

# Record

July | August 2020



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## *Moving Forward*

*Persevering Through the Challenges of Life*

# Persevering Through the Challenges of Life

## Moving Forward

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## Editor's Note

Challenges are inevitable. How we react to those challenges reveals our resilience and likelihood of success. Abraham obeyed, Job praised, Esther went, Paul persevered. Each pressed forward despite pain, hardship and fear. God has set our our feet on the path, but what do we do when obstacles besiege us? Do we give up? How do we keep moving forward?

Jesus suffered and sacrificed for our salvation, contending with our pain and heartache. He persevered by trusting in God's will. Trust and faith prompt endurance. We, too, can be resilient and courageously move forward. Be encouraged by James 1:12: "Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love Him." Be empowered by Deuteronomy 31:6: "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you." As we press on, let us focus on the ultimate goals of Matthew 22 and 28: Love the Lord, Love people, Make disciples. God is with you.



Jessica L. Lozano

Cover Photo by Tony Cash

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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.

# Moving Forward

## Persevering Through the Challenges of Life



Larry Moore | President

**I've met many people in my nearly 50 years of ministry.** Each member and family, out of the dozens I've had the privilege to get to know, has been different in many ways. Some have persevered, some have not.

When I was a boy I witnessed a number of baptisms, including a husband and wife who seemed bound for greatness in the church. However, after a few weeks, they stopped coming to church. Soon they asked to have their membership canceled. I prayed for them, but they didn't return.

When I was starting out in ministry, I met a family that had moved from California to start a new church in Arkansas. Tragedy struck, and the husband was killed in a car accident. I was sure the family would return to California, but they didn't. They persevered and established a church.

James 5:10-11 says, "Brothers and sisters, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. As you know, we count as blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy." I have thought about this second family many times. Their faithfulness inspired me to "stay with it" over the years. God will help us all to persevere in spite of setbacks, of which there are many. I pray God helps us all remain faithful.

**Goals, everybody has them.** Goal setting by definition "is the process of identifying something that you want to accomplish and establishing measurable goals and time frames." Life goals have a purpose or main objective—the reason you do the day-to-day stuff. Smart goals turn life goals into crystal-clear pictures that keep you on the right track and provide purpose and meaning and a sense of fulfillment.

At creation, God set a goal for His created beings. His goal was for their ultimate happiness and the ability to enjoy it for eternity. It became a matter of choice for them—to choose a trusting relationship with God and experience the happiness He intended, or to decide not to trust Him completely, with the result of a life that would end in death. Genesis 3 describes the decision they made. All of creation labors under the decision that was made. However, God did not give up on His created beings. He still had a plan for mankind. His goal was made real in the life of Jesus Christ.

By the power of God's Spirit and a made-up mind, we set our "minds on things above, not on earthly things." Colossians 3:2. In the words of Philippians 3:14, we like the apostle Paul "press toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."



Buford Griffith, Jr.  
Executive Secretary

**Every four years, I look forward to seeing the Summer Olympics.** As you probably know, the Summer Olympics have been postponed until 2021. I enjoy the stories about the athletes sometimes as much as watching the Games. The drive, the commitment, the practice, the belief. The pain of injuries.

Olympic athletes live and breathe their sport. They sacrifice to reach their goal. Gabrielle Douglas has won three gold medals in gymnastics. When she was only 14, she moved far away from her family to train with a world-class coach. Before the 2012 Olympics, she spent around 18,000 hours in training. Gabrielle is a Christian and has been able to share her faith and her love for Jesus.

Most of us have never trained for the Olympics, but each of us have something we are dedicated to in life. What are we willing to sacrifice for our relationship with Jesus? The reward is more than we can ever imagine. Jesus said to His followers in Luke 9:23, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me." Our goal is to share Jesus' love and who He is. Just like an Olympic athlete, we need to dedicate our lives to living out Matthew 22:37,39: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind... Love your neighbor as yourself."



John Page | Treasurer

# Staying the Course

## Pursuing Evangelism in 2020

**The year began with high hopes.** We had 20/20 vision for 2020! The Shreveport South Seventh-day Adventist Church was planning their strategy to blanket their area with fliers and invitations for an evangelistic campaign planned for the fall. Tony Cash, Arkansas-Louisiana Conference Planned Giving and Trust Services director and elder at Shreveport South, began to spearhead the movement, trying to find the best methods of reaching his community.

Southwestern Adventist University (SWAU) School of Evangelism announced it planned to host an evangelism series in the area in late May and early June. The Shreveport South leaders and members were excited, and their first goal was to step up plans to prepare and invite the community.

The Shreveport South, Shreveport First, and Texarkana Seventh-day Adventist Church district joined together, pooling their resources, for a big evangelism push. Cash hoped to reach the community as quickly and affordably as possible. Ordering fliers would normally set them back one to two months. “That’s how we found SermonView Evangelism Marketing,” says Cash. SermonView is an Adventist-based media ministry focused on helping churches reach their communities to grow their congregations.

By the first week of February, SermonView had set up a Facebook advertising campaign offering Bible studies to various age groups and demographics in the Arkansas-Louisiana area. Within the first month, they had generated so many Bible study requests that they had to pause the campaign until

they could catch up with them all. Each of the three churches were overwhelmed with the response.

“All of the volunteers from the congregations were thinking they’d get maybe one to two requests a week. But we actually had so many in the first month that it was overwhelming,” said Cash. “After a week, we decided to pause the campaign so the interests wouldn’t go cold before we could respond to them, but a week later our volunteers and congregations were so excited about the responses they were getting, they said to keep going!”

“There were too many requests for one person to do,” says Loretta Johnson, Texarkana Seventh-day Adventist Church member. “I sent a message to the church board to update them on what we were doing and asked for help. The whole church

board volunteered and even some who are not on the board pitched in. I was really moved by this.”

Eddie and Terri Nugent are first generation Adventists who volunteered to follow up on interest leads by going door-to-

door. “Not all visits are positive. We have some who still don’t know what Adventists are, so they turn the studies away. But that doesn’t discourage us. We’re just happy to share the truth and get people interested in the Bible. We want to get them interested in seeking out the truth,” says Eddie Nugent.

Sometimes, God leads you to visit the wrong house on purpose! The Nugents didn’t realize they were knocking on the wrong door until they began talking with the woman who had answered. But in happy coincidence, through their conversa-



*Terrie and Eddie Nugent  
Shreveport South Seventh-day Adventist Church*



*Rodney and Peggy Dyke  
Shreveport South Seventh-day Adventist Church*

tion, she signed up for Bible studies. After saying farewell, they managed to find the right home and signed that family up too!

Continuing with happy coincidences, on another occasion, as the Nugents were on their way to a home, they struck up a conversation with a mother and daughter who were sitting in front of an apartment. The mother was so interested in what they were doing that she signed up for the Bible studies right there.

Social distancing and quarantine orders were put in place by the first part of March. Evangelism seemed to be forced to a standstill. However, despite the new challenges, the churches continued how they could:

through mail and online studies. Bible lessons are offered online or through the mail, so recipients can choose how to receive them. Alvin Astrup soon took over mailing leads for the Shreveport First church; in one week he sent out 351 lessons with about 15 percent responding.

“I’ve been so swamped that I’ve had to order 3-4 times from the Voice of Prophecy to get more Discover Bible lessons. I’ve done this for many years and I’ve never seen such a high response as this outreach has been,” says Astrup. “I’m happy to be planting a seed. When this pandemic settles, I hope we’ll be able to go visit and connect with these people in person.”

By late May, the campaign had over 580 requests for Bible studies, with each interest receiving an email inviting them to choose between online or mailed correspondence. Three

months into the four-month evangelism outreach campaign, things looked very different. Due to coronavirus COVID-19, the SWAU School of Evangelism had to cancel their evangelism meetings. And where once volunteers and Bible workers

knocked on their neighbors’ doors, they now worked hard to best support their community through correspondence and online Bible study. Many people continue to respond to the lessons and the invitation for studies.

“We won’t drop the ball and let the Lord down—despite the shutdown,” says Johnson. “We have two boys in prison who’ve been faithful about doing their Bible lessons and even

though they are more unreachable in a physical sense, there are many people that we can witness to in other ways.”

Because of the canceled meetings and almost 600 responses to Bible study offers, the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference is working on ways to host

an online evangelistic meeting targeting the Texarkana and the Shreveport communities.

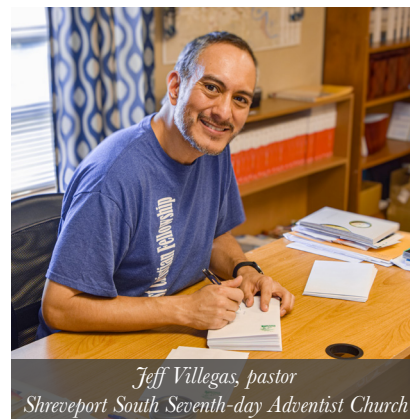
“Even though we’re not able to meet people in person and the meetings have been canceled, we intend to visit when this pandemic comes to an end and I believe people will make decisions because of this effort,” says Cash. **R**



*Alice and James Williams  
Shreveport South Seventh-day Adventist Church*



*Loretta Johnson  
Texarkana Seventh-day Adventist Church*



*Jeff Villegas, pastor  
Shreveport South Seventh-day Adventist Church*

*By Katie Fellows. Fellows is a Michigan-based freelance writer.  
Photography by Tony Cash.*

# Above and Beyond

## Adventist Education and the Teachers That Make It Unique

By Makala James, Record Contributor

As a young girl, Kisha Norris questioned why she and her mother always packed four extra sandwiches for school lunch. She had no other siblings, and it seemed like a lot of extra work. “My mom was an Adventist teacher,” says Norris, Texas Conference Vice President for Education. “When you’re an Adventist teacher, you go all in.”

Every evening, Norris and her mother made extra sandwiches, just in case a

Importantly, it’s a place for children to learn about Christ in the classroom. This environment is special, but there is another element that takes Adventist education from special to unique. That is the missionary spirit of teachers and staff who go “all in” to educate and love their students. This spirit not only helps the students succeed, but it also reflects in their lives as they learn by example to live with an attitude of Christian service.

ulum up to any other curriculum out there. Yet, there’s more to education than just reading, writing and arithmetic. It’s more than homework and lectures. It’s about relationships. It is a true calling.”

The missionary spirit of Adventist educators became even more evident as the global pandemic forced schools all around the world to close their doors. Suddenly, teachers were expected to pick up where they left off in an unfamiliar, virtual environment. This required a completely different skill set. “I tell people, this is not less work, this is more work,” Norris says.

Without hesitation, teachers around the Southwestern Union opened their classrooms online. Yet, when some students didn’t log into class, teachers began to worry. They made phone calls and discovered that many families were missing a lot more than just internet access. Some parents had lost their jobs and couldn’t even buy groceries. In response, the teachers created and hand delivered classroom packets for those without internet. They also took it upon themselves to leave gift cards for groceries with the school packet.

“These families will forever be changed because someone took the time to know what was going on,” Norris says. “It’s a testament to our God and how He has loved them and cared for them, so that they can’t help but spill that love over to the families and their kids.

“This is the difference in our education. I’m not saying that other teachers in other schools don’t care, but I’m saying that we have made it an investment to make sure that these kids are not only part of our school, but part of the kingdom. So their whole person, their whole family and their lives mean something to us.”



student didn’t have anything to eat. This small missionary act made a big difference in her life. Thanks to the example of her mother and other caring teachers, Norris realized that being a teacher means that you go above and beyond to help students.

Adventist education is unique. It’s a safe setting with a strong curriculum.

“What parents and students are going to get at our schools is that intentionality of Christ-centered education with academic rigor,” says Southwest Region Conference Education Superintendent Buford Griffith III. “Having worked at both public schools and Adventist schools, I can say with strong conviction that I will stand our Adventist curric-



Both teachers and students worked hard to complete the 2020 Spring semester during these unusual circumstances. As the school year wrapped up, Tulsa Adventist Academy decided to celebrate their graduating students in a special way. One by one, they drove to each house of their graduating students, including kindergarten graduates. The students dressed up in their graduation regalia as teachers delivered diplomas and sang songs to the children.

“Our teachers are very loving,” says Oklahoma Conference Education Superintendent Tim Kripps. “It was pretty cool to watch their curbside graduation online. In a way, the teachers are now in more contact one-on-one with parents and students than ever before.”



mission trips, get involved in worship, and to practice community service.

When Arkansas-Louisiana Conference Education Superintendent Stephen Burton worked in a small school several years ago, his class decided to start collecting aluminum cans for a mission project. The class talked about prayer, and prayed for God to bless the project. One student raised his hand and asked, “Are we praying that God will encourage everyone to litter so that we can be successful?”

“We don’t want people to litter, we just want God to bless what

These acts of service and love are examples for students on how to live more like Christ. Adventist education builds on these lifelong lessons by also offering ministry and mission opportunities for students. Students have the opportunity to attend

we’re doing,” Burton responded. The class took off down the side of the road near the school, gathering up cans. On the way back, a gentleman stood out in his yard and asked what the students were doing.

“We told him about our mission project,” Burton shared. “He went into his house and came back with a huge trash bag of aluminum cans. When we got back to the school, there was just electricity in the air. These opportunities give students a chance to learn how to serve, and to recognize God’s blessing. I saw that in my son’s life, and in my daughter’s life as well. They changed from a child to a young adult with a vision and a mission. Our schools give that opportunity.”

Thanks to the missionary spirit of teachers, Adventist schools provide a unique educational experience for students. Children are academically prepared for life by a proven curriculum in a setting that teaches them about the love of Christ.

“What’s important is salvation for our children,” says Texico Conference Education Superintendent Derral Reeve. “Our teachers point the child to Christ and prepare them for a life of service. In fact it’s more than just important, it’s eternity.” <sup>®</sup>



# Finding *Light* in the Shadows

**Life is hard.** As I write this article, the United States, along with the rest of the world, is going through an incredibly trying time in the midst of the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic. Millions have lost jobs. Hundreds of thousands of people, formerly self-sufficient, find themselves dependent on charitable organizations to meet basic needs. Worldwide, by late May 2020, nearly 350,000 people have died. Sadly, many of those folks have died alone, separated from loved ones.

However, as if the pandemic hasn't caused enough difficulty, there are the other challenges faced on a daily basis. Broken relationships, failing health, anxiety, depression and a host of other maladies relentlessly pound on our hearts. From the middle of the cauldron of life, we find ourselves desperate for relief and uncertain of our ability to endure one more disappointment. The book of Lamentations begins with a question many people today can readily say themselves. It is simple, direct, and probably one you have found yourself asking at some time in the past. You may even be asking it right now: How?

Lamentations 1:1 (NKJV) says, "How lonely sits the city that was full of people! How like a widow is she, Who was great among the nations! The princess among the provinces has become a slave!" Most translations render the Hebrew word "ekah," which begins the verse, in the form of an exclamation rather than as a question. However, when translating a word or particle, it never entirely loses its basic sense. Consequently, an alternate rendering could be, "How has this city that was full of people become empty and desolate?"

If you apply the same sentiment to yourself, you may be wondering how did you fall down to this place of hopelessness

where you now reside? Or maybe you are wondering, "How can I endure one more disappointment or trial? I don't have it in me to take one more step."

From Genesis to Revelation the Bible acknowledges the difficulties of the human experience because of sin. However, we do not need to allow ourselves to slip into despair, no matter how dark the circumstances we found ourselves within. Many people are familiar with Psalm 23 and the imagery of the faithful shepherd who protects and provides for his flock. Tucked in the passage is the famous verse that reads, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me." Psalm 23:4 (NKJV).

One of the things that is often overlooked is the reality that shadows don't exist in the absence of light. There is no greater threat to us than death. But the Psalmist points out to us no matter how dire the threat we face, there is a light source that is greater than the thing that troubles us. Deuteronomy 31:6 (NKJV) encourages us to "Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the Lord your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you." No matter how challenging things are right now, remember there is a light source that goes with you and warms your heart for the difficult journey of life. **R**

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*By Paul Kevin Wells. Wells is the senior pastor of the Arlington Seventh-day Adventist Church. He lives in Grand Prairie, Texas, with his wife Michelle and their children, Parker and Lydia.*



# Growing Community

## Practical Ideas for Digital Evangelism in Your Congregation

By Jamie Domm, North American Division Social Media + Big Data Digital Strategist

The disciples and the early church worked to spread the Gospel message around the world. Their methods were not limited to weekly gatherings in churches; the message was disseminated through relationships. As Christians, we should work to extend the church experience beyond the confines of

in the community, we better position ourselves to provide a ministry of healing and broad networks of support.

But how can we build community online? How can we serve others in the digital space? Whether you are tech savvy or not, you and your church can implement these ideas right now.

### MEET TOGETHER IN THE DIGITAL SPACE

With the busyness of life, it can be challenging for many to meet in person. Don't let that stop you from studying the Bible and praying together. By using video conferencing tools like Zoom, you may find that your attendance or frequency increases now that physical barriers like traffic have been removed.

### CREATE CONTENT

Create digital content to help people move along their spiritual journey. We should endeavor to put Christ on display every day through our digital influence, not just one day a week. We should create digital content that speaks to the spiritual needs of people and seeks to address their deepest longings. People search online for answers to their questions; we should be the voice that answers back. Digital content includes sermons and Bible studies that we share online, as well as articles or blogs on our websites and social media channels.

### CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRAYER ONLINE

Social media is a powerful tool for soliciting prayer requests and following up on those requests. Prayer can be just one "like," comment, or message away. Online communication lowers the barrier to asking, making it easy for people to reach out when they may be reluctant to do so face to face. Visit [SDAdata.blog/prayer](http://SDAdata.blog/prayer) for more ideas for prayer opportunities in the digital space.

### SERVE THE COMMUNITY

Church should be a group of people mobilized to serve, actively engaged in improving the well-being of their broader community. Many of our churches have robust community services departments, but could more be done using digital tools? Visit [SDAdata.blog/servingothers](http://SDAdata.blog/servingothers) for 10 ways to serve your community using digital tools.

### MOBILIZE YOUR CONGREGATION

Mobilize your congregation to become a reach vehicle for souls through digital door knocking. Digital door knocking is when a person shares spiritual content on their social media profiles or through messaging and email to create an opportunity for people to engage with them about their faith. Spiritual content can be anything (a picture, text, video, blog, etc.), and should include a personalized message. A person's connections can scroll past it or choose to engage when it's convenient for them. Create a culture of sharing and content engagement within your church community. Train your members to share your church's content (created or curated) on a weekly basis as part of ministry efforts. A congregation that understands the value of participating in ministry this way could serve as a powerful reach vehicle for souls.

time and space in a building to an involved community that provides 24/7 support, not only to members but also to our broader contacts.

To be effective, churches should cultivate and nurture healthy communities, both analog and digital. With analog communities and digital communities within the church and

Community building in the digital space works in much the same way as in the physical world. Digital tools simply allow us to scale up friendship evangelism, but this requires getting out of our comfort zone and being intentional about interacting with people, paying attention and following up in meaningful ways. <sup>R</sup>

# My Immune System

## The Forces at Work that Fight on Behalf of My Health and Wellbeing

By Sarah Stephens, Texas Health Huguley Marketing/PR Relations Manager, and Kira Brandt, Texas Health Huguley Marketing/PR Specialist



support, Dr. Haslam suggests vitamins A, C, D and zinc supplements. “There is such a thing as too much of a good thing,” warns Dr. Haslam. “Your primary care physician can test to find out if your body is low in any of these vitamins or minerals.”

### WHAT HINDERS IT?

Stress also has an impact on how hard your soldiers can fight. Too much stress can easily suppress the immune system. In turn, this slows your body’s healing process down and gives you a higher chance of catching infection. If you are

### WHAT IS THE IMMUNE SYSTEM?

Dr. Dennis Haslam, an emergency department physician at Texas Health Huguley Hospital in Fort Worth, Texas, describes the immune system as a team of soldiers whose job it is to fight against invaders and to recognize things as friend or foe within our environment. These soldiers serve as our body’s first line of defense against the invaders, which we call disease and infection.

These soldiers constantly fight for a balanced immune system, which is essential to leading a physically, mentally and spiritually healthy life. If your immune system is low, you are more likely to get sick, and are susceptible to illness. If your immune system is working too hard, the soldiers will fight against themselves, which can lead to problems such as autoimmune disease. The key is to find a sweet spot, says Dr. Haslam.

Exercise, sleep, nutrition and stress are all factors that contribute to the health and function of the immune system.

### HOW DO I BOOST IT?

To boost your immune system, Dr. Haslam recommends keeping active with an exercise level that elevates your heart rate for 30 minutes, three to five days per week. You should always consult with your physician when beginning a new diet or exercise regimen or if you have preexisting health issues.

Nutrition is one of the best ways to fuel your immune system’s soldiers. A naturally colorful diet with minimal processed foods is another great way to contribute to your immune system’s health. By eating antioxidant-rich foods, such as blueberries, beans and spinach, you should be getting the nutrients your immune system needs. For added

looking for ways to reduce your stress levels, Dr. Haslam’s recommendations include breathing exercises, counseling and journaling.

When it comes to sleep, we all know that we should get eight hours. How many of us still find ourselves scrolling on our phones or watching TV in bed? This habit can affect your sleep cycle and confuse your body, lowering your soldiers’ ability to fight off invaders. Dr. Haslam recommends avoiding screen time for one to two hours before going to bed, and practicing bedtime routines such as reading, journaling or taking a bath to help remind your brain that it’s time to get sleep.

Now more than ever, it’s important to make sure you are getting nutrition, sleep, exercise and care to keep your mind, body and soul healthy so that you can live your life to the fullest. **R**

# Just *One* More

## A Single Decision Can Have Lasting Effects

I was so excited! School had been shut down due to a new virus and we would be doing our learning from home. Just hearing the phrase “not going to school” brought a smile to my face. Not only would I get extra time in the morning to sleep, but they were also going to let me borrow a computer and headphones for me to connect with my teacher over the internet. Even though I was in fourth grade, I felt so grown up, as if I was living in the future. Every day we logged in to Zoom, listened to my teacher give the lessons for the day and spent time doing our assignments and projects throughout the rest of the afternoon.

One afternoon I got a little bored while reading a long chapter for my reading assignment, so I thought I would take a five-minute break. I went to YouTube.com to watch one cartoon episode for about 10 minutes then get back to my assignments. After watching the video, I thought to myself, “It won’t hurt if I watch one more.” However, after watching the second video, there was a preview for a clip with funny videos. I could not resist. Before I knew it, I had spent nearly two hours watching video after video. Needless to say, I did not get most of my assignments done for the day.

Unfortunately, since I had my headphones in, mom and dad had not noticed that I had been watching these videos and not doing my assignments. I decided to take some time the next day to do the same. To make it worse, I kept doing this all the way through the end of the week. That Friday afternoon my parents received a text message from my teacher informing them that about half of my assignments were missing.

My parents were shocked as they had always seen me on my computer “working hard.” After a long conversation with my parents about the missing assignments, I finally confessed that I had been spending a lot of time watching cartoons and funny videos. They were very sad to hear my confession. Seeing their sadness made me very sad.

The following week I had to begin my journey to catch up on all of my assignments. It was not easy. It was not fun. It was like eating brussels sprouts...with no ranch. It seemed

like the more I tried to keep up with my current assignments and finish my missing assignments, the more I got behind. It was a long uphill journey for the next few weeks before I finally got caught up. My one decision weeks ago had long lasting effects, and boy did I regret it.

The Bible reminds us in 1 John 1:9 that “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Recognizing my mistake was not easy, and even a little embarrassing to admit. I learned that until I acknowledged my bad choices to

my parents and my God, I could not begin a new path. When I was willing to accept my bad choices, my parents were able to help me and guide me in making better choices. It was then that they were able to help me make sure my assignments were finished. I am thankful for my parents and a God who gave me another chance.



*By Daniel Ortega*

# A Message from the President

## Larry R. Moore Responds to Injustice and Protests

**BURLESON, TEX.** — The senseless murder of George Floyd in May has shaken me, as I'm sure it has many of you, and it has brought to the forefront the issue of racism and the inexcusably protected and repeated unacceptable behavior of some in law enforcement. This behavior is a disgrace to the countless men and women who put their lives on the line to serve and protect their communities every day. People across the country and the globe are speaking up with mostly

peaceful protests, but the scenes of violence and looting we see portrayed on the news have detracted from the work of these demonstrators.

I have witnessed racist behavior first hand, and was taught by my parents to stand up against it. Growing up in San Antonio in the 1950s, my mother taught me that all are God's children, no matter their skin color. As a young boy I witnessed my mother speak up and act on her belief that everyone should

be treated with the same respect and regard, and that none should live in fear.

As we grapple with the reality of the state of our nation and our homes, I encourage you to have uncomfortable conversations with your children, families, neighbors and friends. Demonstrate for your children and grandchildren the love of God for all people. I encourage us all to ask God for wisdom and discernment in our self-reflection.

————— *Larry R. Moore, President*

# Time for Action and Reflection

## Southwestern Union on George Floyd Killing and Protests

**BURLESON, TEX.** — In early June, this official response was shared on behalf of the Southwestern Union leadership and ministries.

The Southwestern Union acknowledges the pain and outcry of millions of Americans over the horrific and inexcusable killing of George Floyd at the hand of four police officers in Minneapolis, Minn. Our hearts break for the families that have suffered this tremendous loss. We are heartbroken knowing that there are individuals in our Church and in our communities who face fear and hate on a regular basis. We recognize the turmoil that this and similarly unjust incidents have caused our community and our country. Today, we know the names of several Black Americans who have unjustifiably lost their lives, but we also must acknowledge there may be names we will never know.

The Southwestern Union condemns these killings and the racist and hateful behavior that contributes to such atrocious acts. The Southwestern Union stands in solidarity with the peaceful protests across the Southwestern Union territory and the United States calling for police reform, legislative change and societal action. We affirm and join

their call for justice to be served for the victims and their families.

The Southwestern Union does not condone the violence that has occurred at some of these protests that has resulted in damage and unrest. A small group of individuals with ulterior motives should not eclipse the tremendous efforts of thousands of peaceful demonstrators exercising their first amendment rights. We praise the demonstrators that have intervened to ensure violence does not occur and we thank the law enforcement officers that have demonstrated restraint and stood alongside protesters in solidarity.

As Seventh-day Adventists we celebrate our uniquely diverse denomination, but we must do more to bridge the gaps created by racism and inequality that allow injustice to continue to occur. The Southwestern Union recognizes that more must be done within our organizations, churches and schools. We want our members to know we hear you. We are listening.

In an effort to begin having conversations and discovering ways to improve, we invite you to reach out to us. We want to hear from you. What ways have we as a union, conference, ministry or

church been exclusive, behaved with prejudice or treated individuals unfairly? What way can we be more inclusive? How can we educate our members? How can we support unity? Please email us at [listening@swuc.org](mailto:listening@swuc.org).

On June 9, the Southwestern Union hosted a special Union-wide day of prayer. We invite members across the union to engage in prayer as we continue seeking God's guidance. Join our weekly prayer meeting at 7:30 CT/6:30 MT. You can find details on how to join at [SouthwesternAdventist.org/Prayer](http://SouthwesternAdventist.org/Prayer).

As the body of Christ in the Southwestern Union, we can make a difference. 1 Corinthians 13 tells us that love is the answer: it always protects, always trusts, always hopes and always perseveres.

Let us love our neighbors as Christ has called us to do. Stand up, speak out, educate yourself and your families. We can stand together, support each other and behave in Christ-like manner. Let us take a close look at ourselves and see where we can do better, imploring the Holy Spirit to "create a new heart and renew a right spirit" within each and every one of us.

# Education By Design

## New Branding for SWUC K-12 Education

**BURLESON, TEX.** — The Southwestern Union Conference Office of Education has developed new branding for K-12 education—Education by Design. The brand signifies that we are intentionally focused on creating coherence among the components that contribute to excellence in education.

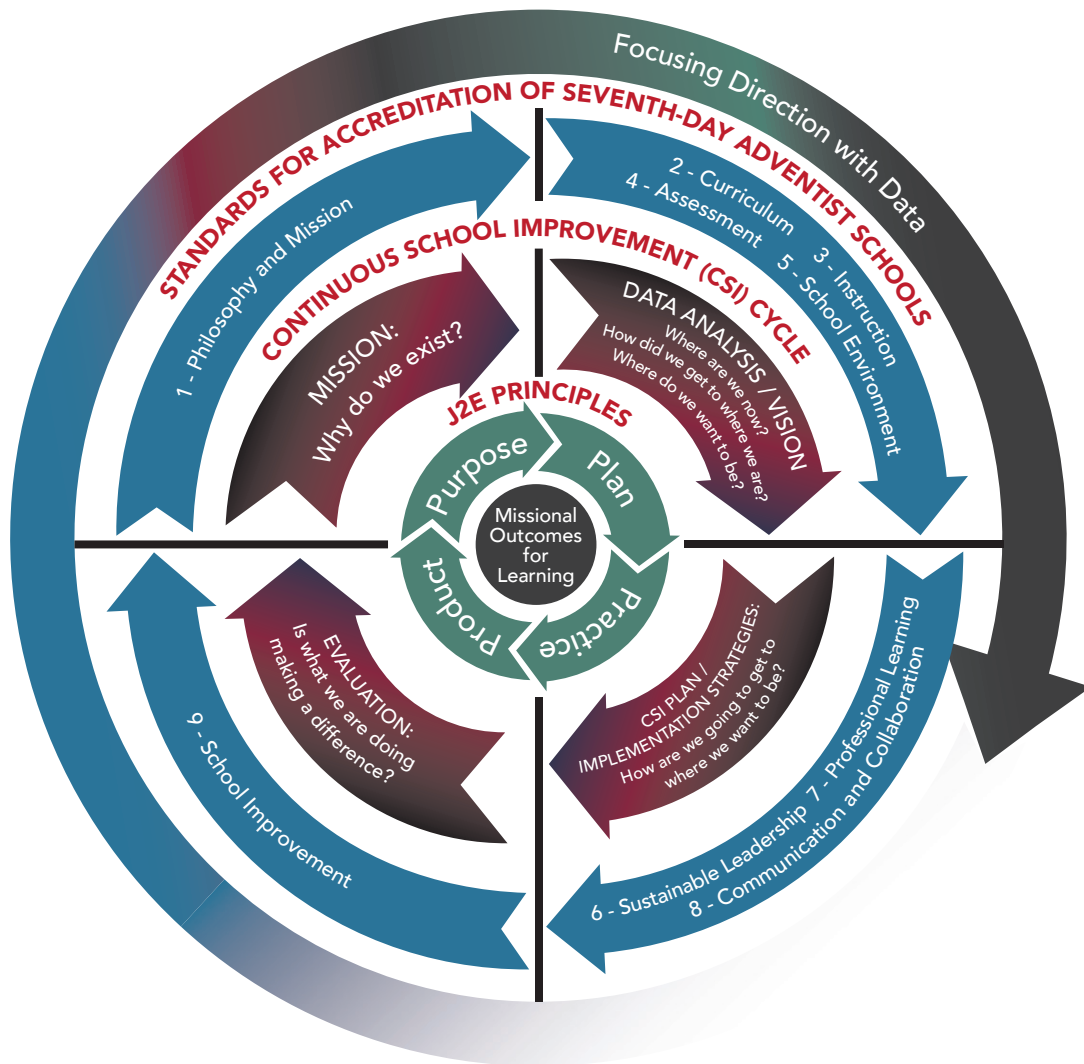
The ultimate goal of Adventist education is to make visible the Adventist worldview to learners. Teaching and learning must be purposefully designed to accomplish this goal, beginning with the articulation of the mission, the

vision and the core values and beliefs of Adventist education. The values and beliefs, in particular, are foundational to the development of all other components of the system. Below, you will find a conceptual framework that identifies the key components of teaching and learning as well as their relationship to other parts.

The values and beliefs, adapted from George Knight, that inform K-12 education in the Southwestern Union are threefold. First, Adventist education prepares learners for excellence and

success in this life, both academically and vocationally. Second, Adventist education prepares learners for eternity by introducing them to Jesus as Lord and Savior and placing the biblical worldview at the center of education as the lens for all knowledge and life. Third, Adventist education prepares learners to serve others by teaching Adventism’s unique doctrinal package, particularly God’s Great Commission for worldwide mission and the Second Advent.

By Carol Campbell  
Vice President of Education



NORTH DALLAS ADVENTIST ACADEMY  
CONGRATULATES OUR

# 2020 GRADUATES

MAY GOD BLESS YOU IN ALL  
YOUR ENDEAVORS!

  
**2020**  
CLASS OF

## YOU DID IT!

The Southwestern Union celebrates the achievements of all graduating seniors across our territory! We admire your resilience and fortitude. May the Lord lead you as you embark on your next journey, and inspire you to make a difference in the world around you.



Being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

— *Philippians 1:6*



**NORTH DALLAS  
ADVENTIST ACADEMY**

2800 Custer Parkway, Richardson, TX 75080

972-234-6322 ■ [NDAAcademy.org](http://NDAAcademy.org)

  
Seventh-day  
Adventist Church  
SOUTHWESTERN UNION

# Educating for Eternity

COME BE A PART OF OUR GROWING FAMILY!



CLASS OF  
**2020**  
 Graduation  
 CONGRATULATIONS

I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.  
 3 John 4



1. ADVENT RIDGE ACADEMY
2. BURLESON ADVENTIST SCHOOL
3. BURTON ADVENTIST ACADEMY
4. CHISHOLM TRAIL ACADEMY
5. CLEBURNE ADVENTIST CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
6. COGGIN MEMORIAL SCHOOL
7. CONROE ADVENTIST ACADEMY
8. CYPRESS BEND ADVENTIST ELEM. SCHOOL
9. DALLAS CHRISTIAN ACADEMY
10. FORT WORTH ADVENTIST JR. ACADEMY
11. GARLAND CHRISTIAN ADVENTIST SCHOOL
12. HOUSTON ADVENTIST ACADEMY
13. JOSHUA ADVENTIST MULTI-GRADE SCHOOL
14. KATY ADVENTIST CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
15. KEENE ADVENTIST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
16. KILLEEN ADVENTIST JR. ACADEMY
17. KNOWLEDGE SEEKERS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
18. LAREDO ADVENTIST CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
19. NORTH DALLAS ADVENTIST ACADEMY
20. SCENIC HILLS CHRISTIAN ACADEMY
21. SOUTH TEXAS CHRISTIAN ACADEMY
22. STONEHILL CHRISTIAN ACADEMY
23. TYLER ADVENTIST SCHOOL

# Congratulations!



*Class of*  
**2020**

JOSHUA ANDERSON

JACK BENDALL

DANIIL ILYENKO

ZACHARY MIOSI

ABEL RAMIREZ

JUSTIN ANDERSON

JASON ENRIQUEZ

IAN LASQUETY

DANIEL MIRANDA

ISAAC SLONAKER

KAYLA ANDERSON

KAIRIN ESPINOSA

ZACHARY LICON

MICAH NAUKKARINEN

HONORIO VASQUEZ JR.

ZANDRY ANDRADE

KATE GARCIA-GOMEZ

MARCUS MARTINEZ

MICHELLE OGAZ

JOSEPH WATERMAN

ARISBEL ANGLADA

LUIS GARZA

ASHLEY MCCLATCHIE

JANICE ORTEGA

EMILY WATTS

ETHAN ARMSTRONG

HEIDI HANSEN

HECTOR MARTINEZ

BEATRIZ PARILLA

CARSON WARD

GRANT BAILEY

JADEN HUTCHINSON

JUSTIN MERTZ

KAMRYN PEREZ

TATIANNA ZELAYA-YOUNGBERG

# Welcome, Class of 2024!

**Chisholm Trail Academy**  
www.cta.school | 817-641-6626  
401 S. Old Betsy Rd | Keene, TX 76059





# Congratulations, Burton Adventist Academy Graduates

SENIORS



8th Grade



Kinder



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

Leading students to CHRIST, preparing them for LIFE!

# Senior Reflections

## Experiences from the 2020 Senior Class During COVID-19



**KEENE, TEX.** — In one way or another, coronavirus COVID-19 changed the way of life for everyone this spring. While Southwestern Adventist University (SWAU) was obligated to make many adjustments, the focus of caring for individual students never ceased!

From personally checking in with every student by phone to creatively implementing virtual worship and campus life programming, SWAU kept students connected, engaged and prayed over. Through refunding housing and dining fees, continuing to pay student workers who were no longer able to work on campus and launching a relief fund to benefit students in need, the university helped ease the financial burdens of students and their families.

For Evelyn Alanis, a senior nursing major who dreams of becoming an ER nurse, the pandemic kept her local as she completed her externship at a nearby hospital. She admits that virtual learning was tough, but video conferencing became her best friend and kept her connected with professors, friends and family. “This pandemic was such a curve ball for everybody,” she shares, “but through it all, the faculty and staff at SWAU remained positive. This displayed courage to me!”

While Alanis was blessed to have a job at a local hospital, many of her classmates and friends didn’t receive

the same opportunity. She recalls how as the pandemic worsened, so many of her friends worried how they would pay for their basic expenses. She shares that SWAU’s decision to refund expenses helped many of her friends make it through the unknown.

For another senior nursing major, Kyley Hidalgo, COVID-19 also brought unique challenges. As a parent of a three year old, the merging of education and parenting as well as home and school was difficult. For her, the university’s employees made all the difference. “I really appreciated the weekly phone call from different faculty and staff members at SWAU,” she shared. “In a time when I was feeling so defeated and overwhelmed, their calls made me realize that they still cared. They helped me put everything into perspective!”

Prior to the pandemic, Hidalgo worked at the university’s Office of Advancement. Continuing to get paid following spring break, even though she could no longer work due to the virus, showed her “how much SWAU thinks and cares about its students!”

As a recipient of the university’s Fighting Food for Hunger and Insecurity Fund, Hidalgo appreciates how this initiative eased her financial load and provided the security she needed to focus on studies. “While bills never stop, God never leaves his children helpless.

My family and I are very grateful for all the opportunities that SWAU afforded us this spring.”

For Semu Siologa, Jr., a senior theology student who thrives with face-to-face interactions, finishing his degree from his apartment and away from his friends and classmates was tough, but he made it through his classes, and through the process experienced the love of his professors in a new way.

Semu shares that he graduated feeling proud of the decisions that SWAU made during this difficult time. “SWAU’s virtual worship services and devotionals provided great encouragement to me,” he shared. “Our professors supported us academically and personally. Administration’s decision to refund housing and dining fees and financially support students was a testament of how great SWAU is.”

“I am proud to be a new alumnus of an institution that backs up their words with action and cares for each student even during the most difficult time,” Siologa says. “I look forward to positively representing Southwestern Adventist University as I make an impact in this world!”

————— *By Tim Kosaka*  
*Marketing and Public Relations Director*

# Launching SWAU Online

## New Online Learning Programs and Pricing

**KEENE, TEX.** – Southwestern Adventist University (SWAU) highly values a personalized learning experience, achieved with a 12:1 student to teacher ratio in our classes. The Distance Education Office has been working on flexible options so students can take the classroom with them and complete these online programs at their own pace. As a result, the university has launched SWAU Online, which contains full online programs with competitive pricing and excellent services for anyone seeking to earn their college degree. “We recognize in today’s mobile society taking the classroom with you meets the needs of many of today’s learners,” says Vice President for Academic Administration Donna Berkner.

SWAU Online offers degrees in Business Administration, Christian Studies,

Criminal Justice, Education, General Studies, History and Psychology. A brand-new Nursing RN to BS track provides nurses aspiring to expand their career the opportunity to earn their BS while working as registered nurses.

Recognizing that students who pursue an online degree seek a more affordable education option, SWAU is offering a 50 percent discount off our on-campus tuition for fully online students. The RN to BS nursing program is being offered at \$7,500, one of the most affordable programs of its kind.

Online academic support will be provided by the Write Spot for students’ writing needs, and the Center for Academic Success and Advising (CASA) will provide academic coaching and career counseling. Online students will be

able to take advantage of our worship services through social media. Spiritual guidance will be accessible through the Spiritual Life and Development Office. “Our online students will have access to many of the same spiritual benefits that our on-campus students are blessed with,” says Vice President for Spiritual Development Russ Laughlin.

President Ken Shaw shares, “SWAU Online has been in the making for almost a year and it is nice to see it being rolled out where students from around the country can now participate in our quality courses and interact with our wonderful faculty while completing the programs affordably from their own homes.” For more information about SWAU Online, visit [swau.edu/online](http://swau.edu/online).

—By *Tim Kosaka, Marketing and PR Director*



# The Passion of Pursuit

## Running the Race with Endurance



I was reminiscing recently and remembered my youngest son's senior class trip in academy. Graduation was not far off and I know he was anxious to get finished. The pressure was on. Steven had been diligent and did his level best to see things through to completion. However, I watched him relax during those days on the class trip. He seemed carefree and the simple, little things were important. He and I had a lot of fun on that trip, including our afternoon at the go carts.

I grew up with racing in my blood and I loved to share that passion with both of my boys. And so, when Steven saw the go carts, he was ready to race. I asked him if he wanted to do that by himself or if he wanted me to join him. He quickly replied he wanted me to race as well. When we lined up to start, Steven was in the pole position. I was on the second row behind a young lady. Then a lot of others finished out the 16 cars in the race.

The flag dropped and Steven took off in the lead. I was stuck. The young woman didn't know what pedal to push for several seconds. Even one of the track personnel had to point out what to do. Finally, she got going. Here I was in last place. Everyone else was long gone. I quickly passed her and off I raced to catch the other 14 ahead of me. One by one I began to pick them off. A little bumping here and there. A fake move and then a swing under passing move and I continued. I used every ounce of racing knowledge to pursue those ahead of me. I kept thinking to myself, what would Dale Earnhardt do next?

On the last lap, all that was in front of me was Steven. He looked back at me and I smiled and then passed him before I took the checkered flag. I remember what he told me after the race. "I saw you stuck behind that girl and I knew you were going to try with everything you had."

I share that with you to remind that is the passion and the pursuit that is needed in our relationship with God. The apostle Paul says it this way in Philippians 3:13,14 (NASB): "Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

In Hebrews 12:1-2 (NASB) he shares, "Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith." This is the passion and the pursuit that is needed now more than ever before. May Jesus be the pursuit of your life!

*By Richard C. Dye, Sr. President*



# Staying Connected

## Bentonville Beavers Pathfinder Club Goes Virtual



**BENTONVILLE, ARK.** – When businesses began to close and many people stayed home because of coronavirus COVID-19, many of our school, sports and music activities ended abruptly. But not so with the Bentonville Beavers Pathfinder Club. We soon learned that our club leader was going to begin online meetings. We'd never met online before, so we were curious about what it would be like. During these times of social distancing, we know that God can help us do anything because everything is possible with God.

Our meetings are held Wednesdays via Zoom video conferencing and each is a little different. The first item on the agenda is worship. Every week we have a different guest speaker. We have had singer/songwriter Scott Krippayne talk to us about his music ministry, and he even sang his song called, "I'm Not Cool!" His song encouraged us to remember that we shouldn't be seeking worldly popularity, but instead look for God's approval. We discovered that Krippayne wrote the theme song for the TV show "Paw Patrol!"

During our virtual meetings, we have worked on the radio honor. We went on a virtual tour of our local radio station, KLRC, with mid-day announcer Isaac Weaver. He showed us how the equipment worked and how shows are recorded, and we got to interview him.

We were joined by a representative from the Saint Louis Science Center who talked to us about electromagnetic radiation and how electricity makes a radio work. He did some experiments and demonstrations! We played games together online too, like Kahoot and Quizizz, which help make what we are learning fun. Our club TLTs also got to help with the virtual meetings. One week they taught us the Red Alert honor. We always do something just for fun too! One night we learned how Jelly Beans are made, did a "History of Jelly Beans" Mad Lab, and then got to guess how many Jelly Beans were in a jar.

We have done so much through our club social media accounts, including two virtual honors (Trees and the Blood and Body's Defenses).

Our club director posts tasks for us each day, like watching videos, reading things or making things. We post our answers or pictures of our projects in the comments. One week we did a #IMadeThis spirit week. Every day we had to make or do something silly, but fun, and post it on our social media accounts. Then we got to vote on our favorites. The prize was a virtual shopping trip to our Pathfinder points store.

Our club leader has been reading us a chapter a day of the book "Summer of the Secret Squadron" by Michael Pledger Ball. It's a story that is set in

Batesville, Ark., and is about mysterious coded messages and the search to figure out clues. We learned a lot about the gift and value of friendship as we listened to the story.

We wanted to continue our club's dedication to doing outreach, so we've been writing letters. Every week, we pick a person out of the church directory and write an encouraging letter to them. Some of the Pathfinders have even received letters back! We are helping take care of our church members during this tough time and that is important to us!

Recently, we attended the first ever iCamporee hosted by the Texas Conference. It was different from regular camporees, but so much fun. We set up "campsites" in our houses or yards. There were family activities for us on Sabbath, as well as guest speakers on Facebook Live.

While we may not be able to see each other in person, we still get to connect with Pathfinders every week! Overall, we are having a great time with each other (virtually of course), and we will just have to wait this whole thing out. We know God is with us and He is in control.

—By Gabby Schlueter, Salvador Aguilar  
and JD Aguilar

# Ozark Adventist School

## What Happened to the Kids?

**GENTRY, ARK.** — My husband and I both work in housing and construction related fields and we are fortunate to still be able to do most of our work from home. The biggest impact coronavirus Covid-19 has had on our family is not being able to take our kids to school. We have four children, three boys and a girl: Zac is a 10-year-old third grader, Jed is a seven-year-old first grader, Nic is a five-year-old kindergartener and Raygann is our three-year old. We live about eight minutes from Ozark Adventist School in Gentry, Ark., and we're very happy to have the opportunity to raise our kids in the Adventist educational school system.

When the state of Arkansas decided to shut the schools down, I was hoping that would mean we would be out for the summer rather than finishing the year through distance learning. I have never had the desire to try homeschooling my kids. I have several friends who use that method of education; they are fantastic people with a whole other level of patience, creativity and organization than what I have been gifted. Home-room mom, yes, but not a homeschool mom! Fundraiser, hot lunch prep? I'm there! Drive for a field trip? You bet!

Take charge of my kids' education from home? Not so much!

Luckily for me, my kids have the best teachers on the planet. They have stepped up to this challenge with dedication, passion and resilience. My kids have followed their lead. I feel like we've barely missed a beat when it comes to the education they're receiving. Don't get me wrong, it's been extremely difficult. It's hard to adjust to the whole family being home all the time together, not being able to go to the playground or library. We've all had to learn a lot of new things, like how to use Zoom, a program for online video conferencing, and other electronic and online formats.

Zac has Zoom meetings at 9 a.m. for Bible and worship and at 11 a.m. for math. His teacher has recorded videos that are available on YouTube for his social studies—and all his other assignments are available online. He can look them all up himself using his school Chromebook. Jed has Zoom at 10:30 a.m. for Bible and 11:30 a.m. for Reading. His teacher sent home a beautifully organized binder with his weekly assignments and an iPad loaded with apps that help support his math and other skills. Nic also has a binder

with his worksheets for the week that makes it so easy for us to keep track. His teacher does a Facebook Live meeting at 10 a.m. Monday through Friday for show-and-tell and Sabbath Celebration with Nic's teacher and classmates.

Once per week the school produces a special video which is posted on YouTube to air on Wednesday for chapel time. Different families have sent videos from their homes for prayer, the Pledge of Allegiance, song service time, announcements and different speakers for the worship thought, all pieced together to make a smooth and enjoyable worship experience for the kids that helps them feel connected to each other and the school while they're apart.

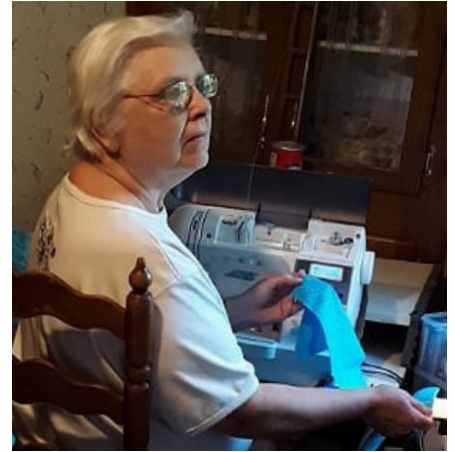
Despite the frustration and general chaos of these past few weeks, I think we will look back on this experience very warmly and enjoy precious memories of this time spent together. In the meantime, I have a whole new appreciation for my kids' teachers, staff and the school building itself. Come Aug. 17, my kids will be there and ready to walk into school as soon as the doors open!

————— *By Lora Weygandt*



# Prayers Lifted

## Bonnerdale SOUL Ladies Make Masks



**BONNERDALE, ARK.** – The Bonnerdale SOUL (Stitches of Unconditional Love), is an outreach-inreach group of our church that started eight years ago to make quilts and “Bags of Love” for children who have recently been taken into foster care. However, the group has begun making masks instead of quilts due to the current pandemic.

I recently found myself at home lifting up a prayer to the Lord: “Here I sit in front of the stove. There’s lots of wood, plenty of kindling and plenty of matches, and here I sit in front of the stove singing, ‘It only takes a spark to get a fire going.’ Lord, you don’t even

need the spark. You created this world out of nothing. In all of my 80 years I’ve never had to start a fire, but it’s 40 degrees outside and the temperature is falling. Please help me start this fire.”

I have a dining table full of material to sew. Our quilting group has gotten requests for 350-plus masks in just the last few days.

We’ve only just started the project and a storm has taken out the electricity, not only mine, but in at least seven of the surrounding towns. It was a bad storm. It took down several trees in my area and a large branch came down on the garage adjoining the home of one of

the members of the SOUL group and of my church.

“Lord, we’re not much in our own eyes, but we’re precious to you – the apple of your eye. Please give us that hunger for souls, as great as or greater than my desire to start this fire in my stove or for that missing electricity. We need the power for our sewing machines, but more than that we need the power of Your Holy Spirit to be the people you want us to be, to love others as you love them and win souls for your kingdom.”

—By June Bates



## ♥ Love Camp Yorktown Bay? ♥

Now a comprehensive history of CYB and summer camps in the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference is available at [ArklaSDAHistory.org/Camp-Yorktown-Bay](https://ArklaSDAHistory.org/Camp-Yorktown-Bay)

Enjoy the history and photos and help us name the staff. If you know the names of any of the former CYB staff, please use the Contact Us link on the website and send the Name(s), Year, and Number(s) based on the drawing below each Staff Photo.

# Heber Springs

## It's All In The Air

**HEBER SPRINGS, ARK.** – During this unusual time, as a pandemic spreads across the globe, the Heber Springs Seventh-day Adventist Church has taken to the air to stay connected with each other while maintaining social distancing.

Thanks to our dedicated pastor, Laurie DeWitt, and his creative efforts, we have daily devotionals shared on Facebook that have allowed members of our church to tune in regularly and be encouraged.

On Wednesday at 6 p.m., the members of the three churches in DeWitt's district meet via the internet on Zoom and enjoy visually seeing each other, sharing experiences and being uplifted by Bible study.

On Fridays, vespers on Zoom at 7 p.m. further enrich the church members with spiritual insights.

Sabbath blessings are found on Sabbath morning with discussion among church members on the weekly quarter-

ly. We followed that with an encouraging sermon by DeWitt.

Instead of being isolated from each other, the Heber Springs church and sister churches have taken to the air to share God's Word! It shows that nothing can stop God's Word from going out and God's church from going forward. Someday soon, we can all be caught up together in the air! God's Word is sure!

————— *By Judith Newton*

### OFFICIAL NOTICES

#### ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

Notice is hereby given that the 35th Regular Session of the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will be held Sunday, September 27, 2020, at The Texarkana Convention Center, 2910 South Cowhorn Creek Loop, Texarkana, TX 75503. The first meeting will convene at 9:00 a.m. Registration will begin 8:00 a.m.

This constituency session is being held for the purpose of receiving reports for the past quadrennium, the election of officers, departmental directors, executive committee; and the transaction of such other business as may properly come before the delegates. Each church/company is entitled to one delegate for the organization. The remaining delegates shall be apportioned based on the percentage of church membership to the total conference membership as of June 30 of the year preceding the session.

Richard Dye, President  
Juan Borges, Executive Secretary

#### THE ARKANSAS CONFERENCE ASSOCIATION OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of The Arkansas Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists will be held in connection with the 35th Regular Constituency Quadrennial Session of the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists on Sunday, September 27, 2020, at The Texarkana Convention Center, 2910 South Cowhorn Creek Loop, Texarkana, TX 75503. The first meeting will convene at 9:00 a.m.

The purpose of the meeting is to elect a Board of Trustees and to transact such other business as may properly come before the meeting. Delegates to the 35th session of the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists are delegates of The Arkansas Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists.

Richard Dye, President  
Tony Cash, Association Secretary

#### THE LOUISIANA CONFERENCE ASSOCIATION OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of The Louisiana Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists will be held in connection with the 35th Regular Constituency Quadrennial Session of the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists on Sunday, September 27, 2020, at The Texarkana Convention Center, 2910 South Cowhorn Creek Loop, Texarkana, TX 75503. The first meeting will convene at 9:00 a.m.

The purpose of the meeting is to elect a Board of Trustees and to transact such other business as may properly come before the meeting. Delegates to the 35th session of the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists are delegates of The Louisiana Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists.

Richard Dye, President  
Tony Cash, Association Secretary



# Trust Him for Strength

## Finishing the Race in the Presence of God



Struggling with doubts, fears, stress and heavy burdens? David also struggled with those emotions and thoughts. The Psalms express every aspect of the human struggle in our world of sin. They have given me much help and courage during my life and ministry. One time when I was weighed down with care and trials, and feeling tired and weary of the struggle, I was led to read Psalm 28:7: “The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in Him, and he helps me.” At the same time I read Psalm 29:11: “The Lord gives strength to His people.” As I read on, in Psalm 31:24, I saw this: “Be strong and take heart, and all you who hope in the Lord.” I sensed God speaking to me and telling me to trust Him for strength and help and go forward. This has happened many times in my life. God used a scripture to speak a word in a difficult situation, a trial or a burden and His word inspired me to call upon Him and He answered by giving me the strength and help that I needed.

Almost every one of God’s greatest servants had moments of feeling overwhelmed and praying to God for His strength. He often answered: “So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” Isaiah 41:10. These words were spoken to Moses, Joshua, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Esther, Daniel, David, Joseph and many others. They all had their trials and temptations and felt afraid and troubled. Like them, we have human weakness and struggles. We have moments when we wonder if we can continue. We also have an enemy who seeks to bring doubt and discouragement upon us all. God knows all about our situation and has already prepared a way for us to be strengthened. In Psalm 46, David writes, “God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.” He concludes saying, “The Lord Almighty is with us.” We are not alone in our trouble; God is with us to help and strengthen us.

Remember that many have gone before us and their witness to God’s faithfulness encourages us to trust in God. Jesus Himself has gone before us. He has walked in our footsteps, felt our pain, experienced temptation and knows how to help us in our trials and temptations. Hebrews has many encouraging words for us in our journey. “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are... Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” Hebrews 4:15,16. “Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before Him He endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:1-2. That’s where I want to finish my race, in the presence of God. He is more than willing to give me all the help I need to finish there. After all, He promised that His grace would be sufficient for me, and I believe Him.

*By James Shires, President*



# Faithful Together

## At-Home Camporee for Adventurer and Pathfinder Families



**OKLAHOMA CITY**—From April 24-26, over 160 families with over 600 participants across Oklahoma, other parts of the United States, and even Beijing, China, participated in a virtual camporee in their own homes.

Since Pathfinder and Adventurer events had to be cancelled, the Youth Ministry team decided to have an on-line/virtual Family Camporee instead. The camporee theme was “Faithful Together,” and focused on being intentional about being faithful together as families, especially as the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic affected family life.

Desiring for families to take advantage of the shelter-in-place mandate by the state, each family was encouraged to camp in their backyard, living room

or garage. Families were challenged to complete certain tasks, such as have family worship morning and evening, participate in an honor/award, cook a meal together, memorize two Bible verses, wear their Pathfinder, Adventurer or Master Guide scarf, do a craft together as a family and send camping pictures to the Youth department.

Daniel Ortega, Oklahoma Conference youth director, put together an easy-to-navigate website with a weekend schedule and ideas for different family activities.

These included the “virus” honor taught by Donald Adams, M.D.; the “talents” award taught by Claudia Andujo, Oklahoma Conference Adventurer director, and Alex Seery. The “Sign Language” honor was taught by

Gabi Simpson. Morning and evening messages were provided online as well. Craft ideas and a scavenger hunt were also included on the webpage along with other resources.

If the pictures that were sent into the Youth department were any indication, the Family Camporee was a huge blessing to all who participated.

Thank you to the families who participated and the staff who made it possible. May we all stay faithful together until the Lord’s soon return.

—By Norma Shepherd

# Fourth Free Vision Clinic

## Faithful Focus on Outreach in Tulsa

**TULSA** – On March 1, 2020, the Tulsa Community Service Center (TCSC), comprised of area volunteers from Tulsa Seventh-day Adventist churches, partnered with the Better Vision Better Hope ministry of Oklahoma City to sponsor their fourth Free Vision Clinic.

The outreach event administered 66 free eye exams and provided free glasses to each person in need. Food and drinks were provided along with ministerial counseling and prayer.

The mission behind this outreach is to reach those within the greater Tulsa area, providing much needed services

and hope. The Tulsa Community Service Center is in its fifth year of operations and is close to finishing its year-long expansion at its 21st and Sheridan Lakewood location.

TCSC is the faithful commitment to outreach as inspired by our Lord and Savior, Jesus, through which the Holy Spirit thrives within the hearts of each volunteer. Our volunteers, from teens to seniors, each draw on their gifts from which they become qualified as they have been called. I was truly moved by our Lord's grace and His steady, calm spirit, which He revealed within each

volunteer. Those being served saw the love of our Lord being shared by all our volunteers and churches. Each volunteer reached out to those in need, providing love and attention to those within our Tulsa community while drawing on our shared lessons of Jesus. Being able to serve with an experience outreach like this, touching and aiding another's life, while also bridging multiple languages and cultures, laughing and at times crying with the stresses, we all witnessed God's grace in action.

—By Bill Carlile

# Reach the World

## Pathfinders Preach Prophecy Seminar

**CHEROKEE, OKLA.** – Romania! Indonesia! Australia! Ireland! Iraq! India! Brazil! Peru! Ghana! In all, 18 countries and 13 states were reached when the Cherokee Raptors Pathfinder Club presented a “Share Him” evangelistic series LIVE on Facebook. Little did we know in December 2019, when the plans were made, that by the time the evangelistic series was broadcast a pandemic would have everyone stuck at home glued to their Facebook newsfeeds searching for answers? Who knew? God knew! Our

tiny club consists of two 11-year-olds and two nine-year-olds and we marvel that God was so gracious and merciful to use us in this way. We are so undeserving of such an awesome privilege as to have been used by our Lord.

Twice a week through January and February, our Pathfinders met in person or through Skype to continue practicing the sermons that they had been practicing all week. When the time finally came, we used an iPhone attached with tape to a xylophone stick, attached with

tape to a microphone stand, attached to an audio adapter, attached to a \$13 lapel mic. We used what we had and God made sure it worked! To this coronavirus I say, “You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.” Genesis 50:20. May the Lord continue to bless all of our church's efforts to reach people in these last days with the Gospel of hope. Amen!

—By Gabrielle Simpson



# Ministering to the Children

## Creative Approaches From the Oklahoma Conference



**OKLAHOMA CITY** – The current world situation did not slow down the commitment of the Oklahoma Conference Youth and Children’s Ministry department to the children and youth of this wonderful Conference. Activities had to be cancelled, but others took their place.

Children’s Ministry used this time to encourage families to spend quality time together. We hosted online activities to help families that have felt isolated feel connected with their church and conference family. One Junior, Primary and Kindergarten activity challenge

included an art contest around a specific theme. The children sent a picture of their artwork to the Children’s Ministry Facebook page. We had 33 children participate in this activity! We have many talented, creative children!

We also posted Sabbath School lesson ideas to help parents teach their children at home. Daniel Ortega, youth director, held an online interactive Bible game (using Kahoot!) every Sabbath evening. While it was intended for the older youth, there were many younger ones that wanted to participate. So he

set a separate time for the younger kids to play. What fun! Twenty five young people participated.

The youth department also hosted an online vespers service with family participants from around the conference. No matter the circumstances, we are committed to the children and young people of this conference. Please continue to pray for us as we minister to and pray for the families, that they can use this time to draw closer to each other and our heavenly Father.

—By Norma Shepherd

# New Members

## Broken Arrow Church Celebrates Baptisms

**BROKEN ARROW, OKLA.** – It was a high Sabbath when our congregation wholeheartedly welcomed Justin Calvert and Cameron Lipich into membership of the Broken Arrow Seventh-day Adventist Church. Both had been regular attendees for years and well-known and loved by our members.

Clayton Calvert had the honor of baptizing his grandson, Justin Calvert, who has been involved in our church activities since his youth. His church family was thrilled to watch him make this commitment to God. His grand-

mother, Barbara Calvert, who recently passed, would have been ecstatic.

We are so proud of Cameron Lipich (pictured right) who is the fiancé of church member Kayla Marquette, for taking this courageous stand to openly follow God and the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Cameron and Kayla will be wed this year and we pray that God will continue to bless their union. Cameron’s soon to be father-in-law, Greg Marquette, participated in the baptismal service.

—By Judy Marquette



# Transformation

## Tulsa Adventist Academy Week of Prayer

**TULSA, OKLA.** – Tulsa Adventist Academy's theme this school year is “transformation,” and little did the teachers and students know how transforming the year would be! Even though we are not meeting at school, teachers have been using Zoom and other ways to connect with students each day. Larry Seery, high school math teacher and TAA worship leader, worked tirelessly to have a week of prayer accessible to everyone. Due to coronavirus COVID-19 restrictions, only a few students met with a few teachers each day at Adventist Fellowship to lead a song service, operate a camera (a first for most students), share a challenge, participate in a skit and then hear Nic Coutet's messages of encouragement.

Each day, teachers shared challenges: “Getting up” (Who can we trust);

“Standing again” (How to trust in God); “Holding steady” (How to handle change); “Taking a step” (being willing to change); and “Moving forward” (Building motivation and momentum).

The challenges were designed to get students to reach out via phone calls to relatives, outdoor activities, sending cards to people in nursing homes, posting their favorite scriptures around their homes and other methods of thinking of others and thinking of Jesus. Meaningful skits were performed by a mix of students and teachers and focused on trusting Jesus in our daily lives.

Coutet captured students' attention by inviting them to text questions and comments to a phone number so they could interact with him during his messages. The texts were anonymous so callers were able to share freely. His

messages included his personal past away from God, and how to trust Him even though we sometimes don't want to. You'll have to watch the first episode to find out about that! He also addressed teen relationships, blind faith and other topics relevant to our youth.

The daily meetings were live-streamed on Adventist Fellowship's website, Facebook page and YouTube channel and viewers from all over the North American Division were invited to watch. If you'd like to watch them, look up TAA's Transformation Week of Prayer on the Adventist Fellowship resources and be blessed! We especially thank the Adventist Fellowship church for providing a space, a sound person and camera person to assist TAA in preparing students for heaven and earth.

—————By *Caroline A. Fisher*



# A Victor's Crown

## Determined to Finish the Course



British sprinter Derek Redmond qualified for the 400 meters with the fastest time in his semifinal heat at the 1992 Summer Olympic Games in Barcelona, Spain. Redmond's dream of winning Olympic gold dissipated when he was suddenly halted midway through the race by a hamstring injury. All the years of hard training and sacrifices to participate in the Olympic games were now for naught. His untimely injury made it impossible for him to advance to the finals and win Olympic gold. Instead of leaving the track, Redmond stood up, limping and in tears, continued in determination to cross the finish line and complete the race. He was able to make it to the finish line with the assistance and support of his father, who pushed his way by security to make it to the side of his son. Together, they would finish the course.

Redmond's determination to finish the race and cross the finish line is a reminder of the aged apostle Paul's declaration at the end of his ministry in 2 Timothy 4:7 (KJV): "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." Of particular importance to me are the words, "I have finished my course." Like Paul, all of us have a course to complete. God has mapped out a course for all of us. Our courses vary and are all different. Like Derek Redmond in the 1992 Olympic games, we must persevere through pain, setbacks and disappointments and be determined to finish the course God has set.

The good news for us as believers is that all who successfully complete their course will receive the victor's crown. Scripture tells us that the race is not only to the fastest or the strongest, but a victor's reward will be bestowed upon all who persevere through obstacles and endure to the end. Jesus set the perfect example for us when He entered human history to serve as our substitute and clear the course for us leading to Heaven. He overcame the agony of suffering in Gethsemane and bore His cross all the way to Calvary to pay the ultimate sacrifice for fallen humanity. He is now cheering us on from glory, declaring in Revelation 3:21, "To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne." What motivation to complete our course and to be privileged and honored to sit with our Savior on His throne!

*By Tyrone Douglas, Pastor and Children's Ministries Coordinator*



# A Sign Over Your Doorpost

## Writing Your Family Mission Statement

**DALLAS**— Christian families need to have a mission statement. Develop your family mission statement, so you can have a sign over your doorpost. “But the blood on your doorposts will serve as a sign, marking the houses where you are staying. When I see the blood, I will pass over you.” Exodus 12:13 (NLT).

The first part of a family mission statement should contain the action. What is your family going to do? What specific steps or actions are you going to make? What are the specific efforts you are going to make as a family? An example might be “to treat each other with respect and love” or “to communicate more effectively” or “to learn new things and new cultures.” Just remember to make it very action-oriented—something that requires effort on the part of each and every family member.

The second part explores the quality of your actions. In what manner are we going to accomplish this: In a way that gets us what we want no matter what? In a way that nurtures our spirit? In a way that gets us the fastest results possible? In a way that is comfortable to all family members? In a way that lets us be creative? In a way that uses our indi-

vidual skills and abilities? In a way that everyone can participate? Every action we take to realize our dreams and goals is going to be done in a way that allows us to learn new things, deepen our faith, make our family life better and make us better people. This is where you articulate and express your family values.

The third part is where you capture the results of your actions. What do you want to come out of all of this: Strong independent children? Successful and happy parents? Caring, actively involved children? A better marriage? A closer relationship with your children?

The following are a few guidelines for writing your family mission statement. Mission statements should be timeless. The best mission statements deal with both ends and means. Every member of the family should participate. Even if your children are younger, you can still start using this “family constitution” method. Just keep the mission simple and full of pictures. You don’t invent your family mission. You detect it. You uncover it. Each family possesses special gifts, unique qualities and characteristics. These are clues that God gives you to your family mission statement.

Ask God to reveal your unique family mission.

Here are a few helpful steps. Gather Information: Brainstorm, do some green light thinking. Organize: Categorize your ideas. Analyze: How practical is that? Does that fit? Limit: Can’t live with that one. We don’t have the gifts or resources to do that. Start: Start using your family mission statement.

Get the most benefit from your family mission statement by posting it in a prominent place. Deuteronomy 6 suggests placing these reminders by the front door of your home. Examine yourselves against it in your weekly family meetings. A church planting pastor once said, “You must mention your purpose and vision at least every three weeks.” Many of us can quote Star Trek’s mission statement because it was repeated at the beginning of every episode. Repeat your family mission and examine yourself against it often. Lastly, memorize it. Constant repetition will make this easy.

—By W.S. and Wilma Lee  
Family Ministries Directors



# Ahead of the Curve

## STEM Initiative in Position

**DALLAS**— In the middle of March, our schools, like most, were thrust into a “new norm.” The manner in which our teachers instruct students would be different, at least for the remainder of the school year. Coronavirus COVID-19 came and disrupted the “normal” way of instruction. However, the teachers of the Southwest Region Conference were already prepared to continue instruction outside of the classroom. Obviously, no one could’ve predicted that our school buildings would be closed and that we would be in a “shelter-in-place.” But a couple of years ago, our schools began a STEM initiative that would place our schools in position to provide personal devices for every student. Whether through laptops, iPads, or Chrome-books, schools were in a position to pro-

vide instruction to our students through distance learning, if needed. Instruction is being conducted using educational applications such as: Google Classroom, Class Dojo, IXL, Jupiter, Google Suites, Zoom, Spelling City, and many others.

As with most Adventist schools, we follow the directions of our local public schools when it comes to school closings due to inclement weather. We also follow the guidelines of our local counties and/or parishes regarding safety and health measures. When instructions were given for school buildings to close and for students to stay at home, we complied.

Throughout all of this, God has been and is good to us. He has allowed all of our principals and teachers to be safe from the coronavirus. Unfortunately, it has been reported that some of our

families were infected with the virus. But again, God in His infinite mercy and grace healed them and they have made a full recovery.

I am very proud of the principals, teachers and staff of the Southwest Region Conference. I commend them for the way they have attacked this new challenge and been successful. While public schools were late and delayed in providing instruction to their students, our teachers were on top of things from the beginning. Through their hard work and determination to not allow students to get behind in their education, our teachers have done extremely well and made sure that our schools stayed ahead of the curve.

————— *By Buford Griffith, III,  
Education Superintendent*

# Family Ministries Musings

## Lifting Families’ Arms In a Time of Pandemic

**DALLAS**— The Southwest Region Family Ministries department has responded to the coronavirus COVID-19 times we are living in, so that families can base their living on Christ the solid rock. Wilma Lee, Family Ministries Co-director, has edited newsletters called “Family Ministries Musings” to provide to families of our conference churches. We addressed families with the message sent to them electronically. The Word of God is full of promises that provide us with feelings of safety and well-being. Even in the midst of troubled environments, all of us are experiencing some very challenging times, but as family ministries leaders, we would like to be Aaron and Hur, lifting families’ arms with comfort and encouragement. It is time to claim those promises of God on behalf of our families.

Many families nestled or safely isolated themselves in homes while schools

closed. During this time, churches were not open for worship and fellowship. Simply being family was challenging at times. We want to provide families with support while developing a safe and healthy home life under these challenging situations, but we also want to provide them with some resources for their use.

First, God tells us in Deuteronomy 6 that parents are expected to lead children to understand what God’s plans for their lives are, and nurture and lead them by parents’ behaviors of faith and assurance that God is in control. “Perfect love drives out fear.” I John 4:18. What an opportunity we have to reset the family altar with spiritual life unfolded, through periods of worship, conversation, and times of sharing their stories of how God has kept them in the past and into the present. Children need to experience their parents’ faith in God.

If times of worship have not been the pattern in parents’ homes, we included resources to share with family members, both younger and those growing, developing into teens. This is a time for parents to create balance and structure, which will provide a sense of security and well-being for the family. Parents, it’s time to step up to the plate as partners. Single-parent families, rest assured that Jesus Christ Himself, through the power of the Holy Spirit, partners with you in creating a spiritual, safe and healthy environment during this time of unrest in the world around you. In John 14:1, Jesus reassures us, “Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me.”

————— *By W.S. and Wilma Lee  
Family Ministries Directors*



# The Little Powerful Book

## Encounter with Family En Route to Jerusalem

**BATON ROUGE**— Published in 1892 and printed in 1896, it has the distinction of being the most popular and most widely read book by Ellen G. White, and 128 years later, *Steps to Christ* is still wielding its influence as evident recently at the Berean Seventh-day Adventist Church.

It began with a family of three adults and three youth who utilized social media to find their way to Berean, arriving in time for Sabbath School. We would learn that the group is Seventh-day Adventist from a Jewish community who formerly resided in Arizona but were relocating to Jerusalem. During the 11 a.m. service, T. Ron Weegar, pastor, invited the family up where he acknowledged them, invited them to speak and posed with them for pictures—even receiving a future invitation with guaranteed housing for him and Mrs. Weegar.

Following the service, one of the ladies approached Weegar about copies of *Steps to Christ*. Feeling overjoyed at

the request and oblivious to its reason, he asked his wife to bring the books and stamp each. The lady was quick to announce that she and the others were anxious to get started with their distribution to the Berean community. We said our goodbyes and bid them well—only to be surprised at their return that night for the conclusion of our ‘Friends and Family’ weekend. At the end of the service, they requested more *Steps to Christ*, which Weegar didn’t hesitate to provide. And again, we embraced for what would be the last time—for now.

On the following Sabbath, during the 11 a.m. service, an excited Weegar called up a young adult first-time worshipper and introduced him as Trevin Blackmore. Weegar asked Blackmore to share the testimony that he had shared with him. We learned that the 30-year-old had been visited by the family of six and received a *Steps to Christ* copy, along with a personal invitation to

Berean church. “They even prayed with me,” said Blackmore. “I feel like I’m in heaven right now. I go to my church and pick up others on Wednesdays and on Sundays, but from now on, I’ll be here on Saturday,” he said to the applause of the congregation. Weegar eagerly replied, “You’re going to be my road dog from here on—since I can’t see [a reference to his visual impairment] and you can. We’ll pick up people along the way as you’re doing now!” True to his word, since reporting that first Sabbath, Blackmore has not missed a service—including Sabbath School, where he is involved in the lesson. The Holy Spirit led a family to the Berean church with a desire to share a little powerful book, and then led them to Blackmore. We have not heard from our new friends, but pray that they arrived safely and that all is well as we praise God for their zest for souls.

—Article and photos by Evelyn M. Edwards



# YAWE

## Youth and Young Adult Worship Experience

**DALLAS** – YAWE was created by Southwest Region Conference Youth and Young Adult Ministries Director Carlos Ming. After polling the conference youth and hearing their concerns, the department set out to redefine its mission to equip and release them to change their world in a way that is unique to them.

In many churches, the generational gap is abysmal, resulting in aged and dying congregations. We need to reverse the course of growing old to growing young.

That’s what YAWE is all about—strategizing how we can bring change and repositioning youth for a successful spiritual life, where their God-given gifts and talents will be utilized along with those more experienced to continue building a Kingdom of God.

Our vision statement is “Giving God our Lunch,” taken from the feeding of more than 5,000 people in John 6. The miracle was made through a little one’s lunch. The disciples’ solution was to send him away, like many churches do every Sabbath. But God will supply all our needs and is willing to use anything or anyone to accomplish His mission. Jesus used this little lad’s lunch, just like we should do. We should bring our youth to Jesus so that He can make a miracle out of whatever is in their hands. We tell our youth, “God needs you, He will use you to make something great. You are important to God, to the Church and to the world.”

This is our initiative in growing young, and some of the expectations include adding youth in leadership positions

at the local church with soul winning and outreach activities, preaching and teaching, all done in their own unique way and style. The initiative launched and continues to meet through online services Sabbath at 3 p.m. on the conference youth Facebook page. As we gather again in our churches, it will continue to develop and change the DNA from growing old to growing young.

In her book *Counsels to Teachers, Parents, and Students*, Ellen G. White shared, “With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Savior might be carried to the whole world!”

————— *By Vanston Archbold*  
Associate Youth Director



# The Theology of Resilience

## Allowing God to Change Courses in Unexpected Ways



Reading the remarkable story of John W. Peterson, I learned he possessed an incredible singing voice as a teenager and was in high demand as a performer. He wrote of himself, “Only in singing did I feel competent and confident!” His music career began to excel. He became known internationally as “the singing farm boy.” Radio programs featured him, and his future was bright. Then, one summer, he started a job in a factory. He literally couldn’t hear anything because the noise was so loud. So, he would spend every working hour singing at the top of his lungs. Far too late, he realized he ruined his vocal cords. He wrote, “I placed such a strain on my faltering voice by overuse and inexperience, that I damaged it beyond repair!” Depression followed knowing he had lost the power to thrill people by his singing.

Peterson’s inability to sing forced him to develop other talents. He wrote, “I turned to writing and that talent emerged and blossomed. What at first seemed like a tragedy God used for good and the course of my life began to take shape in an unexpected way!” If you didn’t recognize the name, Peterson wrote many hymns like “Heaven Came Down and Glory Filled My Soul.”

Merriam-Webster’s online dictionary defines “resilience” as “the capability of a strained body to recover its size and shape after deformation....” As we pass through the valley of darkness named coronavirus COVID-19, God’s people have perhaps been afforded one last opportunity to exemplify spiritual resilience and substance. The word of God tells us in Ephesians 6:18 (NKJV): “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance [resilience] and supplication for all the saints.” The perseverance that the apostle Paul underscores here is a perseverance forged in the fires of trials and afflictions. Yet, God has in His infinite wisdom allowed them to befall us for a specific and redemptive purpose.

Let us heed the admonition of Isaiah 60:1-2 (NKJV): “Arise, shine [be resilient] for your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but the Lord will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you.”

*By Carlos J. Craig, President*



# Church 4.0

## Coronavirus COVID-19 Creates A New Way to Minister



**ALVARADO, TEX.** — When “Jabez cried out to the God of Israel” in 1 Chronicles 4:10, “Oh, that you would bless me and enlarge my territory,” do you think he had something specific in mind?

It is easy to say we want to do the Lord’s will, but how often do we put stipulations on it?

When coronavirus COVID-19 cases were reported in Texas, few had any idea that soon church leaders would have to create Church 4.0—the online version.

For churches already offering online service options, they simply expanded on what they were already doing. For those churches without tech-savvy staff, it was an educational and, for some, overwhelming experience.

It didn’t take long for church leaders to realize how God was enlarging their territories when they viewed the analytics for their online services.

Knowing some churches would need extra assistance, Kenn L. Dixon, Texas Conference vice president for Communication and Public Relations, offered workshops as well as an innovation web page ([TexasAdventist.org/Innovation](http://TexasAdventist.org/Innovation)) to help get them started with ideas and resources. “I wanted to make sure they didn’t get overwhelmed before they even began,” Dixon said. “The focus was just to do something. We didn’t want church buildings closed and members have

no connections. It is okay if a church doesn’t have the latest equipment. Any church can offer something using an iPhone and Facebook Live.”

Dixon also transformed the Texas Conference worship room into a makeshift studio to record music and sermons to share online, helping to keep the Texas connections. Every Friday evening and Sabbath morning, a sermon was shared in English or Spanish on the Texas Conference Facebook page, [Facebook.com/TexasAdventist](https://www.facebook.com/TexasAdventist).

As the weeks progressed, more and more Texas churches increased their online presence from prayer meetings to church board meetings, youth groups to online Pathfinder meetings. Church 4.0 was becoming a new normal. The web page [TexasAdventist.org/Livestream](http://TexasAdventist.org/Livestream) was created to share the Texas Conference church links so people could find encouraging music and messages 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Starting to feel a bit more comfortable with the online services, church leaders realized members as well as community families needed food, so they followed God’s advice in Matthew 24:35 and started or expanded their food pantries.

Merlin Cochran, pastor of the Elgin and La Grange Seventh-day Adventist churches, worked with his members to provide a drive-thru food pantry (pictured left). “I am literally amazed at

the way Jesus divided the fish and loaves. Normally, we prepare for 100 families. Due to the COVID-19 crisis, the first drive-thru had 120 cars with 140 families, then more the next and the next. Within weeks, we were serving almost 300 families,” Cochran shared.

Marshall and Julie Gonzales, Texas Adventist Community Services director and associate director, supplied many frontline workers with N95 masks that were in high demand during the initial weeks as COVID-19 cases increased. They were also able to distribute grant money donated by North American Division Adventist Community Services to help 14 churches offset costs for their food pantries. The full story can be found in the spring issue of the Texas Conference THE FLAME magazine at [issuu.com/texasadventist](http://issuu.com/texasadventist).

Arlington Seventh-day Adventist Church UG (youth ministries) created a unique experience for families when they introduced a Virtual Family Cook Off (pictured right). Registered participants displayed their recipes during the scheduled Zoom time.

Find more stories on the Texas Conference Facebook page, [Facebook.com/TexasAdventist](https://www.facebook.com/TexasAdventist).

—By *Tamara Michalenko Terry*  
*Communication and Public Relations*  
*Associate Director*

# A New Way to Learn

## Students and Teachers Go Online Learning Together

**ALVARADO, TEX.** — When face-to-face classes ended in March, many were hopeful that it would only be temporary. Unfortunately, as coronavirus COVID-19 cases continued to increase, it became apparent that school for this year would have to continue virtually.

It was an education for many teachers who had never taught classes online before. In addition to learning new online software, teachers had to learn new ways of teaching and tutoring without being together. When some of our teachers discovered there were students without

internet connections, they took it upon themselves to make assignment packets, put on masks and gloves and drop off the work at students' homes. Their dedication and hard work were unparalleled!

Students had to learn new ways of learning, studying and working together. Zoom and Google Classroom became places where students socialized, learned and grew beyond what they already learned.

Our graduating kindergarteners, eighth graders and seniors had to celebrate and be honored in different ways.

This is a school year that will definitely be included in future history books.

Principals, teachers, students and parents, I applaud you for your perseverance to complete this past school year as best as possible.

It was a challenge for all, but many utilized their creativity to make the best of the situation.

Your drive to finish strong did not go unnoticed.

————— *By Kisha Norris*  
*Vice President for Education*

# A Virtual Camporee

## Leaders Create Online Worldwide Camporee

**ALVARADO, TEX.** — As coronavirus COVID-19 made headlines, I was praying we would be able to have our conference-wide Pathfinder Camporee when a pastor friend sent me a meme about watching camporee on a computer.

Initially laughing at the meme, I soon wondered, What if Adventurers, Pathfinders and Master Guides could watch a program online and camp in their backyards? I wondered if this could be a blessing to many families.

Our club council leaders discussed the idea, and everyone was on board

and excited. Bo Gendke, Adventurer coordinator, Marilyn Boismier, Pathfinder coordinator, and Lily Hernandez, Master Guide coordinator, arranged the activities for their respective teams. Iris Escobar, administrative assistant for Texas Conference youth, handled registration, while Jeffrey Hernandez, designer, videographer and webmaster, assisted me with the program.

We didn't know how people would respond, but we decided to try. In just four days we had 1,500 people registered. When we had people from different con-

ferences trying to register, we decided to make it available to everyone.

By the time registration closed, there were 12,400 people of all ages registered from 63 different countries.

Many shared photos and expressed thankfulness using the hashtag #txyouthiCamporee or #iCamporee.

The Lord truly blessed this camporee and the volunteers were outstanding.

————— *By Paulo Tenorio*  
*Youth and Club Ministries Director*  
*Photo by Kī Song*



# AdventistGiving

## More Than 150 Texas Churches Join Online Giving Option

**ALVARADO, TEX. —** When Texas Conference church buildings closed this past March, church leaders had to figure out a new way to present programs. They also had to offer church members and guests an alternative way to return their tithes and give offerings.

Knowing their faithful members knew the importance of systematic giving and with the reality that the local church still had bills to pay, such as a mortgage and utilities, it was imperative to provide options.

For those churches already offering the AdventistGiving online option, it was an easy transition. Surprisingly, though, more than 200 Texas Conference churches were not. At that point, Texas Conference Communication and Public Relations launched a quick mini campaign, #TexasGive, providing awareness about AdventistGiving.

AdventistGiving provides a digital tithe envelope for Seventh-day Adventist churches in North America. In 2018, the AdventistGiving app made it even easier to return tithes and give offerings.

“We recognized the trends years ago, and since 2007, AdventistGiving.org has been a service of the North American Division to any church in the U.S., [Guam, Micronesia] and Canada to allow for tithe and offerings to be given electronically online with a credit

card or eCheck,” Gordon Harty, North American Division (NAD) Web application developer in Columbia, Maryland, shared in the release for the app written by Kimberly Luste Maran, associate director for NAD Office of Communication.

Simply search “Adventist Giving” on any Apple or Android device to download the app with the hand as shown in the bottom right picture.

The service is free to the local church and the user, and the church can customize the digital tithe envelope to include specific church projects and ministries. Users are also able to set recurring giving selections. Fees are covered by the conference, union and the NAD.

It was a stressful time for church treasurers, conference treasury staff and the AdventistGiving team as thousands of churches scrambled to sign up for AdventistGiving as church buildings were closing all across the United States. At the time of this writing, 259 Texas Conference churches are enrolled in AdventistGiving, an increase of more than 150 in just a few weeks.

That was helpful to many, but there were still members and guests who were not able to or preferred not to use AdventistGiving, so church leaders had to provide other options.

One church provided church-ad-

dressed envelopes, so checks could be mailed to the church.

Other churches provided drive-thru offering times, which gave pastors and elders a time to pray with members while still observing social distancing.

Some church leaders provided personal home pick-up times, especially for those members not able to leave their homes for various reasons.

“Churches depend on their members and guests to help them survive and ultimately thrive,” Randall B. Terry, Texas Conference treasurer, said. “I want to acknowledge our members and guests who faithfully give to advance God’s work in Texas and around the world, as well as our local church treasurers and conference treasury staff who worked tirelessly to process the AdventistGiving applications so quickly.”

Francisco Pollock, Texas Conference associate treasurer, created instructions in English and Spanish to help treasurers enroll in AdventistGiving. You can find those videos at [texasadventist.org/churchauditing](http://texasadventist.org/churchauditing).

As Paul reminds us in 2 Corinthians 9:7, “God loves a cheerful giver.”

—By *Tamara Michalenko Terry*  
*Communication and Public Relations*  
*Associate Director*





**Adventist Giving**  
ONLINE OR APP

AdventistGiving.org  
Texas Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

**Donate** **Log in**

# YOUR FAITHFULNESS REWARDED

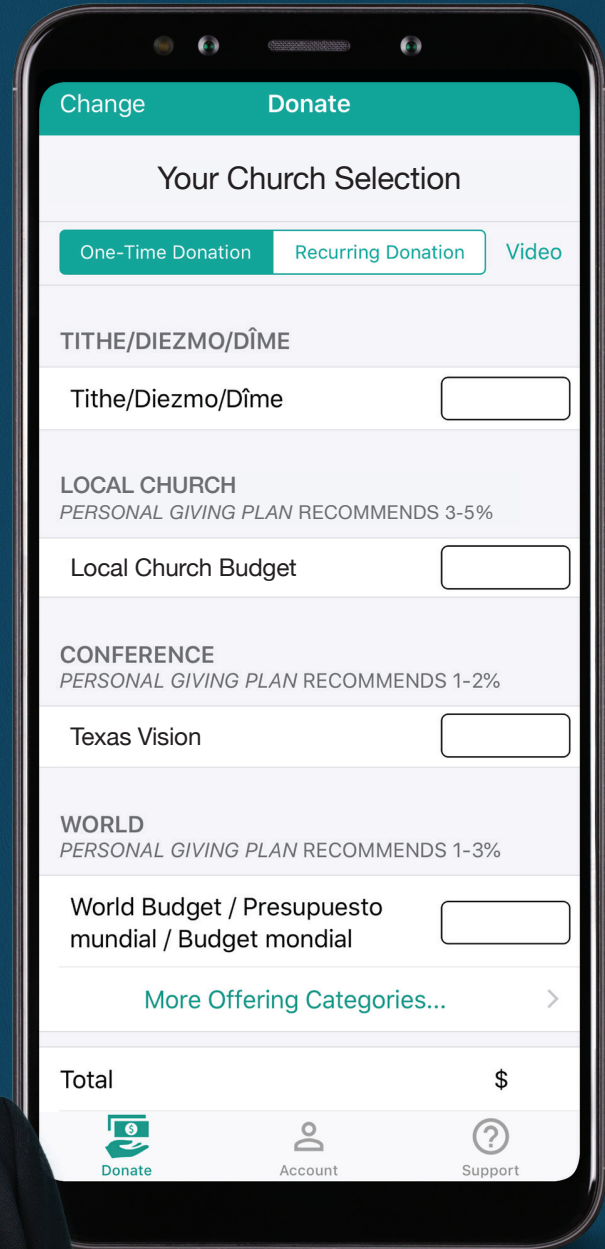
## GIVING OPTIONS

### ADVENTIST GIVING

**WEBSITE OR APP** gives you the opportunity to give back to the Lord all of your first fruits as soon as you have them. Now you can return your tithe and give your offerings any time of day or night to the church of your choice\*



\*Church must be enrolled in AdventistGiving



### LET EACH ONE GIVE

as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.  
2 Corinthians 9:7

# Run the Race

## More Than Just Temporary Success



Paul reminds us in Philippians 3:12-14, “Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on... Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.”

This text makes me think of a story I recently read about long-distance runner Abel Kirui. Kirui is a World Championship marathon runner who has set amazing marathon records. Yet what is impressive is that Kirui says he finds motivation in bringing glory to God. Every time he finishes a race, he thanks God and drops to his knees to pray as celebration. Kirui’s spiritual influence came from his mother, who encouraged him to go to church on Sabbaths and pray every morning. Today, Kirui gets up early every morning to pray and asks God to give him strength to run. This makes him open to hearing God’s will and direction for his life. What I like most about Kirui’s story is that although he works arduously to meet his running goals, he more importantly puts God first, pressing towards a different goal.

Most athletes will dedicate their lives to training and striving to win the ultimate trophy in their respective sport. Some will do anything to experience a taste of glory. In Ancient Greece, the Olympic games were an integral part of society and religion. The games were deeply rooted in faith and athletes were encouraged to dedicate their entire lives to prepare for the games. The incentive? The victors of the games brought honor to themselves, their families and their hometowns. Yet, for as much as they persisted and triumphed, their success was only temporary.

Paul tells us that we too are competing in a very important race with eternal implications. The race of life can be tough and discouraging, and many give up along the way. However, the apostle also reminds those who decide to stay on course that they are not competing in vain. God invites us to press forward, and He in turn will give us the endurance, perseverance and faith to finish the race. The finish line which lies in heaven is getting closer and closer each day.

Let us keep our eyes fixed on the one true prize, for God’s glorious and eternal reward is worth far more than any earthly reward!

*By Lee-Roy Chacon, President*





# Million Mask Challenge

## Member Contributes to Global Sewing Initiative

**ALBUQUERQUE** – Lissey Vancil always goes above and beyond for people. The North Valley Seventh-day Adventist Church member who owns an online cake business normally dedicates her time to making baked goods. However, when the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic slowed her business, she decided to use her talents to help her community in a different way. “I own a sewing machine and I had fabric,” said Vancil. “I know how to sew, so I wanted to put my skills to good use.” Lissey joined thousands of people who contributed to the “Million Mask Challenge” initiative, a global sew-a-thon aimed to support healthcare workers, and those in need, with homemade masks.

When she started making the masks, people in the United States were not

sure about the effectiveness of wearing cloth masks. But as she heard reports of mask shortages, she kept sewing, thinking there would eventually be a need. Initially, Vancil donated masks to Family Practice Associates, a clinic in Taos, N.M., and to several healthcare workers in Texas and Colorado. By the time the Center for Disease Control and Prevention began recommending the use of cloth masks in April, her requests skyrocketed. She made masks for people in Albuquerque, including for a prosthetic clinic, and also shipped masks to family and friends who are caregivers all over the United States. She even made special military masks for an army unit in Albuquerque.

“People kept asking me how much I was charging for the masks and I would

tell them they were free,” said Vancil. “If I charged for them, I wouldn’t be better than those individuals who took advantage of the situation. People were very generous and donated materials and money to cover costs. Some even donated money without getting a mask.”

Despite the challenges of at-home mask making, Vancil made and donated over 1,000 masks. She joined thousands of volunteers who felt the call to do something proactive to help during the pandemic. “Although I wasn’t on the front lines like the nurses and doctors who were fighting the virus directly, it was a way to help in uncertain times,” said Lissey. “The hours were long, and it was hard on my body, but it was well worth it.”

– By Debby Márquez, Communication Director



# Online Learning

## Texico Schools Go Online Amid COVID-19 Pandemic

**CORRALES, N.M.** — As the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic began, Texico quickly restructured to continue instruction for the 2019-2020 school year. Fortunately, our elementary students only took an extra week of spring break so their teachers could plan and reorganize their programs for online teaching.

Using tools like Zoom and Google Classroom, teachers prepared packets, videos and interactive programs for students to use online. Many teachers were surprised to learn that they were already using these tools as a part of their curriculum, making the transition easier. Fortunately, the math, science and social studies textbooks had online resources which were also of benefit. Once online, instruction began, our student information system (SIS) became an important

part of the infrastructure for delivering information to the students and receiving their completed work. Most exciting of all was the inclusion of live PE classes online, which allowed students to stay connected and active while at home.

Sandia View Academy (SVA) has offered distance education since 2017, so they had the infrastructure in place to begin classes immediately after the spring break. No school days were lost as the SVA staff worked with the students to have them all participate online.

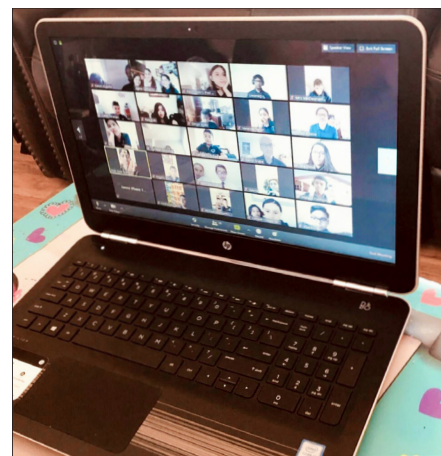
There were some challenges, however, especially for parents who were working from home and supervising their children's studies. Parents and teachers worked together to provide the best education and environments possible to finish off the school year at home. Many

parents have reached out with expressions of thanks and appreciation for our Texico educators.

"I want to applaud our school for making this online learning thing work. I had one child doing PE, another doing Bible and another doing math," said a Sandia View Christian School parent. "This was hectic for all of us, but praise God for our awesome principal, teachers and parents! It feels wonderful to have such a close-knit family."

We are grateful to our teachers and administrators for their hard work and providing academic and spiritual growth during this unusual and unprecedented time. We covet your prayers!

—By Derral Reeve  
Education Superintendent



# Adventurer Family Camp

## Sharing Jesus at Texico Conference Virtual Camporee

**CORRALES, N.M.** – Every year, the Texico Conference Club Ministries Department hosts an Adventurer Family Camp in southern New Mexico. This year, due to the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic, the camp was hosted virtually. From April 24-26, Adventurer families camped in their backyards or living rooms and joined in on a variety of activities and meetings through Zoom. Over 190 people registered and 43 different groups participated.

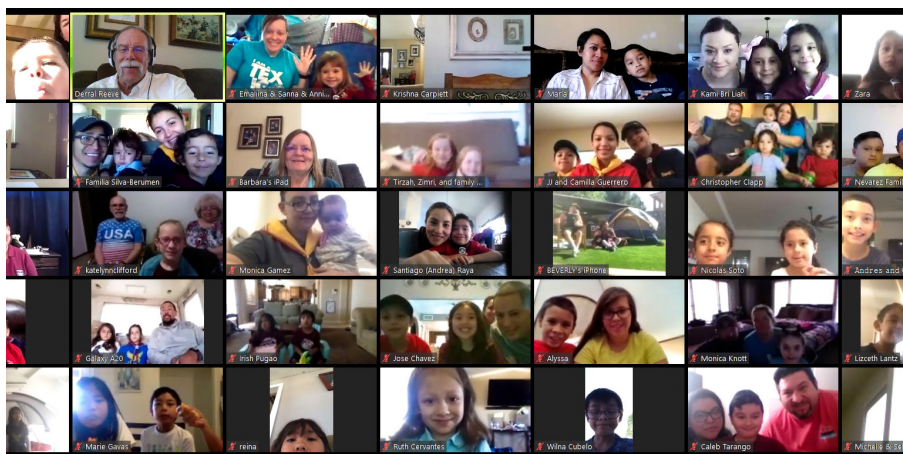
Activities were based on the weekend's theme "Share Jesus," and the

speaker for the meetings was Joel Navarro, pastor of the Abilene, Tex. district. Area coordinators led different activities which included rock painting, making plant cards, chalk messages on sidewalks and preparing crafts. Each activity highlighted how the Adventurers could share Jesus with others.

Although the Adventurers were at home, traditional club camp activities like the lowering and folding of the United States flag, uniform inspection and drill marches were not excluded. The Adventurers and their families

presented stories, skits and showcased their musical talent. To close, families sent in pictures of their virtual camporee experience. They enjoyed a special presentation prepared by Chris Clapp, Southwest English coordinator for the Texico Conference. Feedback about this special weekend has been great. Parents indicated that their kids had a fun time despite not being able to visit the lake. The Adventurers were truly blessed and it was a wonderful "camp" experience that they will never forget.

— *By Derral Reeve, Club Ministries Director*



# More Blessed to Give

## La Roca Spanish Gives Back for Christmas

**ALBUQUERQUE** – Last December, the youth at La Roca Spanish Seventh-day Adventist Church were inspired by Acts 20:35, which says, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," and chose to do something different in their church for Christmas. Instead of buying the usual gifts for church members and leaders, the youth filled 100 backpacks with items such as socks, gloves, toiletries, water, snacks, a *Steps to Christ* book and a Bible. By faith and through much prayer, the youth reached out to their community to find people who would need the backpacks.

On Dec. 21, 2019, the youth went out into the streets of their community and passed out every single backpack. This activity was not only graciously accepted by those receiving the backpacks, but as a whole it seemed to have a positive impact on the community.

It also resonated with the members of the church who took part in the project. For many adults and youth who participated, it was their first time doing an outreach activity.

Nonetheless, each of them was happy that they were able to give back during

the holiday season. More importantly, they were encouraged and motivated to do it again.

This year, the La Roca youth department is planning new outreach projects in their community. Overall, this event was a great opportunity for the youth to see, and meet, the needs in their community.

It was also a great way to meet new friends in the neighborhood. The young people are looking forward to seeing their new friends soon.

— *By Enrique Flores*

# Unexpected Adventure

## Experiencing God's Timely Provision

**ALBUQUERQUE** – My husband Ray and I are very passionate about traveling, so when we had the opportunity for a trip to Antarctica in early March, we were thrilled. Although we were hearing reports about coronavirus COVID-19, we safely arrived in Buenos Aires, Argentina on March 6, and found the city bustling, alive with tourists and activity.

We met up with our fellow expedition passengers and boarded a charter flight to Ushuaia, the southernmost tip of South America. There we boarded the Ocean Endeavor and set sail to our final destination. As we settled in, we met two wonderful people, Dwight and Prime, and they became our travel companions for the rest of the trip. We affectionately called ourselves the “seal team 4” because we looked out for each other.

In due time, we were exploring the beautiful outer islands of the Antarctic. It was vast and stunning. However, near the end of our tour, we were notified that we needed to head back to Ushuaia because the Argentinian government had issued a national lockdown due to the heightened threat of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As we approached Ushuaia, we were notified that all travelers entering the country needed to undergo a 14-day quarantine. But since we had already been in remote isolation, we only had to quarantine on the ship for five days.

The ship's administration spent the next few days negotiating our permission to disembark and board a charter flight to Buenos Aires.

On March 22, half of the passengers were allowed to come ashore and we were quickly loaded onto buses and escorted to the airport by police. Upon arriving, we were met by armed officers and medical personnel dressed in full protective gear.

The mood was tense—each passenger kept a safe distance from one another and was screened for fever and virus symptoms. On our flight to Buenos Aires we had no contact with flight attendants.

After clearing individual health screenings in Buenos Aires, we were allowed to go to a hotel. As we drove through the city, we were very surprised by how much things had changed since our last visit. With the exception of a few essential businesses that were operating, the streets were empty. Sometime later, we returned to the airport and learned that our flights had been cancelled and, due to travel bans, the only flights out of the country were three “Humanitarian Flights” per day.

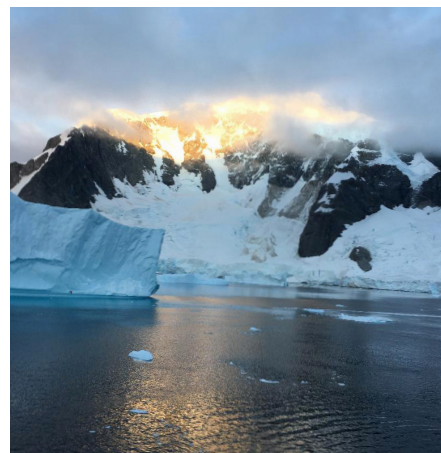
I prayed fervently for the Lord's intervention and felt at peace that He was in control. Fortunately, two ticket agents spent extra time helping us, and they were able to get flights out of the coun-

try for us and for our friends. I praise God for His divine help! Still, God had many more blessings in store for us.

That same day we met a taxi driver named Angel, who promised to pick us up the next day for our flight. When we reached the hotel lobby the next morning, there were several hotel staff dressed in protective gear telling the guests to stay in the building. From afar, we saw Angel motioning for us to get into his taxi. He explained that city officials were not allowing taxis in the area, but he returned because he had made a promise to pick us up. En route to the airport we encountered roadblocks, police questioning and barricades, but we made it to the airport in time for our flight.

As I now reflect on this experience from the comfort of my home, I am reminded that we are all in God's constant care and protection. There is nothing impossible for Him. We can be certain that we serve a powerful and loving Heavenly Father who is there for us, even in the most uncertain moments.

————— *By Janet Van Why*



## Classified Ads

### EMPLOYMENT

**Wanted: Experienced, adventurous radio broadcaster!** This mission field is not overseas. Details at [RadioOfHope.org/production](http://RadioOfHope.org/production)

#### **Andrews University Seeks Assistant/Associate Professor of Audiology.**

The Assistant/Associate Professor of Audiology will teach in the undergraduate speech-language pathology and audiology program as well as support the speech-language pathology graduate program. [Andrews.edu/admres/jobs/show/faculty#job\\_7](http://Andrews.edu/admres/jobs/show/faculty#job_7)

#### **Andrews University Seeks Faculty - International Language Studies.**

This is a half-time position to teach Spanish language courses from elementary to advanced levels. The academic load will be 12-14 credits per academic year, divided into two semesters. No teaching assignment during summertime. [Andrews.edu/admres/jobs/show/staff\\_salary#job\\_4](http://Andrews.edu/admres/jobs/show/staff_salary#job_4)

### 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 offers Wolfe Living Center offering independent living and nursing home.

Contact: Bill Norman at 405.208.1289 or [SummitRidgeVillage.org](http://SummitRidgeVillage.org)

### MISCELLANEOUS

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**Atlanta Adventist Academy** offers excellent Adventist education locally (Atlanta, Ga.) as

well as virtually through our live online program for homeschoolers and distance campuses. To enroll your student, become a partner campus or receive more information, call 404.699.1400 or visit [AAA.edu/Admissions](http://AAA.edu/Admissions)

**Do you want to get your children out of the city?** Bonnerdale, Ark., may be the place for you. Ewing Adventist Junior Academy is a two-classroom Christian school. Enrolling students in K-8 now for the upcoming school year. Contact for details: Principal's Cell 903.930.9433. Website: [Florence22.AdventistSchoolConnect.org](http://Florence22.AdventistSchoolConnect.org)

## Announcements

**Indiana Academy Alumni Weekend October 9-10, 2020.** Alumni weekend will be conducted at the academy located in Cicero Ind. There will be a golf tournament on Friday Oct. 9. For reservations contact Bill Summitt: [IAgolffclass@gmail.com](mailto:IAgolffclass@gmail.com) or call 317.437.8104. October 10 Sabbath services will be streamed via YouTube at Indiana Academy Alumni or on the Alumni website at [IAAlumni.org](http://IAAlumni.org). For questions about events, contact Janet Schalk White at [Janet.White@earthlink.net](mailto:Janet.White@earthlink.net).

**Plainview Adventist Academy, Sheyenne River Academy and Dakota Adventist Academy Alumni Weekend:** Oct. 2-3, 2020 at Dakota Adventist Academy, 15905

Sheyenne Circle, Bismarck, N.D. Come and renew your friendships. Honor Classes: '46, '51, '56, '61, '66, '71, '76, '81, '86, '91, '96, '01, '06, '11, '16. Information: call 701.751.6177 Ext. 212 or visit [DakotaAdventistAcademy.org](http://DakotaAdventistAcademy.org)

## Obituaries

**Barron, Jeanne**, died March 22, 2020, Boise, Idaho. Adventist Church service: more than 20 years for the Texas Conference as a Bible worker, Adventist Community Services, assistant pastor and associate field representative for the Texas Conference Planned Giving and Trust Services Department.

**Byrum, Randy**, born Jan. 1, 1966; died April 2, 2020. Church membership: Enid Seventh-day Adventist Church. Survivors: mother, Gloriann Byrum, Ponca City, Okla.; brother, Allen Byrum (Cheryl), Enid, Okla.; sister, Cheryl Lundy, Enid, Okla.

**Cowan, Jacquelyn Page (Kilbourn)**, born Jan. 13, 1989, Cleburne, Tex.; died Oct. 1, 2019, Beaumont, Tex. Church membership: Beaumont Seventh-day Adventist Church. Survivors: husband, Jason Cowan; children, Camellia Cowan, Cameron Cowan and Jason Cowan; brothers, Kristopher Kilbourn, Jared Kilbourn; and parents, Keith and Jeanne Kilbourn.



**Carolyn Kay Cherry**, a devoted daughter, sister, wife, mom, grandmother and aunt, passed away on March 11, 2020, while on vacation with her husband, daughter, son-in-law and grandchildren in Florida.

Kay was born in Loma Linda, Calif. on Dec. 2, 1948. She was raised in Southern and Northern California, and, for a couple of years, in Canada. She graduated high school from Milo Academy in Days Creek, Ore., and attended college at Southwestern Adventist College, ultimately graduating with a degree in Radiology Technician from Kilgore College. Kay loved helping others during her over 40-year career in x-ray, nuclear medicine and heart catheter technician work. She also gave her time generously as a volunteer at the Arlington Seventh-day Adventist Church food pantry, numerous mission trips and other outreach projects.

Kay was an accomplished photographer with a specialty in the Texas Hill Country landscapes. Several of her photos won places in the Arlington Memorial Hospital yearly calendar. Kay was a longtime member of the Arlington Seventh-day Adventist Church and resided in Kennedale, Tex. with her husband.

Kay is survived by her husband, Charles A. Cherry of Kennedale, Tex.; her daughter Shannon Cherry-Gonzalez; her son-in-law James Gonzalez; her grandsons Zachary Gonzalez and Ethan Gonzalez; her siblings, Helen Spencer-Braden, Edward Drew Daughetee, Steven Wesley Heinrich, Craig Allen Heinrich, Renne Marvin Heinrich and Edmond Eugene Heinrich. She was blessed with four parents: predeceased by George Christopher Daughetee and Vera Imogene Spencer Daughetee and survived by Wesley M. Heinrich and Laurie L. Heinrich. She is also survived by many loving nieces, nephews, grand-nieces, grand-nephews and longtime friends.

Pamela D. Craig of Zachary, La., son, Mark Denman (Sharron), Nashville, Tenn.; two grandchildren, and sisters, Ora Lee Brown and Jerry Denman.

**Freenev, Hazel Bell**, born June 25, 1921, Laneville, Tex.; died April 27, 2020. Church membership: Henderson Seventh-day Adventist Church. Preceded in death by husband, Aaron Freenev; daughter, Dorothy Bell Freenev; brothers and sister, James, Rena Fay and Theron and four grandchildren. Survivors: children, Charles Aaron, Charlene Wesley, Howard Ray, Lue Ella Beal, Billy G., Jimmy and Launice Brown; 20 grandchildren.

**Gates, Aaron Phillip**, born Jan. 16, 1978; died Jan. 21, 2020. Survivors: mother and father, Phillip and Marilyn Gates; brothers, Joseph Gates (Jenny Lynn) and Benjamin Gates (Heather); three nieces; one nephew; grandmother, Naomi Raffety; aunts and uncles and many wonderful friends.

**Parker, Robert**, born Aug. 24, 1925, Denver, Colo.; died March 2, 2020, Siloam Springs, Ark. Membership: Gentry Seventh-day Adventist Church. Survivors: wife, Evelyn Parker; daughters, Marice Clegg (Marlin), and Lynne Bouchard; five grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren.

**Pugh, Naomi Ann**, born June 25, 1928, Tulsa, Okla.; died Feb. 25, 2020, Tulsa, Okla. Church membership: First Tulsa Seventh-day Adventist Church. Survivors: sons, Mark Peugh (Lisa), Tulsa, Okla.; Roger Peugh (Sue),

Tyler, Tex.; Timothy Peugh, Tulsa, Okla.; sister, Henryetta Penny Fenshe.

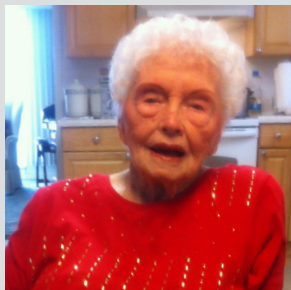
**Robertson, Leonard Charles "Chuck"**, born Feb. 4, 1940, Dustin, Okla.; died March 14, 2020, Tulsa, Okla. Church membership: Tulsa Adventist Fellowship. Survivors: wife, Norma; daughters, Vicki Partain (David) of Cranfills Gap, Tex.; Kimberli Copeland (Freddie) of Lake Jackson, Tex.; Karla Shannon of Tulsa, Okla.; brother, Donald W. Robertson (Freida); two grandchildren.

**Smith, Phyllis Arlene**, born Oct. 8, 1929, Lime Springs, Iowa; died Feb. 3, 2020, Tulsa, Okla. Church membership: First Tulsa Seventh-day Adventist Church. Survivors: daughters, Judy Miller (David), Tulsa, Okla.; Gena Malcolm (Ted), Shallotte, N.C.; Susan Morgan (Kevin), Miller's Creek, N.C.; brother, Jerry Hart (Marian), Siloam Springs, Ark.; nine grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

**Whitacre, Ethel Ann**, born April 26, 1927, Tulsa, Okla.; died March 24, 2020, Tulsa, Okla. Church membership: First Tulsa Seventh-day Adventist Church. Preceded in death by parents; one brother and one sister; husband, Jack Whitacre; stepson, Jon D. Whitacre; daughter, Gayle Tucker. Survivors: daughters, Joni Darmody (Steve) of Ooltewah, Tenn.; Julie Little (Ron) of Bixby, Okla.; son Jackson Whitacre (Jessica) of Broken Arrow, Okla.; 11 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

**Denman, James, Jr.**, born Jan. 28, 1935, Woodville, Miss.; died April 1, 2020, Baton Rouge, La. Church membership: Baton Rouge Berean Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Preceded in death by wife Joyce Gosa Denman; son, Jeffrey L. Denman; parents, James Denman, Sr., and Julia W. Denman; sister, Julia O. Batiste. Survivors: daughter,



**Lydia Sadau Flynn** was born on Jan. 5, 1918, and passed to her final rest on Feb. 13, 2020 at age 102.

She was the second of six children born to Julius and Martha Sadau. She was born on the family ranch near Olney, Tex. Her parents and five siblings preceded Lydia

in death. Lydia was married to Durwood Eustace in 1936. She and Durwood had four children, Durwin, Dewayne, Shirley Wahlenmaier and Larry. She married J.W. Flynn and had two daughters, Brenda Campbell Buchanan and Darlene Garr. Durwin and Dewayne preceded Lydia in death. She had 17 grandchildren and several great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren.

Lydia was a nurse and took great pride in giving excellent care to her patients. She had a farm and enjoyed growing a variety of crops along with her garden vegetables for personal use and for her children and friends. Additionally, Lydia loved to quilt and she made many beautiful quilts for her children and grandchildren. Her belief in Christian education led Lydia to place her children in church school even when times were hard.

Lydia was a lifetime member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and served as pianist and Sabbath School Superintendent for many years. Lydia loved to support the various ministries of the church and she often read of results of the worldwide spread of the gospel with rejoicing. Lydia will be missed by all of her family and friends. Her children rise up and call her blessed. She will rest in her grave in Olney, Tex., while awaiting the call of the Life Giver.

The 61st General Conference Session  
has been postponed until **May 20-25, 2021**  
Indiana Convention Center, Indianapolis, Ind.



Learn more about the rescaled event at [Session.Adventist.org](https://Session.Adventist.org)



**Simpson, Richard C. (Rick)** was born on March 29, 1948, in South Bend, Ind. to William and Anna Simpson. He passed away on Jan. 10, 2020, after battling a lengthy illness with cancer. Rick grew up in Atlanta, Ga., but always claimed Texas as his home.

He graduated from Indiana Adventist Academy in Cicero, Ind. He enlisted and was ultimately drafted into the Marine Corps. He proudly served in Vietnam as a radio operator.

When his tour was completed, he decided to attend college at Southwestern Union College in Keene, Tex., where his mother, Anna, was working as the cafeteria director. Rick graduated with a degree in accounting and nursing home administration.

While attending college, he met Glenda Trujillo and they were married on June 10, 1973. They have one son, Beau Simpson. Rick worked several years as a nursing home administrator in Texas and New Mexico. He also spent several years as a long-distance truck driver. He was proud to have driven in every state of the Union, except for Alaska and Hawaii, as well as Mexico and Canada.

Rick enjoyed riding and traveling on his Harley Davidson motorcycle and Mustang convertible. Rick was an active member of the Grandview, Texas Seventh-day Adventist Church. When he retired, he devoted all his time and energy to the Grandview Area Food Pantry. He enjoyed the clients and volunteers, but most importantly "being the hands and feet" of Jesus to the community.

Rick's dream was that he would be a "Gramps" and he was overjoyed when Henzie Jewel was born to Beau and Falan. Rick will be remembered for his sense of humor, his love of life and his generosity. Most importantly, he will be remembered for his love of his family, his friends and his Lord.

Rick is survived by his wife, Glenda; son, Beau; daughter-in-law, Falan; granddaughter, Henzie; brothers, William Simpson and wife, Karen; Arthur Simpson and wife, Susan; Martin Simpson and wife, Deliegh; brother-in-law, Sonny Trujillo and wife, Tonya; sister-in-law Pamela Langford and husband, Richard; and many beloved nieces and nephews.

A photograph of a white staircase with a light blue glow emanating from the top, creating a sense of depth and upward movement. The text is overlaid on the steps in a mix of black serif and cursive fonts.

*one thing i do*  
forgetting what  
*is behind*  
and straining toward  
*what is ahead*  
i press on  
*toward the goal*  
to win the prize for  
*which God has called*  
me heavenward  
*in Christ Jesus.*

Philippians 3:13-14





**Charles Lee Ice.** After more than eight years, Charles finished his journey with frontotemporal dementia on May 7, 2020, at the age of 63.

Charles Lee Ice was born in Hemet, Calif., on April 24, 1957, to Robert and Rosalee. Although he spent his first few years in California and Ohio, he always considered Arkansas his home. He was 63 years old at the time of

his death and resided in Fort Worth, Tex.

The oldest of four children, Charles was considered the leader of his house from a very early age and carried those leadership qualities through his life in his home with his wife and children and his church. Many who knew Charles knew him to be a man of many talents. On any given day

you would find him baking a pie, fixing a household appliance, or playing one of his many musical instruments while serenading you with his amazing voice. He was known to have great patience and was extremely generous to everyone who encountered him. An engineer by trade, he was always dreaming up his next big idea. His work ethic and entrepreneurial spirit allowed him to create several patents and start several businesses.

Charles is survived in death by his loving wife of 37 years, Paula; son, Chase, and wife, Karen; son, Tristan Salcido; loving mother-in-law Billie Tunnell; siblings, Joyce Thomas and Ricky Ice.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests charitable contributions in memory of Charles Ice be made to Brain Support Network, P.O. Box 7264, Menlo Park, CA 94026, [www.brainsupportnetwork.org](http://www.brainsupportnetwork.org).



**Eloisa Purtle**, 99, of Kerrville, Tex., passed away on Nov. 15, 2019, in Kerrville, Tex. She was born at “La Paz” Ranch in Delmita, located in Starr County between the cities of La Reforma and San Isidro, Texas, to Ignacio Alvarado and Beatriz Longoria Alvarado on Dec. 1, 1919. She married her husband Reuben Purtle in 1951, who preceded her in death. Eloisa attended kindergarten through 8th grade at the Seventh-day Adventist school built on the property her father donated in the Rio Grande Valley.

After 8th grade, the family moved to Mission, Texas, to be closer to the Weslaco Seventh-day Adventist Academy, where she completed 9th-10th grades. Her last two years of academy were completed at the Montemorelos Academy in Mexico, where she graduated in 1943. After completing her academy education, she returned to the Valley to complete a certification in secretarial support, followed by working at the sanitarium where she met her husband, Reuben Purtle.

Eloisa worked at the state hospital in Kerrville as a unit clerk, and then was promoted to hospital librarian, where she exceeded high levels of standard performance on her employee evaluations. She later retired after more than 30 years of service to the State of Texas. Eloisa was the foundational member of the Kerrville Seventh-day Adventist Church on Harper Road. She was instrumental in operational support as the church secretary for many years.

She was also active in prison ministries, community outreach and an avid pen pal to many, spending many hours praying for the needs of others worldwide. Eloisa was known to have high standards of organization with any programs she was involved in.

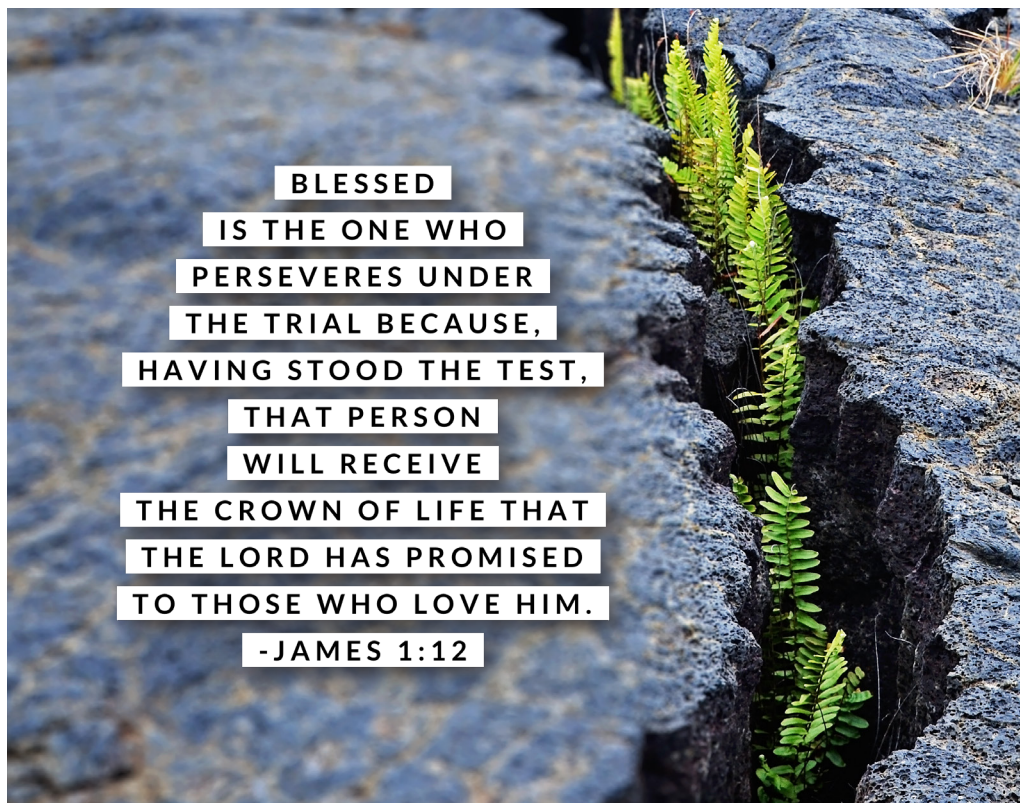
Eloisa is preceded in death by her husband Reuben Purtle; brother, Daniel Alvarado; and sister, Ida Fredrick. Eloisa is survived by Faustina Parfitt, of New London, Wis.; Ygnacio Alvarado, of Madera, Calif.; nieces, Anita Perez, Liz Fish and Dr. Vanessa Greer; nephews, Danny Parfitt, Richard Parfitt, M.D., Timothy Alvarado and Randolph Alvarado; great-nieces, Savonna Greer and Jenna Parfitt; great-nephews, Pastor Austin Greer, Adam Perez, Andrew Perez, David Parfitt and Eric Parfitt.

The family of Eloisa Purtle wishes to extend their sincere appreciation for their care to: Charlene McGowan, R.N., Dawn Gonzales, D.O., Deepti Nagpal, R.N., M.S.N., Michah Carney, M.S.W., Peterson Hospice, Peterson Medical Center Emergency Department, Ann Connors, Lucilla Seale, Alice and Lawrence Guille, Sara Kendricks, Tony Lamb, Gary Bates, Alan Johnson of Kerrville Seventh-day Adventist Church. Caregivers; Amy Vela, Rosa Montanez, Rosalinda Salazar and Elsa Benson. Broadway Bank Assistant Vice President, Donna Spencer. The family invites you to send condolences at [GrimesFuneralChapels.com](http://GrimesFuneralChapels.com).



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PERSEVERES UNDER  
THE TRIAL BECAUSE,  
HAVING STOOD THE TEST,  
THAT PERSON  
WILL RECEIVE  
THE CROWN OF LIFE THAT  
THE LORD HAS PROMISED  
TO THOSE WHO LOVE HIM.  
-JAMES 1:12

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