder History Museum Hangar)

- Pathfinders may earn 4 Pathfinder Honors: Dinosaurs, Fossils, Reptiles I, Reptiles II taught by Southwestern Adventist University's experienced professors.
- Every Pathfinder who takes the honor will receive a genuine fossil!
- Pathfinders will be able to not only see full skeletons of theropods such as a T-rex, Allosaurus, and Oviraptor, they will also have the chance to experience a dino dig through a virtual reality experience and encounter reptiles such as Max, our 25lb, 8-ft long boa constrictor.

Practicing Grace

Forgiving Because He Forgave



I recently pondered the words of Psalm 31:7,8,14: “I will be glad and rejoice in your love, for you saw my affliction and knew the anguish of my soul. You have not given me into the hands of the enemy but have set my feet in a spacious place. But I trust in you, Lord; I say, ‘You are my God.’”

These precious words have been a refuge. Everyone has days that are filled with disasters, challenges and headaches. Our approach, however is critical. My grandmother used to remind me often that a person could find good or bad in life. If you chose good you would find good. If you chose bad you would find bad. If you learn to trust in God, then even the challenges could be hurdled and overcome. Your choice of attitude makes or breaks most of life.

Never was this so vivid until it happened to me years ago at a meeting. This was a meeting of many leaders of the church across North America. As I was sitting listening to the presentation, my eye caught a colleague of mine. He was at the same meeting. I hadn’t seen him in years. We had worked together before in the same church. I decided to catch up to him at lunch. When I found him, I greeted him with great joy. I asked him if he would like to do lunch that day. He responded with a yes. Great! I would meet him in a few minutes. A little later we both had our trays of food and were sitting down to eat. When, all of a sudden, he excused himself and then came back a few minutes later.

When he returned, he indicated he couldn’t eat until he got something straight. And I listened as he confessed that he had done something very wrong to me several years earlier. He told me how many times he had picked up the telephone and started to dial my number and then hung up. He was so ashamed he couldn’t bear the thought of telling me. Now, here we were at the table together and his heart was crushed. He was overwhelmed. He asked if I could ever forgive him. I remember responding that I had forgiven him many years earlier. He was in a state of shock. I continued by sharing that friendship and fellowship were too important not to forgive and show the same kind of grace that God had shared with both of us.

Tears began to roll down his cheeks and he stood up and gave me a hug, thanking me for sharing forgiveness. Years earlier when the incident had happened, my wife asked what I was going to do. I told her that I was going to forgive him, because God had forgiven me for far greater things in my life. I continued by saying that God would take care of it on His timetable not mine. Forgiveness and grace are needed more now than ever. I challenge you to practice the work of forgiveness and grace. We are never closer to Jesus than when we forgive.



Richard C. Dye, Sr., President

Student Spotlight

Adventist Robotics Team Excels in Bentonville

BENTONVILLE, ARK. – In 2018, Renee Otts, principal of the Bentonville Seventh-day Adventist School, heard Mel Wade speak about Adventist Robotics. The students already cultivate a garden and participate in environmental community projects but Otts wanted to create a STEM emphasis. She had been praying and looking for ways to find a niche for the school in the community and was interested in the Robotic idea but felt inadequate to lead out. However, volunteer Priscilla Glasgow has degrees in computer engineering and mathematics and she offered to volunteer as needed. They have been unstoppable since!

Bentonville Seventh-day Adventist School received a robotics grant from the Southwestern Union as well as a grant from McKee Foods to start the program. The school joined the Adventist Lego First Robotics League and made a team of seven 5th and 6th grade students, with the addition of Otts, Glasgow and Angela Carvajal. The team met every Friday for two hours of Lego Robotics work.

In December 2018, the team became aware of the regional competition at Oakwood University and stepped out in faith to begin planning. They raised the funds necessary at their International Food Festival in January 2019. In March 2019, they headed to Oakwood in a rental van. The competition began on Sunday, March 15, with 28 teams from

the Southern region. The Bentonville team had no idea what to expect and came in completely wide-eyed.

There were three presentations that each had to give: First, Project – they were required to pick a problem that related to the theme “Into Orbit.” They chose two problems and researched a solution to solve both. Second, Core Values – this presentation was based on the core values that come from the LEGO League: Inclusion, Fun, Team Work, Innovation, Impact and Discovery. Team members shared with judges how each value was used to create their projects and to accomplish their missions. Third, Robotics Design – this presentation showed the judges the designs the students came up with in creating their robots and completing missions. Our students had practiced well and felt confident in their presentations.

The Robot Mission competition is very exciting and scary! Students were given a two and a half minute practice round. Every team was given the same supplies to work with and had to design any equipment their base robot needed to complete a variety of missions in the time allotted. There were about 15 different missions with a variety of points awarded. During the practice round, Bentonville’s robot failed to complete the mission it had been programmed for. The team diligently worked on the program between rounds

and in Round One they completed the mission and gained 12 points. The judges were very gracious in giving feedback and encouraged the students after each round to try different strategies for more points. With some quick ingenuity, the team scored 62 points at the end of Round Three putting the Bentonville Muscibots in 11th place. They were ecstatic!

The team was awarded 1st Place in the Project Presentation and 2nd Place in the Core Values Presentation! After the champions were announced, Bentonville was selected as one of the teams to present at the National Competition at Forest Lake Academy in Florida. More fundraising and much practice in perfecting their presentations, while adding more missions to their robots was the order of the day. The Bentonville Muscibots made it to the competition on May 5, 2019 and they received 2nd place for their project. All were very excited!

Bentonville Seventh-day Adventist School is striving to give students opportunities that larger schools cannot provide. Through unique and diverse experiences we want our students to leave well prepared to make a difference in this world and be prepared for Christ’s soon return. We have stepped out in faith on many ventures and God has blessed us. We can’t wait to see where God takes us next!

By Renee Otts



God Moves

Miracles Unfold in Huntsville

HUNTSVILLE, ARK. – The Huntsville Spanish group had been growing for some time. They bought a small church with a small all-purpose building and were enjoying a thriving congregation. When Stennett Nash moved to the area, they began to think about adding a real fellowship hall where they could enjoy getting together for dinners and other programs they wanted to implement. The group decided they needed to expand their sanctuary to include Sabbath school rooms and a fellowship hall. They began exploring their options, counting their finances and talking about trying to finance a loan. During this time, the group was reorganized and they became the Huntsville Spanish company on March 2, 2019.

While things were in the exploratory stage the church received an offer from a lady who had bought a large modular building, planning to make it into a home. When looking into the nitty-gritty of getting it moved, set up and remodeled, she decided to just cut her losses and get out. However, the building was sitting on airport property and it had to be moved by April 30. She asked the Huntsville Spanish leaders if they would like the building and be able to move it, if it was donated to them. To Nash it was an answer to prayer.

The company talked with the conference Associations Director, Tony Cash, who took a quick look at the new building and where it would have to be placed. There was no place on the church property without moving

the small building already there. Cash helped the proposal go through the appropriate Committee and got the go-ahead from the conference Executive Committee. With three weeks left to move, the existing building was removed and the area was levelled. The church men came together to clean up the debris and get the foundation laid. The moving company was held up a few days because of rain and high winds, but the Lord held His hand over the project and made it happen! Finally, the building made it to the site.

God is moving in the Huntsville Spanish Company. May He continue to guide them as they let their light shine in their community.

By Sylvia Downs



Answered Prayers

Growth in Zachary

ZACHARY, LA. – Last October, the Zachary Seventh-day Adventist Church family started praying and planning for their Prophecy Seminar with Jason Morgan. Then, from Feb. 8 through March 10, 2019 the Zachary Church listened to Jason Morgan who visited from Montana.

All were blessed with the “Revelation Prophecy Seminars” he shared and each night 25-40 people came to enjoy the meeting. The services were also live streamed on the church’s Facebook page, with over 500 views!

On Sabbath, March 10, the church

was privileged and honored to watch nine souls be baptized into the church family. A family of four came to the meetings and were baptized because of the flyer they received in the mail. Never underestimate the power of the Holy Spirit to use the little things we do. We praise and thank the Lord for this wonderful gift and for answering our prayers.

By Cheryl Livingston



Ministry At Home

Ouachita Healthy Living

AMITY, ARK. – Ouachita Healthy Living recently held its third seven-day, live-in lifestyle program. Each of the five participants expressed having acquired helpful knowledge and a desire to continue to incorporate it in their lives.

Classes were taught to explain the how and why each healing remedy is important, but there was so much more to fill each day – exercise, hydrotherapy class, simple gardening instruction, massage class and worship times together. Cooking class was a highlight each day in which all participated in preparing

the meal they would eat that afternoon and the next day for breakfast.

Ouachita Healthy Living is under the direction of Carlos and Kathy Irizarry and takes place in their home which they had built with this plan in mind. The Irizarrys are both retired family practice physicians. Carlos has also become board certified in Lifestyle Medicine. There are several others who make up the teaching team and a few Ouachita Hills college students have helped. They exude youthful energy—a great ingredient for all involved.

Ouachita Healthy Living sessions will continue to occur twice a year, spring and fall. The next session will be Oct. 13-20, 2019. Contact information: 318.426.1843; email: DrSi@OhHealth.org; web address, OhHealth.org.

By Kathy Irizarry



Monticello's Beloved Ms. Annie

A New Twist on Traditional Study Programs

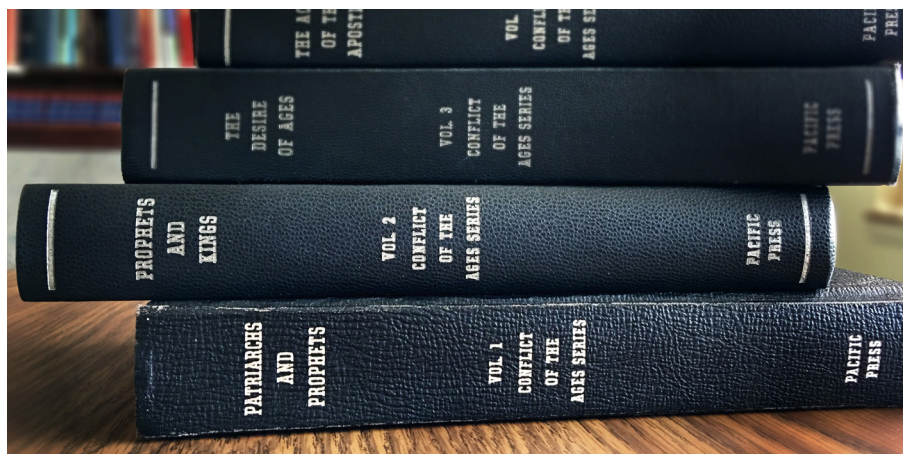
MONTICELLO, ARK. — You can find her everywhere for Jesus: the Monticello Seventh-day Adventist Church, the health expo, family life seminar, vacation Bible school, evangelistic meetings and she will fill in for the nursing home ministry team if needed. Ms. Annie and her late husband moved from Little Rock to Monticello in 1979 and eventually found the recently built church. She recently retired from her offices as head deaconess and Sabbath school superintendent but is still working as the Sabbath school secretary.

This year Ms. Annie picked up Ellen G. White's book *Patriarchs and Prophets*. She started telling some of her friends about reading it and one of her dear friends wanted a copy, so Ms. Annie found an old one in the office, but she wanted a new one. After looking into the cost, she decided to order a whole case and proceeded to announce she would also buy a case of the next one in the series, *Prophets and Kings*. "You'll have to pass the hat for the next boxes," she told us. And that's the plan. After taking out five books for her interests, she gave

the church the rest, knowing that books are a regular part of the cycle of evangelism throughout the year.

Forty interests and members have received copies and are being carefully recorded so we can offer them the next book in the Conflict of the Ages series before long. This project is planned to go through May 2020 with a new book being "released" every three months. Thank you Ms. Annie for loving Jesus and letting Him shine through you. We love you!

By Deborah Bush



An Emphasis in Prayer

Women's Ministry Weekend in Siloam Springs

SILOAM SPRINGS, ARK. — The Siloam Springs Seventh-day Adventist Women's Ministries team held a Prayer Emphasis weekend on March 14-16, 2019. This was an outreach project involving the community and many who were not church members attended.

The outreach started with Girls Night Out on Thursday evening, where the ladies met friends and joined the community to enjoy downtown Siloam Springs and the stores. Friday night, the women were invited to meet at the church where Cindy Mercer shared a

powerful testimony on prayer and how it worked in her life to save her marriage. On Sabbath, the ladies in the church took over the services and Cindy continued her message on the power of prayer. Many friends and neighbors were in attendance and following the morning service, the men of the church served a great potluck lunch. It was a huge blessing for both the men and women.

By LaTara Reyes



Red Letters

A Journey of Forgiveness and Grace



As a new Adventist studying the Bible for the first time, I was drawn to the red letters in my Bible. The words of Jesus were riveting to me as I read them with the fresh eyes of one searching for truth. I had never been so affected by such words. The first study I undertook was on the Sermon on the Mount. I read the words “blessed are the poor in spirit” and I realized that I was proud. I read “blessed are those that mourn” and I realized that it was my sin that put Jesus on the cross. I realized that He suffered for what I had done and I was convicted and began a process of repentance. One of the first things that I was convicted to do was to make things right with those whom I had hurt or offended. I made phone calls, visited people to apologize and even paid money back that I had owed. It was a humbling experience, but cleansing.

There came an inner peace that I hadn’t yet experienced along with a new inner joy. But the thing that surprised me the most was that most of the people forgave me freely and thanked me for making things right. A former boss smiled widely and said he was very happy that I was a Christian and had turned my life around. I was truly realizing the experience of peace with God and with my fellow man. At that early stage of my Christian experience, I had just begun to realize the forgiveness that Jesus offers and was paid for on the cross and what it meant to me. But I had little awareness of another way that it applied to me.

I received a phone call from an acquaintance to whom I had loaned a considerable sum of money. He was calling to tell me that he couldn’t pay it back. I pressed him and asked him when he could pay the money, as I needed it back. He got angry and told me he wasn’t going to pay it back. He cursed at me, threatened me, and then hung up on me. I was shocked and also angry and wanted vengeance. At that moment, words from those red letters of Jesus came to me, “Forgive us our debts as we forgive others.” I remembered the thought that “while I was in sin Christ had died for me.” I reflected how He had forgiven me and given me peace and acceptance. I had received a second chance, a new beginning. Now, He was telling me to do the same to the one who had stolen from me, who owed me a debt and had cursed me. Most of those things I also had done to Jesus. I was able to let it go and release him to Jesus and even pray for him. I wish now that I had called him back and told him he was forgiven. Truth be known, I had done worse than him at different times during my life.

At that point, I had not yet read the parable of the unforgiving servant. In answer to Peter’s question, “How often do I have to forgive?” Jesus basically said always; no limit. The story He then tells is of a man who was forgiven a debt so large that it was impossible to repay, but his master had mercy and forgave him and released him. He then went out and found one who owed him a small sum and demanded payment. When the master heard of it, he called him to account and took back his forgiveness.

Jesus’ point is that He has forgiven us all. He paid our debts that we couldn’t pay. He now asks us—commands us—to do likewise. Those who have hurt us are as nothing compared to how we have hurt Jesus. He teaches us that in order to keep receiving His forgiving peace and grace, we must do the same to others.

James Shires, President



On the Radio

Students Interviewed By Local Station

MUSKOGEE, OKLA. – In April, Muskogee Seventh-day Adventist Christian Academy students and faculty took a field trip to the local radio station 101.7 FM. Christean Gilliam and Grace Lane were interviewed by morning talk show host Cliff Casteel about their upcoming participation in a regional spelling bee. The entire class was invited into the studio during the on-air interview. Afterwards, the students toured the studio and learned about how a radio station is run and about how radio broadcasting works.



Maranatha Mission

Parkview Students Build Classrooms in Costa Rica

OKLAHOMA CITY – For the first time in several years, Parkview Adventist Academy went on a multi-group mission trip with Maranatha to Costa Rica. Steve Case was the director of the trip. We were blessed to serve with four other academies, an adult team from Canada, and an adult team from the United States.

This specific trip was to build two classrooms for an Adventist elementary school, paint the inside and outside of two churches, and do child evangelism in the public schools and Adventist schools around those churches.

Our students were blessed in so many ways. The adults worked really well with the students from grades 7-12. They actually took the time to teach the young people, to gain a very important relationship with them and show Jesus to them.

The Parkview participants came home with a whole new outlook on life. They saw Jesus in the beauty of the land and the kindness of the Costa Ricans and the students from the other schools. The bonds that were created between the schools was a miracle of God's love.

In short, the mission trip to Costa Rica

was a wonderful opportunity for a few students to leave Oklahoma for the first time, to fly for the first time, to see the ocean for the first time, to see sea creatures for the first time and to see God's other creations in birds, volcanoes and people. This mission trip gave the students opportunities to see other kids their own age working together from around the globe to make life better for the less fortunate. It was an opportunity for our young people to see the Lord alive in places outside of Parkview or home.

By Annette Park



Staying Safe Online

Bristow Church Community Presentation

BRISTOW, OKLA. — Once a quarter, the Bristow Seventh-day Adventist Church hosts “Chat ‘n Chew” for church members and the community. This special outreach is arranged by Virginia Harrison, vespers coordinator. Our latest Chat ‘n Chew featured internet savvy, including online dating and personal security, by two experts in our church membership.

Candice Hart, owner of Hart4Recovery, provides outpatient behavioral healthcare services to individuals. Hart realized that many of her clients are enticed online by promises of wealth and love through “legitimate” websites. She shared the story of an Oklahoma City 21-year-old who has a mental development challenge making her cognition that of a 12-year old. Lured by an online dating ad, she began chatting online with a handsome man about 30 years old. The relationship intensified quickly and she told Hart that she had been sent money for bus fare and was moving away to live with her new boyfriend in Tulsa. Hart questioned the motives of her patient’s boyfriend since the couple had never met in person and Tulsa was only a two-hour drive. Through the legal system, Hart

discovered the boyfriend had a jail record and she told her patient about his past, but she still left home. A few weeks later, the patient admitted that her family and Hart had been correct: the man was simply online bait to use her for other purposes.

Hart shared that many teens often post personal information on social media sites: their bodies, location, school, age, interests, etc. This makes teens easy to find by predators seeking victims for pornography, sex trafficking and even forced labor. It may seem like these situations only apply to “others,” but the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children estimates there are at least 105,000 children sexually exploited annually in the United States. Hart recommended the websites Nsopw.gov and ChildWelfare.gov for safety tips, and advised parents to be vigilant about what their children are posting online.

Euniece Dunning, owner of Articulate Communication Publications, shared her knowledge of information technology for online safety. She admonished that when using the Internet, “Nothing is free, so if it seems too good to be true,

it usually is” and that “every encounter via, text, social media platforms or email is giving and receiving data (primary, secondary, latent).” She shared tips to keep personal information private such as installing a security system devices and keeping all apps up to date; keeping personal information limited; changing passwords at least once every three months; using third-party vendors to process online purchases, i.e., stripe, Google Pay, PayPal, etc.; and keeping your social media personal life and business lives separate with distinct email addresses.

Social media apps targeted to teens including Burn Book, Calculator%, Hot or Not, House Party, Instagram (Finsta vs. Rinsta), Kik, Omegle, Whisper and Wishbone. Teens often believe they are not at risk or being followed by predators or “fake” people, but they often don’t understand how predators work. Dunning added “Don’t be afraid, just use best practices.” Specifically, she encouraged guests to “keep three people in your mind’s eye when using social media: a child, a parent and Jesus Christ.”

————— *By Caroline A. Fisher*

Rooted in Christ

Youth Enjoy Fellowship On Camping Trip

HULBERT, OKLA. — In April, nearly 100 young people set up camp on the shore of Sequoyah State Park’s lake to spend three days enjoying God’s natural sanctuary, studying His word, hanging out and enjoying the lake! The weekend was organized and led by local youth and young adult leaders. Samuel Ruiz, Julio Diaz and I shared messages on being “Rooted in Christ” (Colossians 2). After enjoying the Sabbath services, nature walks and bonfires, the weekend ended with exciting boat tours.

————— *By Daniel Ortega, Youth Director*



Meeting Our Community

Zomi Church Teens Visit Police Department

TULSA – During Spring Break, the teens of the Zomi Seventh-day Adventist Church in Tulsa visited the Mingo Valley Division Police Department. With the help of Officer Billy, a former youth pastor, we toured the the department. The next day, a few officers visited our church and showed us inside their patrol cars. We now have a better understanding of our officers’ responsibilities. It was truly a fun and interesting experience!

By Go Lian Kap



Exemplary Service

Two Shattuck Members Honored for Volunteer Work

SHATTUCK, OKLA. – Two members of the Shattuck Seventh-day Adventist Church were recently honored by the City of Shattuck for their exemplary volunteer work and their service to the citizens of Shattuck.

Pat Stock is the director for the Ellis County Food Bank. She received Shattuck's “Best NonProfit” award. The Shattuck church has faithfully sponsored the food bank since 2007. Church members and volunteers from the community alike serve Ellis County citizens on the second and fourth Thursdays of each

month. Their services are available from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. and on those days they can care for up to 200 visitors.

Van Hurst is a retired pastor. He was awarded Shattuck’s “Citizen of the Year” award. The city wanted to honor him for his volunteer work. Hurst started the Ellis County Health Coalition. The organization works in conjunction with the Shattuck Chamber of Commerce and the Senior Citizen Center board. When a local church of any denomination requests Hurst's skills, he willingly supplies a sermon and music.

As these two members are honored for their service we remember the words of Matthew 25:40 that remind us, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

By Janell Hurst and Susan Castillo



Samaritan Center

Churches Collaborate for Community Outreach

MUSKOGEE, OKLA. – The Wagoner Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Muskogee Seventh-day Adventist Church have teamed up to make an impact on their communities by reaching out to provide different programs and services to help the cities' special needs. The Muskogee Pathfinders helped by passing out literature, and their leaders provided speakers to help spread the Gospel in Wagoner.

The Muskogee church has purchased a building, which was formerly owned by the Salvation Army, for their com-

munity service ministry. The Samaritan Center provides a thrift store and food distribution.

The churches also plan to provide a halfway house, health seminars, a food kitchen and clothing distribution. The Wagoner church has shared clothing and other equipment to supplement Muskogee's current equipment. The two churches will work together to organize the administration and the services offered.

The Wagoner and Muskogee churches also participate with other churches

in their areas to support other community programs. By partnering with others they are joining forces to broaden their mission efforts. Through their collective efforts, two baptisms have been celebrated.

By Jack Harris



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A Rebel Without a Cause

Forgiven and Covered by Grace



He was a rebel without a cause. A professional thief, perhaps most of his life cared about one thing—to get as much as fast as he could the easy way, so he robbed the rich but never gave to the poor. He was certainly not a Robin Hood of Sherwood Forest. The Bible says little about the thief on the cross. It simply refers to him as a thief (Luke 23:32-43). Did he rob banks? Was he known for snatching purses? Was he a pickpocket, embezzler or just avoided and a cheater on his taxes? We will never know, but we know one thing about him—he was a known thief with a record that was as long as the breadth of Jerusalem.

Thieves in biblical times were considered the lowest of the low because people had very little worldly possessions that they could claim, and whatever they had, most likely it came by hard work and many hours of struggle. This thief, although he was a good one, made the fatal mistake that most thieves eventually make. He got caught and received the maximum sentence of death by crucifixion. We will never know why the sentence was so harsh, but now the thief found himself stranded on a cross, between Jesus and another criminal.

Should he be forgiven? He was guilty without question, guilty of all the charges. Did he deserve to be forgiven? Most people and even some Christians would say, “No. Enforce the law! He gets what he deserves. You reap what you sow.” But aren’t you glad that Jesus does not go along with how society sees individuals? He forgives the man without any explanation, without a trial, without reviewing his record, and defies even Roman law, government and mandatory sentencing. He simply says, “You will be with me in Paradise.” Forgiveness is a God-given attribute that is the core foundation of every real Christian. Jesus understood that because a wrong has been done, it never means that there is no room for redemption. Redemption simply means, “I don’t excuse your wrong, but you are worthy of a second chance to redeem yourself.” Forgiveness also has another element, a twin sibling whose name is Grace.

Forgiveness says, “I forgive you.” Grace says, “Amen,” by extending God’s favor in spite of the infraction. The Bible says that if you don’t forgive you cannot be forgiven (Matthew 6:14-15). Grace covers us even though we are wrong and deserve the ultimate punishment, but how do we move past what the thief has done? Simply by remembering that it could have been you or me. So, I forgive with the knowledge that by forgiving, I too may need forgiveness. Grace is simply amazing because of what it will do for you in your moment of need even though you deserve the ultimate punishment. Always remember, grace is not naïve. Forgiveness is what must take place. God’s grace cannot be exploited because it is not an entitlement but rather a privilege extended by a merciful God to an undeserving, repentant sinner. It is a wonderful gift that God gave to us. Forgiveness and grace—you can’t have one without the other.

By Calvin L. Watkins, President



Women Arise

Conference Women's Leadership Convention

SAN MARCOS, TEX. – On April 5-7, 2019, Southwest Region Conference Women's Ministries had their Leadership Conference for both English and Spanish speaking leaders with a great turnout of 85 ladies of different ages ranging from 18-years-old on up. It was a weekend full of blessings starting with an uplifting worship service, followed with prayer and seminars.

On Friday evening, we welcomed our ladies with a lovely Agape Feast and enjoyed a spiritual awakening message

as we savored a delicious meal.

We had dynamic, spiritual speakers throughout the weekend who encouraged us to serve the Lord and our ladies in an authentic way. We were equipped with a colorful notebook which included ministry resources, helpful handouts from presenters, tips and ideas for the ministry and our personal growth as a woman of God.

It was a relaxing yet motivating learning experience weekend where we had time to enjoy the hotel amenities,

get to know each other, sing, laugh, cry, pray for one another and overall feel the presence of the Lord within our midst.

It was definitely an enjoyable, learning, worthwhile experience and we are looking forward to the next. We are grateful to all who had a part in making this happen and praying that the Lord will continue to guide and bless our Women's Ministries.

By Ana Acosta
Hispanic Women's Ministries Coordinator



Southwest Region Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

Notice is hereby given that the Fourth Quadrennial Session of the Southwest Region Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will convene September 21 - 22, 2019, at the Keene Seventh-day Adventist Church in Keene, Texas.

Registration for the session is scheduled to begin at 7:45 p.m. Saturday night, September 21, 2019. The purpose of the session is to elect officers and departmental personnel for the ensuing quadrennial term, and to transact such business as may properly come before the session.

Each church is entitled to one (1) delegate for the organization and one (1) additional delegate for each forty-five (45) members or major fraction thereof and who holds membership in the local church or company, which accredits them.

Calvin L. Watkins, Sr., President
Stephen E. Brooks, Jr., Secretary
Philip G. Palmer, Treasurer

Lift Up Your Heads

Cariker Church Presents Black History Programs

NACOGDOCHES, TEX. – Cariker Seventh-day Adventist Church recently held their annual Black History Program. This year’s theme came from Margaret Blair Young’s “Black History” play and was directed by Jennifer Gillaspie. Evan Muir, narrator, opened the program with a brief history. “We were here. Before the pilgrims came on the Mayflower, we were here,” said Muir. “Before the first cannons fired in the Revolutionary War, we were here. Some of us were slaves and some of us were free, but we were here.” Following Muir, Agatha Mooreland, another narra-

tor, gave a more in-depth history and set the scene for what was next.

Cariker church was blessed with the presence of some prominent black historians such as Nat Turner (Kourtnei Moore), Frederick Douglass (Brandon Moreland) Sojourner Truth (Hyacinth Muir), Harriet Tubman (Rose Powers), Green Flake (Evan Muir), Booker T. Washington (Rosa Coakley), Rosa Parks (Shirley Richardson) and Martin Luther King, Jr. (Bennett Hamilton). Each historian spoke of their trials and tribulations giving examples of things

they endured and conquered. After each spoke, the audience would join in singing the spirituals that helped them overcome.

Closing out, a passionate Hamilton ended on an encouraging note. He inspired everyone to dream and to acknowledge that dreams can come true. “I have a dream today, too. I hope each of you has a dream,” he said. “And I hope each of you has the knowledge that your dreams can come true. So dream high. Lift up your heads and dream high.”

By Keisha Roland



Marriage is for Friends

Family Ministries Cruise

DALLAS – “A Marriage is for Friends” cruise is a new venture for family ministries in the Southwest Region Conference based upon the small group process. The process was developed over 40 years ago by Ed and Letah Banks. Banks was a seminary professor at Andrews University. He and his wife, Letah, trained facilitators in this unique process which allows couples to develop skills to apply to their marriage relationship.

The cruise departed from Cape Canaveral, Fla. in March with seven couples from Louisiana, Illinois, California and

Texas. During the time at sea, retreat sessions were held for the couples covering topics like communication, conflict management, commitment and forgiveness. Time was spent dialoguing about the expression of feelings and how that impacts each person’s love language.

A closing ceremony which included communion and vow renewals sent couples forth with renewed vision for their marriages. All were blessed and new relationships were created. May Jesus Christ be praised!

–By Wilma Lee, Family Ministries Co-director



Garden of Eden

Berean's Friends and Family Weekend

BATON ROUGE – Berean's recent Friends and Family weekend took on a new twist with its guest presenters. According to their biographies, the Holy Spirit brought Carrie Cyprian, Stephanie Cyprian and Bobbie Hammond Jackson together. Even though residing in different cities and attending different churches, their desire "to teach, preach and heal" kept bringing them in close proximity of each other. They began with a health fair at a Hammond church's tent meeting. Next was a community back-to-school event where the trio set up a Garden of Eden scene resulting in the name "The Garden of Eden, Tree of Life." Pearlie Taylor joined after asking the team to organize an agape feast. Three years ago at their first One Day Restoration service, Tiffany Weathersby was so impressed by their meatless dishes that she joined. "We are available to conduct health seminars, health fairs and lectures,

private consultations in home services, cooking classes and agape feasts—all designed to take our audience from the garden to the kitchen, in learning God's healing methods," reported Jackson.

The theme song taken from 3 John 2, "I wish above all things that thou... be in health." made its debut during the Friday night seminar and formed the backdrop for the three Sabbath seminars beginning with Sabbath School. Its feature "The Body Can Heal Itself Under the Right Conditions" revealed how high blood pressure, diabetes, cancer and other health problems can be defeated through the diet that originated in the Garden of Eden. Carrie Cyprian and Jackson presented the Sabbath sermonettes "Does God Really Care What We Eat?" and "Gratitude and Service" respectively. Cyprian related a comparative study between the diets of rural Chinese residents and that of urban Chinese residents: "Coupled with

exercise, the rural residents' diet resulted in a prevention of many life-threatening diseases." Jackson followed with a reminder of the NEWSTART™ program and the benefits of its simple remedies. The evening's practical applications by all five included demonstrations of hydrotherapy treatments, natural remedies for headaches, sore throats, coughs and sore muscles; and even a lesson on using charcoal to purify water. Proverbs 17:22, "A cheerful heart is good medicine" brought the weekend to a fitting close – but not before we purchased many of the dried herbs and salves that the ministry brought with them. We praise God for this ministry of healing.

By Evelyn Edwards

The "Garden of Eden, Tree of Life" team poses following their Sabbath seminar: lft-rgt: Bobbie Hammond Jackson, Pearlie Taylor, Tiffany Weathersby, Carrie Cyprian, Stephanie Cyprian.





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Good for the Soul

Loving Others Without Expecting Anything in Return



In Luke 6:32-36 (NKJV) Jesus says, “But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.”

In this passage, our Lord tells us that if we do good only to those who have done good to us, we really haven’t accomplished anything. But, to do good to someone who has no intention of loving, liking or even treating us humanely—now that would be a divine attribute. Jesus says that even men who have no regard for God or the principles of the heavenly kingdom occasionally do the right thing under the pretense of a return on their investment, but when the Christian does righteousness with no conceivable benefit in sight, he or she demonstrates the traits of heaven.

To bless someone who actually may detest or abhor you, that would require a spirit and attitude of spiritual fortitude and resolve. Christ urges us to love our enemies as He did, desiring the good of those who have no desire to do good to us. That’s not easy, not simple and hardly ever convenient; it is discipleship at its highest sense and application.

What would a world look like where everyone did good to others even when others had done evil to them? It would look like heaven! These heavenly attributes are called grace and favor. Receiving something undeserved. Jesus instructed His disciples about the importance of building a character and attitude fit for the kingdom of heaven. It begins by thinking of others before thinking of ourselves and by giving without measure even when there is nothing to be gained. That is the ultimate “pay it forward” principle. May we live our lives by that principle, ever seeking to honor our Master by paying it forward in love and mercy.

By Carlos J. Craig, President



Keene Bible Schools

A Mission Field Right in Our Hands

KEENE, TEX. — Did you know that the Keene Seventh-day Adventist Church has two Bible schools (New Life and New Discovery) that share the gospel with more than 10,000 students across the country, and has more than 190 teachers that nurture and distribute over 650 lessons each week? The Bible schools represents one of the largest evangelism outreaches operating in Texas. While the principle focus has been prison ministries, there is a trend of other people joining the Bible schools as well.

The Bible schools started in the early 1990s under the leadership of Alice Davis. Her vision for sharing the gospel through Bible lessons and Bible study started in her house and has since grown to its own building just a couple of blocks from the Keene church.

The Bible schools offer more than 529 complimentary lessons across a set of 20 series and are available in both English and Spanish.

In January, the Keene Bible Schools launched a new class that allows for inmates to study for baptism and church

membership as members of the Texas Prison Company of Seventh-day Adventists. This includes an official Texas Conference Baptismal Certificate. This baptismal class allows participants to study for baptism via correspondence with a mentor for each baptismal candidate. We are excited that around 10 people to date have joined the baptismal class, and we are praying that more will join and be baptized as well.

For more information, visit NewDiscoveryBibleSchools.org.

By Rick Weaver



Summer Camp Testimony

Meeting Jesus at Camp Offers Life-Changing Experience

CLIFTON, TEX. — Many kids come to summer camp for the fun or because someone encouraged them to, but when they meet Jesus, some for the first time, they leave with a new perspective, a new friend, and their lives are changed forever. Robert was one of these kids.

Robert shared that his parents sent him to our summer camp to get closer to God and respect them, but he really just came to play sports and have fun. He says he didn't really know God had a plan for him when he came to camp and thought that he would just have fun.

The week really meant a lot though. Robert says it was a big blessing and really got him closer to God.

The reality is that you don't know what God has prepared for you, but God knows. As always, God truly blesses our summer camp experience. Thank you for your prayers as we continue to share Jesus with young people.

Watch more testimonies and summer camp experiences on the Texas Conference Youth channel on YouTube at YouTube.com/TXyouth.

By Paulo Tenorio, Youth Director



Outdoor School

Bringing the Classroom to Life With Outside Activities

MIDLOTHIAN, TEX. – For more than 35 years, the Texas Conference Education Department has organized an Outdoor School for grades five and six. This past April, it was held at Camp Hoblitzelle in Midlothian, Texas. More than 400 students and staff met to enjoy three days of activities that included birdwatching, canoeing, cruise control, miniature golf, photography, robotics, rockets, ropes course, science and more. The Texas Conference Children's Ministries Director, Alexis Rivera, was the keynote speaker.

— *By John Hopps, Education Superintendent*



40 Days of Giving

United Methodist Church Members Donate During Lent

SAN ANTONIO – Nine years ago, George Barnette, a member of a disaster team in San Antonio, Texas, attended a presentation by Frank and Mary Jeys explaining what Adventist Community Services (ACS) does with donated clothing.

Since then, every year for the past eight years during the season of Lent, United Methodist church members in the hill country sponsor a clothing drive under the direction of Barnette.

During those 40 days, 28 churches, from Johnson City to Castroville, ask

members and local citizens to bring clothing and shoes to their churches for Texas ACS. Texas ACS then donates the clothing and shoes to those in need, especially during a disaster.

In 2017, the donated clothing and shoes filled 40 gaylord boxes. Each gaylord box is four feet long, three and a half feet wide and three and a half feet deep. This year, the clothing/shoes donated filled 36 gaylord boxes. Most of the items donated are new or in very good condition.

These churches have been a tremen-

dous help to our ministry. Barnette shared that they have invited another district to join them for next year.

Would you consider having a Christmas in July clothing and shoe drive at your church? Children's clothing in new and very good condition is always needed. When Hurricane Harvey forced residents to flee, some people had only the clothing on their backs. They appreciated receiving a clothing kit that included new socks and underwear. Email acs@txsda.org for information.

— *By Marshall Gonzales, ACS Director*



Adventurer Family Camp

A Weekend Focused on Our Destination: Heaven

CLIFTON, TEX. — Lake Whitney Ranch was once again the site for the annual Adventurer Family Camp for Texas Conference Adventurers and their families. Usually held in October, the weekend was rescheduled due to bad weather. Thankfully, the new Easter weekend date was beautiful.

The camp program began with a spectacular opening ceremony showing Jesus riding on a cloud with four angels leading the way. Each club was asked to have a child represent them with a club flag or sign. The chosen Adventurers

entered through the pearly gates where Jesus placed a crown on their head. It was a beautiful moment, with many tears shed, as we pictured in our mind what it will truly be like to have Jesus place that crown on our own heads.

The United Praise Worship team (pictured below) blessed us at each service. They had the kids excited and ready to worship our God through song.

Wayne Jamel, a pastor from New York, shared Bible-based messages that helped the Adventurers see that Jesus is there to help through the struggles

of the world, so that we can reach our destination: heaven.

Sabbath afternoon activities included picking a heavenly name and writing it on a rock with invisible ink; learning about and placing their name on the tree of life; making crowns; fun games choosing an animal mask and a new Family Worship Spinner game that each family took home to help with family worship.

The best part of the weekend was the four baptisms held on Sabbath morning.

————— *By Bo Gendke, Printing Director*

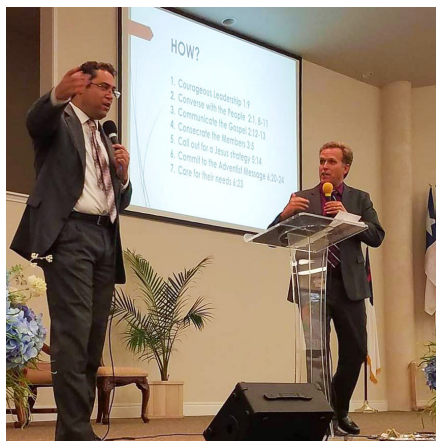


Soul-Winning Festival

Sharing the Adventist Message in East Texas

TYLER, TEX. — Following evangelistic meetings and Bible study groups, church members celebrated at a Soul Winning Festival on Sabbath afternoon at the Tyler Spanish Seventh-day Adventist Church. Gary Blanchard, General Conference youth director, spoke with Ismael Castillo, Texas Conference hispanic ministries associate director, interpreting. We witnessed testimonies, baptisms and music by the Jefferson Academy Choir and the Tyler Youth Choir. What a blessing!

————— *Article and photos by Dan Serns*
Evangelism Director



Growing Young

San Antonio Camp Meeting Focused on Young Adults

SAN ANTONIO – The annual camp meeting in the San Antonio area this past April focused on Growing Young and the importance of embracing younger generations as part of church leadership and programming. The event started on a Friday evening at the San Antonio Spanish Durango Seventh-day Adventist Church. Justin Yang shared his testimony following his arrival to the Atlanta Korean Seventh-day Adventist Church in Georgia. Throughout the years, the culture changed. It is now a thriving multi-generational church.

Jose Cortes, Jr. was the speaker for the Sabbath services at the New Creation Christian Fellowship in Windcrest, Texas. He encouraged attendees to be open-minded, welcoming people of all ages to their churches.

A special part of the day was a forum discussion with Chuck Woods, left, Emmanuel Machamire, Ashley Burk, Alondra Arroyo and Randy Terry (not pictured) facilitated by Justin Yang.

Find more information on Growing Young at GrowingYoungAdventists.com.

By Robin Lopez



Pathfinder Bible Experience

The Gospel of Luke Comes Alive For Young People

ROCKFORD, ILL. – The North American Division (NAD) Pathfinder Bible Experience (PBE) provides Pathfinders an opportunity to study the Bible in depth and then be quizzed on their knowledge at different levels. According to the NAD PBE web site, "Each year, teams of six club members study a book of the Bible (alternating Old Testament and New Testament), memorizing large portions of God's word." For 2019, PBE participants were assigned Luke. There were 166 Pathfinder teams from Texas that participated in PBE 2019, accord-

ing to Paulo Tenorio, Texas Conference Youth Director. "60 of those teams were able to move to the conference level, 25 to the Union level and 23 to the North American Division level," Tenorio stated. "We are very proud of all our Pathfinders and for the work they put into this, but more importantly, we are proud of the time they took to study the Bible. In addition, we appreciate the help of the parents and staff as they spent countless hours helping the Pathfinders study and prepare for the different levels."

The NAD PBE webpage shared

that overall 158 Pathfinder teams were awarded first place, 48 second place and three third place. That translates to a lot of hours the Pathfinders, staff and family spent studying, memorizing and quizzing each other about Luke. For 2020 PBE info visit, PathfindersOnline.org/pbe.

By Tamara Michalenko Terry
Associate Communication Director

Photos by Alyssa Truman

Tenorio prays with the Joshua team (left) as hundreds of Pathfinders gather for the NAD Pathfinder Bible Experience.



A Burden Released

What True Forgiveness Can Offer



Forgiveness is not easy. Our natural instinct is to recoil in self-protection when we have been hurt by others. God's love, mercy, grace and understanding don't naturally flow out when we have been wronged. If anything, our first instinct is to lash out and seek revenge so we can be compensated for the hurt or loss we have suffered.

The Bible has a lot to say about forgiveness. In Matthew 6:14,15, Jesus said, "For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins." Forgiveness is a two-way street. In the parable of the unmerciful slave, Jesus equated forgiveness with canceling a debt (Matthew 18:23-35). It's a basic Biblical truth we can't run from: we forgive others because God forgives us. Forgiving others is a prerequisite for our own forgiveness. This does not mean that we must earn God's forgiveness with our own forgiveness of others. Instead, our forgiveness of others demonstrates our need of being forgiven by God. It shows what the Lord has done in us and for us. The attitude of forgiveness demonstrates genuine repentance. We can't expect our prayers for forgiveness to be heard if we pray with malice and spite towards others in our hearts. To pray in such a state is mere formality and hypocrisy.

As important as this is, it is fundamental to point out that forgiveness is not something we do for others, it is something we do for ourselves. Too many times when we choose not to forgive, we become slaves to bitterness and resentment. In his book *Forgive and Forget*, Lewis Smedes writes, "When you release the wrongdoer from the wrong, you cut a malignant tumor out of your inner life. You set a prisoner free, but you discover that the real prisoner was yourself." Nothing compares to the freedom we can feel when we learn to truly forgive. It is as if a huge weight is removed from our hearts. Perhaps that is why I like the word "forgiveness" in Greek, which means "to let go." To me, it means to be free and trust God for justice and leave the outcome in His hands.

So, my dear brothers and sisters in Christ, don't forget that God stands ready and is willing to forgive us, but He asks that we extend the same forgiveness to others first. Also, the next time you find yourself wanting to lash out or harden your heart with unforgiveness, remember what God has done for you and what true forgiveness can offer.

By Lee-Roy Chacon, President



Who Am I?

Texico Conference Youth Rally Invites Coming Out Ministries

ALBUQUERQUE – Since taking over as the Youth Director of the Texico Conference in 2014, Michael Razon has been organizing at least two youth rallies each year. Razon’s goal is that these rallies will be experiences that not only touch young people but also offer potential life-changing outcomes.

“We are currently living in a world that is giving our young people a lot of mixed and harmful messages and I believe it is important that our events address topics that are relevant,” said Razon.

For that reason, Razon felt impressed to invite Ron Woolsey, co-director/ founder of Coming Out Ministries, to speak at the April 19-20 Texico Youth Rally hosted by the North Valley Seventh-day Adventist Church. The event

drew more than 100 youth from the Albuquerque area. On Sabbath morning, the North Valley congregation joined the youth and approximately 400 people were present.

“We are currently seeing a lot of young people in our churches who are questioning their identity and are struggling with sexual confusion. That is why we felt it was extremely important to invite Woolsey to speak to our youth,” said Razon.

On the first night, Woolsey shared his personal testimony and emphasized Coming Out Ministries’ mission which affirms that Christ works to restore all men and women and that He can bring restoration and liberty to those struggling with sexuality, identity or brokenness.

“What stood out most from his messages is that God does not love us for who we are but in spite of who we are,” said attendee Alexis Tarango.

Woolsey hopes his message resonated. “What brought me into the Seventh-day Adventist faith was our message of uncompromised truth,” said Woolsey. “I have a burden that our young people will embrace this message and share it with compassion rather than condemnation. That is the point that I was trying to get across and I think the young people got it.”

— *By Debby Marquez*
Communication Director



On Air

Hobbs Church Repairs Tower and Builds New Facility

HOBBS, N.M. – On Feb. 12, 2019, five television stations that belong to the Hobbs Seventh-day Adventist Church were broadcasting again after having been off the air for quite a long time after a lightning strike hit the station tower.

The Hobbs church has invested approximately \$7,000 so far to repair the damage and get the stations on the air again. The process to repair the equipment has been arduous and there is still some work that needs to be done; nevertheless, the church is happy that the stations are operating again.

A sister radio station was also affected by the same lighting storm; however, it only took about six months to repair it.

The Hobbs church is currently in the process of building a new media facility that will house equipment for the TV and radio stations. The equipment was previously installed in the church’s gym. The Hobbs church members are thrilled about this new project.

By Ken Davis



FESJA Texico

Adventist Youth Federation Retreat in Albuquerque

ALBUQUERQUE – Over 200 young people attended the first FESJA or Federación de Sociedades de Jóvenes Adventistas (Adventist Youth Federation) retreat of 2019 and made it one of the largest in recent years.

“We are thankful that the Lord continues to bless this ministry. We see how it grows every year,” said Daniela Márquez, FESJA Texico president.

The theme of the weekend was “El Vive” (He is alive) and was based on the book of Job. Guest speaker Ricardo Castro, who serves in the Española dis-

trict, delivered messages focused on the importance of having a close relationship with God. Attendees experienced the presence of God through worship, community service and fellowship. Other special activities throughout the weekend, included a Bible contest, a retro-themed dinner and a Q&A session with Castro and another pastor. Surprisingly, one of the main concerns that surfaced during the session was the youth expressing their desire to want to give their lives to Jesus, but being afraid of disappointing Him.

“Our young people are ready to follow Jesus but they need support from our Adventist community so they can take that leap of faith,” said Márquez. “We are happy that FESJA provides a safe space for youth to have an encounter with God and help them make a decision to follow Him.”

The next FESJA Texico retreat will take place on July 26-28, 2019 in Ruidoso at Cook Canyon Camp.

By FESJA Texico

Photo by Karen Maturino



Selfless and Wonderful

Students Pay Tribute to Retiring Librarian of 25 Years

CORRALES, N.M. – In 1994, when Netscape Navigator was released and quickly became the market leader for browsing the web, Lurlyne Eskew was tasked with starting a library for the newly opened Sandia View Elementary School, now Sandia View Christian School (SVCS).

Starting with a single book shelf and a few books, Eskew’s library evolved over the years and moved to six different places until it finally found a home in a prime location in the current SVCS building.

Twenty-five years later, on May 1, 2019, the students of SVCS surprised Eskew with a farewell ceremony, after she announced her retirement from volunteering at the school. During the ceremony, students from preschool through 8th grade paid tribute to her service by singing songs, showering her with gifts

and giving her heart-warming messages. The 5th and 6th grade class read a poem that likened Eskew to a web browser. “Ms. Eskew you were our search engine,” read some of the students. “The difference is that you smiled, you have a big heart and you didn’t give us annoying advertisements.”

Many people from the community came to support the event including Charlene Zeelau who worked alongside Ms. Eskew at SVCS for 17 years. “Lurlyne spent a lot of time working out of her home cataloguing and getting the books ready for the library, so she probably spent 40 hours a week volunteering,” said Zeelau. “She is an amazing person; truly selfless and wonderful.”

“I worked with Ms. Eskew for about eight years in the library and have

known her since my 23-year-old was a preschooler at SVCS,” said Jennifer Christiansen. “Throughout the years she has been an amazing example to me of Christlike love, sacrifice and service.”

From mentions of her overall support of the school to legends of her reading all the books in the library to ensure their appropriateness, there was an overwhelming sense of love and respect for Ms. Eskew at the ceremony and she was happy to be part of it all.

“I’m kind of sad because I’ve been doing this for a long time, 40 years in total,” said Ms. Eskew. But I appreciated the willingness of the kids who participated, and I think the library is going to be in good hands.”

By Debby Marquez
Communication Director



Amazing God

Fifth Annual Texico Conference School Music Festival

ALBUQUERQUE – On April 6, 2019, over 500 people visited the Albuquerque Heights Seventh-day Adventist Church to see 84 students from five Texico Conference elementary schools perform the musical program, *Amazing God*. Led by music teacher Edna Becerra, the Festival Choir, comprised of fifth through eighth-grade classes. During the practice days before the program, students auditioned for solo parts. The Sandia View Academy Choir and ninth graders from El Paso Adventist Junior Academy (EPAJA) also joined the Festival Choir

for the final song, “My Tribute.” The program featured a ukulele number performed by students from the El Paso Adventist Junior Academy. The older students from the Adventist Academy of Santa Fe sang as the first through third-grade classes played their xylophones and Ms. Morataya accompanied the group on her guitar.

If you were unable to come to the program, you may view it at: [Facebook.com/TexicoConference](https://www.facebook.com/TexicoConference).

By *Derral W. Reeve*
Education Superintendent



Texico Evangelism

Conference Encouraged by Public Evangelism Success

CORRALES, N.M. – There is a visible shift in the way many churches are conducting evangelism these days. With the implementation of technology that supports ministry for smaller groups, churches are finding new and creative ways to draw people to church. As important as this development is, the Texico Conference is still finding success in public evangelism.

In April, the Spanish Seventh-day Adventist churches in El Paso, Texas, organized and conducted a two-week evangelistic series that featured Omar Grieve, La Voz de la Esperanza (The

Voice of Hope) director/speaker, and his wife Nussy Pittau-Grieve, La Voz de la Esperanza associate director. Over the course of the nightly meetings, more than 300 people attended, 17 were baptized and many more are receiving follow-up Bible studies.

“Public evangelism is still a powerful and effective tool for church growth,” said Lee-Roy Chacon, Texico Conference president. “One of our conference objectives for the next few years is to employ a strong evangelistic emphasis. We support and encourage our churches

to engage in outreach activities including public evangelism.”

The El Paso evangelistic meetings are just one of many successful evangelistic series that have taken place throughout the Texico Conference in the past year. Many more are planned for the remainder of 2019.

“We are excited about our evangelism plans and are looking forward to seeing more people make a decision for Christ and be welcomed into the Seventh-day Adventist Church,” said Chacon.

– *By Debby Marquez, Communication Director*



Classified Ads

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adjusts academic standards and curriculum content; assigns faculty teaching loads as agreed upon with the Dean; monitors accreditation issues and accreditation standards for programs to assure compliance; encourages faculty and student research and publications; and works with marketing staff to develop annual marketing plan. Andrews.edu/admres/jobs/show/faculty#job_9

Southern Adventist University seeks Dean of Graduate Studies. Candidate will assume a leadership role in all aspects of graduate education and provides academic, administrative and strategic direction to Graduate Studies. For a complete list of responsibilities, requirements and qualifications visit Southern.edu/jobs

Southern Adventist University seeks Website Development Manager. The Website Development Manager works closely with the Director of Marketing and University Relations to create and implement the strategy and goals for the university website, digital advertising and social media efforts. As a full stack developer, this position requires a high level of website design and development proficiency. For a complete list of responsibilities, requirements and qualifications visit Southern.edu/jobs

Southern Adventist University seeks Director of Records and Advisement.

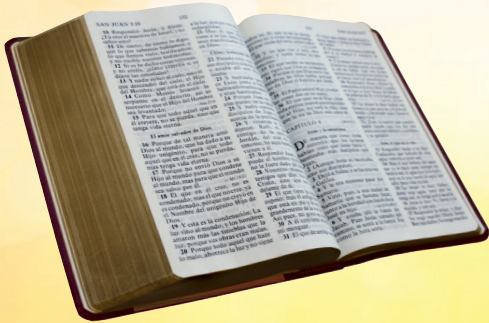
The Director of Records and Advisement has direct supervisory responsibility for management of all aspects of the Department of Records and Advisement. For a complete list of responsibilities, requirements, and qualifications visit Southern.edu/jobs

Southern Adventist University seeks to fill a faculty position in the School of Journalism and Communication (SJC). Candidate will bring his or her creativity, energy, and academic and professional excellence to the SJC. For a complete list of responsibilities, requirements and qualifications visit Southern.edu/jobs

Southern Adventist University seeks Vice President for Spiritual Life who will oversee all areas of spirituality on campus. This leader will provide spiritual mentoring and programming for students, spiritual support for employees and spiritual guidance for campus decisions. This role involves collaboration with the university church and its pastoral staff to foster Christian growth and fellowship between campus and church. The VP will also direct team members in the Chaplain's office by motivating, developing and integrating skills for strategic goals and meeting departmental objectives. For the full description and list of qualifications: Southern.edu/HR

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Union College invites applicants for an Accounting teaching faculty position. Qualified applicants will be committed members of the SDA church and have a master's/doctorate degree or significant experience and willingness to pursue a master's degree. Find more information at UCollege.edu/faculty-openings or contact Lisa Forbes at Lisa.R.Forbes@UCollege.edu

Stallant Health Rural Health Clinic in Weimar, California is accepting applications for a Nurse Practitioner or a Physician Assistant, as well as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. Please contact Marva at Marva@StallantHealth.com for further information.

Southern Adventist University seeks candidate for the Associate Director of the Center

for Teaching Excellence and Biblical Foundations of Faith and Learning. For full job description, including responsibilities and qualifications, visit Southern.edu/jobs

Andrews University seeks Faculty-Discipleship and Religious Education.

The individual will hold a faculty appointment in the Department of Discipleship and Religious Education and carry regular faculty responsibilities related to teaching, service, research and publication, and administration: Andrews.edu/admres/jobs/show/faculty#job_2

Union College seeks committed Adventist to establish and direct an Occupational Therapy Assistant Program effective Summer 2019. Essential qualifications

include a master's degree in Occupational Therapy (doctorate preferred), being licensed and registered, and five years of professional experience. Email letter of interest and C.V. to Rick Young, Chair of Emergency Management and Exercise Science, Rick.Young@UCollege.edu

REAL ESTATE/HOUSING

Summit Ridge Retirement Village is an Adventist community in a rural setting that offers affordable homes or apartments and caring neighbors, with a fellowship you'll enjoy. On-site church, planned activities and transportation, as needed. Also, Wolfe Living Center offering independent living and nursing home. Website: SummitRidgeVillage.org or Bill Norman 405.208.1289.

For Sale: 21 acres in Ozarks, Northwest Arkansas. South slope wooded, small SDA Church nearby. Winslow, Arkansas. \$80,000. Please call Beth at 707.954.2529 or 707.337.1652.

MISCELLANEOUS

Enjoy Worry-Free Retirement at Fletcher Park Inn on the Fletcher Academy campus near Hendersonville, NC. Spacious apartments available now. Ask about our limited rental units and villa homes. Enjoy a complimentary lunch at our vegetarian buffet when you tour. Call Lisa at 1.800.249.2882 or 828.209.6935 or visit FletcherParkInn.com

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Walla Walla University offers master's degrees in biology; cinema, religion, and worldview; education (including special education); and social work. Flexible completion times and in-person, hybrid, and fully-online formats available. Financial aid may be available. For more information call 509.527.2290 or visit WallaWalla.edu/Grad

Dallas First Church is hosting a 2-day, free medical clinic in partnership with AMEN ministries on October 25th and 27th. We are planning to serve hundreds of people in the center of Dallas, so we are seeking volunteer and financial support. No matter what skills you have, medical or otherwise, we can use your help. See the announcement in this magazine or visit us at Health4Dallas.org for more details.

Special Education master's degrees are offered at Walla Walla University (M.Ed. or M.A.T.). Fully online format and flexible completion times available. Now offering a limited time, 33% tuition discount. For more information call 509.527.2290 or visit WallaWalla.edu/SPED

Do you have a car that you no longer need? Ouachita Hills Academy, providing quality Christian education for youth grades 9-12, a 501(c)(3) charity is now accepting donations of automobiles that are less than 10 years old, whether they are running or not. At Ouachita Hills Academy, we believe in teaching youth practical skills by which they can support themselves throughout their lives. Your donated car will become a part of the process

by which we teach the youth enrolled in the automotive class these important skills. If interested, please contact us at 870.342.6210 or 719.688.5299.

Experience Adventist Heritage Village, Battle Creek, Michigan & 3ABN tour October 6-11, 2019. Details on the web: AdventToursUS.com

Announcements

Plainview Adventist Academy, Sheyenne River Academy, and Dakota Adventist Academy Alumni Weekend, October 4-5 2019 at Dakota Adventist Academy, 15905 Sheyenne Circle, Bismarck, ND. Come and renew your friendships. Honor Classes: '45, '50, '55, '60, '65, '70, '80, '90, '95, '00, '05, '10, '15. For more information call 701-751-6177 ext. 212 or visit our website at DakotaAdventistAcademy.org

Dallas City Temple Centennial Celebration set for October 2019. City Temple Adventist Church in Dallas, Tex., is celebrating 100 years of existence. An anniversary gala as well as other celebratory events will be taking place through October 2019. More information is available at DallasCityTemple.org. Email: DCT100@DallasCityTemple.org

Alumni Weekend for Spanish-American Seminary and Sandia View Academy. October 10-12, 2019 in Corrales, N.M. Honor classes are years that end in 4 or 9. Theme this year is "Always Welcome. Always Family." Festivities begin Thursday evening with dinner and karaoke in the

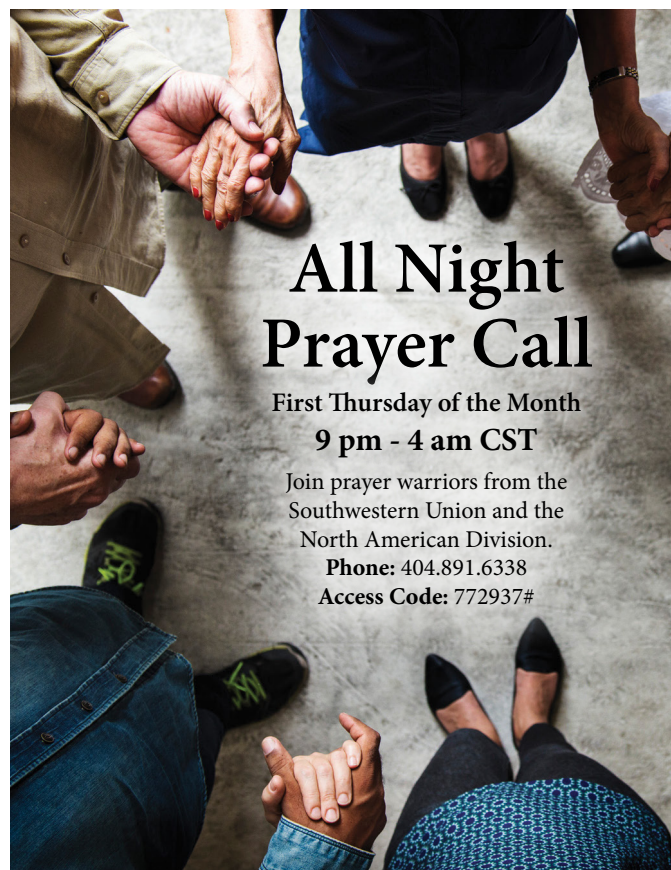
SVCS gym at 6 p.m. Go to SandiaViewAcademyAlumni.org for information about speakers, lodging, Balloon Fiesta and the schedule for weekend activities. Email us at SVARocks@gmail.com if you have questions.

Paula Lajara (Phillip Riley); daughter, Mary Deckard (Dean); son, Mike Clark (Janna); son-in-law, Juan Lajara; brothers, Donald Clark (Bebe), Melvin Clark (Dianne), and Dudley Clark (Sue).

Dworak, Margaret (Midge), born June 3, 1928, Marceline, Mo.; died April 5, 2019, Fort Smith, Ark. Church membership: Alma Seventh-day Adventist Church. Preceded in death by her parents, James and Juanita Liles; husband, Richard Dworak; sister, Judy Adkins; three brothers, Gene, Jimmy and Larry Liles; and one great-granddaughter. Survivors: son, Barry Beldin of Greenville, S.C.; daughters, Sandi Presson (Larry) of Ft. Smith and K.J. Spring (Tini Murdock)

Obituaries

Clark, Paul Estes, born in Ponchatoula, La.; died Jan. 7, 2019. He served in the United States Navy during the Haitian crisis, Cuban crisis and the Vietnam War. He served the Adventist church as a pastor for 45 years. Preceded in death by his parents, Danna and Ethel Clark and infant sister. Survivors: wife, Rebecca Louise Mitchell Clark; son, Raymond Clark; daughter,



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Creighton Hunter Davis, 36, was born November 17, 1982, in Fort Worth, Texas, and died April 8, 2019, in Mandan, N.D. He was a 2001 graduate of Georgia-Cumberland Academy and attended Southern Adventist University and Newbold College.



Creighton spent most of his childhood and teenage years in Tyler, Texas. During the summer, Sunday mornings found him with family and friends at the lake, where he developed a great love and proficiency for water skiing. Fireworks were another passion, and he often choreographed his own New Year's Eve and Fourth of July shows. Attending school in England opened to him the world of travel, and while at Newbold it was his privilege to visit many countries in Europe and the British Isles, an experience which helped define the person he was.

Like his grandfather before him, he found satisfaction and fulfillment in physical work, rising to the challenge of often working long, hard hours in extreme weather conditions. After returning from Newbold, he moved to Cincinnati, Ohio, where he worked in construction. Several years later, he moved to the Collegedale, Tenn., area, working as an irrigation systems installer and as a driver for FedEx Ground. He moved to North Dakota in 2013, again working as a driver for FedEx Ground and then FedEx Freight in Bismarck, N.D.

But regardless of where life took him, he was first, foremost, and always a proud Texan. The Texas flag which he took with him to England continued to hang in a prominent location in his home as a tribute to his home state.

He is survived by his son, Alden Louis Davis, of Mandan; parents, Phil and Kathy (Miller) Davis of Ooltewah, Tenn.; brother, Brad Davis of Keller, Texas; sister and brother-in-law, Jennifer and John Hammermeister of Corinth, Texas; and nephews, Jared and Josh Davis and Carter Hammermeister. He will be remembered for his strong work ethic, sense of humor, quick wit, and kind heart. He was a loving father, a devoted son and brother, and a faithful friend, and he will be forever missed.

of Oracle, Ariz.; sister-in-law, Martha Liles; brother-in-law, Hank Adkins; 10 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; and 10 great-great-grandchildren.

Frase, Dorothy Irene Simkin, born June 3, 1928, Silver Spring, Md.; died Jan. 23, 2019, Malvern, Ark. Church membership: Malvern, Ark. Survivors: husband, Gordon Autumn Frase; brother, Gordon Simkin; son, Autumn Frase; daughters, Rhona Brown and Esther Erb; six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Head, Joan E., born July 24, 1933, Fort Smith, Ark.; died April 1, 2019, Little Rock, Ark. Church membership: Little Rock Seventh-day Adventist Church. Preceded in death by her husband, Emmitt Evert Head; infant daughter, Leeann Head; son, David William Richard Head. Survivors: children, Ron Head (Sandy) of Jacksonville; Larry Head (Marie); Terry Head; Donny Head (Sheila), all of Little Rock; Brandon Head (Jordie) of Perryville; Roxanne Garvin (Kori) of Conway; daughter-in-law, Doris Head of Memphis, Tenn.; eight grandchildren, 14 great-grandchildren.

Holerud, Arlen Gene, born May 27, 1938, North Dakota; died March 8, 2019, Oklahoma City, Okla. Church membership: Southern Hills Seventh-day Adventist Church. Preceded in death by his parents, Marvin and Myrtle Holerud; siblings, Dean Holerud, Carol Hold and Myrna Hubert. Survivors: wife, Beverly; his

three daughters, Nancy Burr, Edmond, Okla., Rebecca Boyd, Moore, Okla. and Karen Holerud, Moore, Okla.; his sister, Alvera (Steve Hlavac) of Minnetonka, Minn. and several nieces and nephews.

Jackson, Alvin Sr., born Nov. 15, 1938, Opelousas, La.; died April 28, 2019, Lake Charles, La. Church membership: Lake Charles Seventh-day Adventist Church. Survivors: wife, Margaret, Lake Charles, La.; four sons, five daughters, 16 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Matlock, Vivian Lee Dyer (LeeLee), born Nov. 2, 1935, in Malvern, Ark.; died March 19, 2019. Church membership: Malvern Seventh-day Adventist Church. Preceded in death by her parents, Walter Max and Claudia Mae Dyer; brother, Doyle Dyer and granddaughter Theresa Matlock. Survivors: husband, Victor Wayne Matlock; son, Jimmy Matlock (Wanda) of Rockport; daughter, Renae Frase (Autumn) of Malvern; sister, Judy Lambeth (Jim) of Deer Park, Wash.; three grandchildren, six great-grandchildren and one great-great-granddaughter.

Maxwell, Joseph Edward, born Oct. 31, 1963, Dinuba, Calif.; died March 19, 2019.

Maxwell, Ruth Lillian Garrison, born Jan. 16, 1925, Lansing, Mich.; died May 25, 2019, Albuquerque, N.M. Church membership: East Mountain Seventh-day Adventist Church. Preceded

Therefore, as God's chosen

people, holy and
dearly loved,

clothe yourselves with
compassion, kindness,

humility, gentleness and

patience

Bear with each other and
forgive one another if any of

you has a grievance

against someone.

FORGIVE AS THE LORD FORGAVE YOU.

And over all these virtues

put on love, which binds

them all together in perfect

UNITY.

Colossians 3:12-14

Dr. Edwin Collins, DDS, was born in Denison, Texas on September 19, 1925. He graduated from the University of Nebraska in 1949 with a doctorate in dentistry. He was



drafted by the US Army and served as a captain in the Korean War, both as a medical and dental doctor from 1949 to 1953. He was recipient of several medals. After leaving military service, Dr. Collins practiced dentistry in Nebraska and Idaho. He later became a professor and dean of the School of Dentistry at Loma Linda University in California. He then moved to San Antonio, Texas, where he was a professor and later the dean of the School of Dentistry at the University of Texas, San Antonio, until his retirement.

He lived in Bandera, Texas, and attended the Laurel Heights Church in San Antonio and later the Kerrville Church, where Dorothy, his wife of over 50 years preceded him in death. He later married Linda Cardenas Gutierrez and they lived in Bandera, McKinney and Fredericksburg, Texas; and last year moved to Fayetteville, Arkansas, where he passed away on April 5, 2019. He will be missed.

in death by her parents; brother, Homer Garrison; two stepdaughters, Dorothy (Jones) Stolte and Roberta (Jones) Dunford and three step grandsons. Survivors: children, DiAnne (Jones) Wafford of Albuquerque, N.M.; Linda (Jones) Bricker of Bluffton, Ind.; Michael Jones of Naples, Fla., Philip Jones of Moriarty, N.M. and Sue (Jones) Hinkle of Columbia, Md.; 23 grandchildren, 38 great-grandchildren, 14 great-great-grandchildren.

Morrow, Virgil, born on May 13, 1937, Tellico Plains, Tenn.; died Feb. 24, 2019. Church membership: Waldron Seventh-day Adventist Church. Survivors: wife, Barbara Morrow of Hatfield, Ark.; son, Jeffrey Morrow of New Hampshire; sister, Evelyn Brown of Wyoming and one grandchild.

Phillips, Robert E. (Bob), born June 29, 1935, Tulsa, Okla.; died April 6, 2019, Tulsa, Okla. Church membership:

Back Pages

First Seventh-day Adventist Church of Tulsa. Survivors: wife, Gale; children, Tammy Shoemake, Sherman, Tex., Sherry Nikles (Brian) of Newburgh Heights, Ohio and Lori Huddleston (Joe) of Owasso, Okla.; brother, Howard Masingale, Owasso, Okla.; 10 grandchildren.

Rush, Billy Joe (Bill), died Feb. 8, 2019. Church membership: Alma Seventh-day Adventist Church. Survivors: wife, Connie Rush, Alma, Ark.

Sears, Ida Lee, born Sept. 17, 1954, Memphis, Tex.; died March 4, 2019, Little Rock, Ark. Church membership: Magnolia Seventh-day Adventist Church. Survivors: mother, Gloria Sears, Magnolia, Ark.; three daughters, Debbie Sears and Rebecca Harper

of Magnolia, Ark. and Evangela Michelle Gatson, Longview, Tex.; eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Turpen, Adelle Janette Kitto, born May 21, 1931, Fresno, Calif; died March 8, 2019, Wimberley, Tex. Church membership: San Marcos Seventh-day Adventist Church. Preceded in death by husband, Don Turpen; older brother, Robert Everett Kitto. Survivors: sister, Doreen Kitto Clark of Port Angeles, Wash.; four children, Kathleen Davis (Gary) of Wimberley, Tex.; Kenneth Turpen (Sandra) of Hermitage, Tenn.; Karen Oldmixon of Wimberley, Tex., and Kraig Turpen (Terri) of Fredericksburg, Tex.; 14 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Wheeler, Theodore Roosevelt, born Jan. 15, 1924, Fountain Hill, Ark.; died March 31, 2019. Church membership: Benton Seventh-day Adventist Church. He served during WWII and Korean War, earning a Purple Heart as a POW in Korea. Preceded in death by parents, Garner A. Wheeler and Mary Clementine Davis; wife, Shirley Lorene Rafter Wheeler; children, Rhett Wheeler and Tammy Hobbs; and a granddaughter. Survivors: son, Kirk Wheeler (Willa) of Little Rock; daughters, Rhonda Phillips of Benton, Vicki Smith (Steve) of Hot Springs Village and Kelly Goodrich of Bryant; 14 grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren.

Submissions

Back Pages: To submit family milestones, obituaries, announcements or address changes, visit SouthwesternAdventist.org/Communication or call 817.295.0476.

The *Record* also accepts expanded obituaries. For submission and cost information, contact Record@swuc.org or call 817.295.0476.

News and Articles: Send your local church news and high-resolution photos to your local conference communication representative listed on page 2.

If you are interested in writing for the *Record*, email Record@swuc.org or visit SouthwesternAdventist.org/Communication to review our writer's guidelines.

Advertising: Contact Bradley Ecord at BEcord@swuc.org or 817.295.0476

Sabbath Sunset Calendar

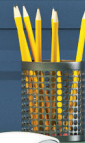
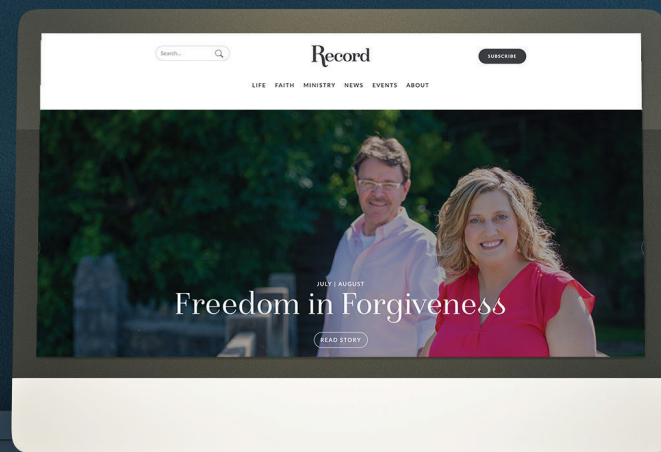
July-August 2019

	7/5	7/12	7/19	7/26	8/2	8/9	8/16	8/23	8/30
Abilene	8:50	8:49	8:46	8:42	8:37	8:31	8:24	8:16	8:07
Albuquerque	8:24	8:23	8:20	8:15	8:10	8:03	7:55	7:47	7:38
Amarillo	9:05	9:04	9:01	8:56	8:51	8:44	8:36	8:28	8:18
Brownsville	8:26	8:25	8:23	8:20	8:16	8:11	8:06	7:59	7:53
Dallas	8:39	8:38	8:35	8:31	8:26	8:19	8:12	8:04	7:56
El Paso	8:15	8:14	8:11	8:08	8:03	7:57	7:50	7:42	7:34
Fort Worth	8:41	8:40	8:37	8:33	8:28	8:22	8:15	8:07	7:58
Gallup	8:34	8:32	8:29	8:25	8:19	8:12	8:04	7:56	7:46
Gentry	8:39	8:37	8:34	8:29	8:24	8:17	8:09	8:00	7:50
Houston	8:26	8:25	8:23	8:19	8:15	8:09	8:03	7:55	7:48
Little Rock	8:26	8:25	8:22	8:17	8:12	8:05	7:58	7:49	7:40
Muskogee	8:41	8:39	8:36	8:32	8:26	8:19	8:11	8:02	7:53
New Orleans	8:05	8:04	8:02	7:58	7:54	7:48	7:42	7:34	7:26
Oklahoma City	8:49	8:47	8:44	8:40	8:34	8:27	8:19	8:11	8:02
Roswell	8:11	8:10	8:07	8:03	7:58	7:51	7:44	7:36	7:27
San Antonio	8:38	8:37	8:34	8:31	8:26	8:21	8:15	8:07	8:00
Shreveport	8:26	8:25	8:22	8:18	8:13	8:07	8:00	7:52	7:44
Tulsa	8:44	8:43	8:39	8:35	8:29	8:22	8:14	8:05	7:56

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