

Record

January | February 2023

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Live Connected
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and Success
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Come True
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to Connect
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Most Wonderful



Staying Connected
Lifeline to the Savior



PSALM 5:11-12

Record

January | February 2023

Vol. 122, No. 01

Staying Connected

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Editor's Note

The hustle and bustle of the holidays are now behind us. I pray you ate well, laughed abundantly and made precious memories with those you love. As we look to 2023, with all the hope of a new year, I challenge you to connect with the Lord before you fill your calendar with activities. Check in with your Saviour about His plans for you this year. For as much excitement and anticipation you may have, the reality is that there will also be challenges and difficult times ahead. If you make it a point to remain connected to the Lord, you will be able to face the blessings and the challenges with grace and favor.

Kristina P. Busch
Kristina P. Busch

Publisher

SOUTHWESTERN UNION OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS
SWURECORD.ORG | RECORD@SWUC.ORG

Editorial

EDITOR

KRISTINA P. BUSCH
KBusch@swuc.org

ASSISTANT EDITOR

TAMMY G. PRIETO
TPrieto@swuc.org

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Arkansas-Louisiana Conference
FRANCES ALCORN | News@arklac.org

Oklahoma Conference
WES VIA | News@okla-adventist.org

Southwest Region Conference
LESLIE SOUPET | News@swrgc.org

Texas Conference

KENN DIXON | News@txsda.org

Texico Conference

DEBBY MÁRQUEZ | News@texico.org

Southwestern Adventist University

TONY REYES | Communication@swau.edu

AdventHealth

ELIZABETH CAMPS
Elizabeth.Camps@adventhealth.com

Design

DESIGNER

TAMMY G. PRIETO

COVER STORY IMAGES

MARIA LONG PHOTOGRAPHY

STOCK IMAGES

GETTY IMAGES

Operations

ADVERTISING

BRADLEY ECORD
BEcord@swuc.org

CIRCULATION

TAMMY G. PRIETO
Record@swuc.org

ADDRESS UPDATES

To subscribe, discontinue or change address, email your local conference contact listed above or Record@swuc.org.

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News articles and obituary submissions should be emailed to your local conference contact listed above or Record@swuc.org.

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Equipping, inspiring and sharing hope and wholeness in the Southwestern Union territory.

OFFICIAL

The Record is published bimonthly for a total of six issues per year and is an official publication of the Southwestern Union Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists.

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HEADQUARTERS

P.O. BOX 4000, BURLESON, TX 76097
817.295.0476 | SouthwesternAdventist.org

President

Carlos Craig

Executive Secretary Stephen Brooks

Treasurer John Page

Undertreasurer Bo Just

VP Church Ministries Tony Anobile

VP Education Carol Campbell

VP Multicultural Ministries Osvaldo Rigacci

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Church Planting Robin Lopez

Communication Kristina Busch

Community Services Bo Gendke

Evangelism English Stephen Brooks

Evangelism Spanish Osvaldo Rigacci

Family Ministries Letty Craig

Health Ministries Randy Phillips

Human Resources Joel Wallace

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Ministerial Tony Anobile

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Personal Ministries Stephen Brooks

Prayer Ministries Helvis Moody

Prison Ministries Tyrone Boyd

PARL Stephen Brooks

Revolving Fund Joel Wallace

Sabbath School Sonia Canó

Secondary Education Mike Furr

Stewardship Tony Anobile

Planned Giving/Trust Services Bo Just

Women's Ministries Letty Craig

Young Adult/Youth Director Helvis Moody

Conferences & Institutions

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OkAdventist.org | 405.721.6110

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Texas Conference

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512.556.3682

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TexasHealthMansfield.org | 682.341.5000

Texas Health Huguley Hospital (AdventHealth)

TexasHealthHuguley.org | 817.293.9110





Live Well, Live Connected

Many years ago, I went through a very trying and taxing experience. The anguish and consternation of the ordeal forced me to think long and hard about my connection, or lack thereof, with the Lord. There are decisive moments in this life when we are compelled to look up instead of around. If you've ever lost your connection with heaven momentarily, you'll completely understand what I am referring to.

Psalm 51:10 says, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." (NKJV). A clear and clean connection with God is so vital. The devil works feverishly 24/7 to clog up the channels to our soul. The loud conflicting messages of this world, persistent busyness, unhealthy habits, even the urgency of the work we do for the Kingdom, yes even positive things can be negatives if they are replacing our connection with Christ!

Ellen G. White makes this statement in *Steps To Christ*: "Deal truly with your own soul. Be as earnest, as persistent as you would be if your mortal life were at stake. This is a matter to be settled between God and your own soul, settled for eternity! A supposed hope and nothing more, will prove to be your ruin." Referencing once more that most

taxing spiritual experience I underwent a number of years ago, I became keenly aware that my connection with Christ was more than faulty. My spiritual arteries were clogged! I needed to undergo spiritual angioplasty. It was not an enjoyable process; it required an opening of the heart to God in full recognition of the resilient rebellion that was like a plaguing plaque residing in my soul.

The Bible reminds us that the heart is truly deceptive above all things. For a moment, I felt discouraged, downtrodden. But then I went to the Word, and the Lord strengthened me through it. There was also a song that ministered to me during this time. "Redeemed" by the Christian musical group, Big Daddy Weave. The lyrics say: "Seems like all I could see was the struggle. Haunted by ghosts that lived in my past. Bound up in shackles of all my failures. Wondering how long is this gonna last. Then you look at this prisoner and say to me, 'Son, stop fighting a fight, it's already been won.' I am redeemed, You set me free. So I'll shake off these heavy chains and wipe away every stain, that I'm not who I used to be. I am redeemed, I'm redeemed!"

Although I had been a Christian most of my life, and a Seventh-day Adventist

minister for over 25 years at that point, I had been surviving on a faulty and sub-par connection. I felt that for the first time I was truly in step with the Lord! We began to talk as friends instead of business associates. It was all in the connection. As my father used to tell me: "Carlos, it's not what you know, it's Who you know!"

I urge you to live connected. There is life and life abundant that is waiting. Don't wait another day! Live your full life today, filled with the Spirit of God to the full extent! [®]

*By Carlos Craig
President*





Through Adversity and Success

Leon Sloan was five years old in 1944 when his grandmother and an older cousin would pick him up every Sunday morning from the family farm near Wynnewood, Oklahoma. His cousin drove his grandmother's 1942 Ford pickup truck while his grandmother sat in the middle and Sloan stood in the footwell next to her as they made the two-mile drive to a small church. His mother and father would visit church about twice a year at Easter and Christmas. They weren't particularly religious, so his Christian walk began with his grand-

mother and the teachings he learned at that small church.

At Sunday school one morning, the children were taught about the Ten Commandments, and the Fourth Commandment caught his attention. Later, when Sloan was at home, he lay on his bed looking at a calendar. He started counting the days, wondering why the end of the week was Saturday rather than Sunday. If that was the case, he wondered, why didn't they go to church on Saturday? He asked his grandmother and was surprised when

she looked at him and simply said, "I don't know." The question stuck with him, but he wouldn't get his answer until much later.

A decade later, 15-year-old Sloan was visiting a girl he knew and liked named Virginia, who lived a few miles away. While he was there, a visitor came to the door to check on Virginia since she hadn't been to church that Sabbath. Sloan listened while Virginia explained that she'd stayed home to care for her nephew but would be at church the following Sabbath. The visitor also invited

Sloan to join them, and Sloan said he would be there.

When the man left, Virginia turned to Sloan and said, "I suppose you heard that he said 'the Sabbath,'" and she explained that she attended church on Saturday at a Seventh-day Adventist church. Sloan remembered his questions about the day from a decade earlier and wanted to learn more. He began attending church with Virginia and, when the two were 16, they got married. At 17, their family expanded with the arrival of a baby boy.

Young Sloan provided for his family by working as the produce manager at the local grocery store. It was a job he enjoyed and he made a good wage. The store manager relied on him greatly, leaving the store in Sloan's hands over the weekend and knowing it would be in excellent condition come Monday. While he was working at the store, Sloan was approached to see if he would be interested in working delivering milk along an 81-stop route. Although Sloan would have liked to have stayed with the grocery store, he was offered a higher salary, and Sloan couldn't say no. He began working the route six days a week and working on maintaining his truck on the seventh. Sloan worked the route for about a year, increasing productivity and reducing spoilage. He did so well that his boss had him present his methods to the rest of the company. The next year, the company gave him a smaller route with the intention that he could improve it the way he'd improved the other route.

About this time, Sloan became more and more convicted that he should not be working on the Sabbath. He spoke to his father about quitting, and his father said he would help him get started fishing on Lake Texoma if he wanted to quit.

They had some savings, which they used to purchase fishing nets and equipment, and they rented a small cabin on some land near the lake. Sloan set up his nets and began to wait. And wait. While other fishermen continued

to catch fish, Sloan caught nothing.

One Sabbath at church, the pastor told the story of Jesus and the fishermen. The pastor made the comment that fishermen were considered very lowly, and Sloan began to feel very discouraged. Their savings had dwindled and they were not able to pay rent. Something needed to change, but the nets weren't producing.



***“Try the Lord,”
said Sloan.***

***“My life is full of
stories of where
He provided.”***

At this low moment, Sloan's former boss came to visit. The milk company wanted Sloan back and they were willing to work with him so he would only have to work five Saturdays during the year. Having been unable to pay rent and with their young child, Virginia was worried. She told Sloan she thought he should take the job. But Sloan couldn't do it. He told the man, "If I work five Saturdays during the year, I might as well work them all. I'm sorry. I just can't do it."

Shortly after, Sloan's nets began to fill. Sloan began catching more fish than any other fisherman on the lake. Virginia apologized for her doubt, and

this moment became a basis for Sloan and Virginia to trust the Lord even in the face of seeming impossibilities.

"Try the Lord," said Sloan. "My life is full of stories of where He provided."

At 83, Sloan still works running a greenhouse business. He looks back on a life where God has continuously provided for all of his needs through both adversity and success. He reflects on his life and growth and likens it to the maturing of tomato seedlings, which need to be exposed to the wind as they grow in order to strengthen their roots and become mature plants able to withstand harsh conditions.

At 65, Virginia passed away from a heart attack, and Sloan said that when she died, it felt like half of him died, too. But he's continued on, having faith. He lost his second wife, Eloise, to cancer, and in 2022 he lost his son to a heart attack at the age of 65, just like his mother. Sloan met Judy, a former Sunday school teacher and introduced to the Sabbath. The two married and are members of the Ardmore Seventh-day Adventist Church.

A few years ago, Sloan began a YouTube channel, "Gardening with Leon," where he could provide gardening tips. With his frank and friendly manner, he has amassed over 125,000 followers and published more than 130 videos. Amid the gardening information, he also shares his personal stories and testimonies and encourages this community to get to know God in the way he has. Sloan said he'll continue using the channel to share his testimonies and life stories even as he continues to stay busy with his greenhouses.

By Jessica Lozano. Lozano is a freelance writer based in Northwest Arkansas. Leon Sloan is a member of the Ardmore Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Making *Dreams* Come True

Attending university in America was always my dream growing up. I remember studying for the SAT with my siblings in Jamaica and falling in love with words. However, my SAT score was not enough to grant me a placement in college. My passion and dreams were put on hold. I finished high school and went straight to work.

I was born and raised a Seventh-day Adventist, but I strayed from the Church when I entered the workforce. This period coincided with a marriage to my ex-husband and the birth of my daughter, Mia. In 2014, I moved to New York, and in 2015 the marriage ended. Shortly thereafter, Mia went back to Jamaica to live with her grandmother.

By 2019, my spiritual life had declined sharply. I had enlisted in the military and was stationed in Fort Hood near Killeen, Texas. I was working as a logistics specialist, attending to government supplies. Mia had moved back with me, and I observed that she was always reading her Bible.

I was a new soldier alone in a new state. I was finally away from non-Christian friends and the bright lights, glitz, and glamor of New York. Here, I finally heard God calling me back to a relationship with Him. After several Bible studies together, Mia and I got baptized together on August 22, 2020.

I had begun online college classes and after serving three years, my

military contract was about to end. I didn't know what to do. I contemplated whether I should leave or stay.

I was deployed in the Middle East and one of the first obstacles I faced was working on Sabbath. After a series of prayers I approached my commanding officer on the matter. I told him that I could work every Sunday, even Saturday nights, but I could not work on the Sabbath. He replied: "I'm pretty Jesus friendly," and he gave me Sabbaths off.

While on deployment, I received news that my sister had passed away in New York. I went back for the funeral and one day, while I was walking with Mia and her friend, I heard a voice saying to me as plain as day: "You know, you could become a teacher." At the time I didn't know where that voice came from or what I would teach. Even though I'm from a family of teachers, I had never thought about being an educator. But the thought only persisted.

After the funeral, I went back to the Middle East. Matthew 28:19, which says, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations" regularly resounded in my mind. I started contemplating whether God wanted me to teach Bible classes or something else, but I still wasn't sure. That Scripture kept repeating itself in my mind for a whole week while my supervisors kept asking if I was planning to re-enlist. I simply replied: "I am waiting on the Lord."

I was in contact with a military career counselor who would help me weigh my options on how to proceed for re-enlistment. He sent me a message on December 29, 2021, with some figures for re-enlistment bonuses. I was offered \$2,800 for three years and \$9,000 for six years. This really got me thinking, "Should I really re-enlist?" I mean, if I did, I could pay off some things that needed paying off.

Even though I had told my supervisors and battle buddies that I was waiting on God to make my decision, I started to think about the re-enlistment bonuses. I texted my sergeant and asked if I could get the money all at once, and he said yes. This got me really thinking even harder than before.

During this time, I was about to start my classes at Liberty University where I had planned to go into the chaplaincy program. But on January 5, 2022, I tested positive for COVID-19. After just barely recuperating, I had to go straight back to work with lingering symptoms. I happened to miss the bus one morning and my leaders were upset. As a result, they stopped me from re-enlisting and prevented me from starting my program at Liberty University.

I couldn't understand why all of this was happening. I remember crying out to God and calling friends requesting prayers. Pauline Mullings, a friend of mine in England, and the Oakwood





University Church prayer warriors were my constant support. I called them almost every day requesting prayers.

A few weeks later, a highly stressful period at work arose. We had to give an account of all the government property we had, and then I started having some high fevers that the doctors on base couldn't diagnose.

I was transported to the hospital and, while hospitalized, a roommate came to stay for the night. As we chatted, she mentioned that the flag on my profile had been removed, "You can now re-enlist," she shared.

"God doesn't want me to re-enlist," I replied. I was thinking that I had already accomplished all that I was called to do in the military and I knew that my daughter needed me. A week later, I was discharged from the hospital, and within several more weeks, I was medically released and sent back to Fort Hood in March. My deployment should have lasted a year, but God sent me home early.

The things that I went through on deployment showed me that when you stand up for God, He will stand up for you. I thought about how God had pro-

vided a solution for my Sabbath challenge. I remembered how I sang to stay connected to God while in the Middle East. How I had spent a lot of time in nature and could feel God was using me in various ways.

So, in March, I continued to press forward with the decision I felt God led me to make which was not to re-enlist, but rather to pursue school.

However, I still didn't know how or where I would get accepted, or what I was supposed to study. All I knew was that God was taking me into something new.



I left the military on the morning of July 15, 2022, still unsure of what was next. Liberty University was still calling me and I had applied to Oakwood University and Baylor University. I got a job on the military base in the warehouse, but during my second week a member from my church, Carmen Rhodes, called me and said, "Do you know about Southwestern Adventist University (SWAU)? It's here in Texas."

I had no idea. That day I met with a friend who told me her children had attended SWAU and I resolved to check out the school, but procrastinated.

God woke me up early one morning and said, "You have to apply today," so I said, "Okay, Lord." I went on the computer, and started to apply. I was getting nervous because I needed to get ready for work, but a message popped on the screen saying I was almost done.

I hit submit and checked my email a bit later to find there was a message in my inbox from Rahneeka Hazelton, vice president for enrollment. Her email said, "If you send me your transcript, I could get you in to start classes." I was so excited. I sent my transcript and called the school all week to follow up.

Ms. Hazelton said she would work late one day to process my application. When she messaged me and said "accepted," I burst out crying. When Mia asked why I was crying, I told her that all my life I had wanted to go to university in person, and now God was blessing me with this opportunity.


I was so excited that I couldn't even sleep. I handed in a resignation letter that day. Then, I discovered that I would be getting some compensation from the military. This would help to take care of my bills so that I wouldn't need to work. God is amazing!

My academic adviser, Dr. The, called me on the Friday before classes started to discuss my school plans. I was planning to travel from Killeen to Keene every day, but Dr. The said, "You can't travel; it's two hours away."

She connected me with the Keene Adventist Elementary School principal and we visited the school with a few of my supportive church members. Dr. The also introduced me to her husband who oversees the family housing at SWAU. Although I had to drive to school two hours one way the first week, I received the keys to my apartment the next Friday. On Sunday, my church family, friends and soldiers helped Mia and me move to Keene.

A few weeks ago, I sat in one of my religion classes, *Life and Teachings of Jesus*, when my professor put up a slide that said: "When God is sending you somewhere, He will make provision for you." God has done this for me.

God told me that He was going to do a new thing in my life and I am rejoicing. I'm finally attending university in America. Not only that, but my tuition is paid in full because of my military service.

One day, I hope to share God's goodness through teaching others. I am blessed and I thank God for making my dreams come true! 

By Marsha Miller. Miller is studying English and Theology. She is a member of the Keene Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Disconnecting to Connect


By Kristina P. Busch, Southwestern Union Communication Director and Record Editor

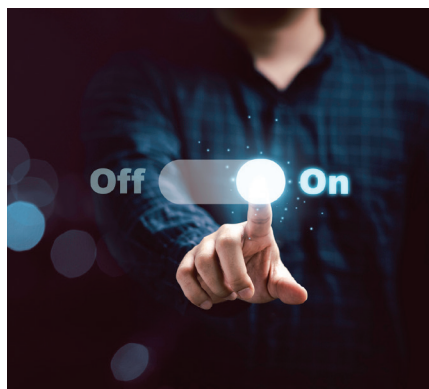
Jesus loved people. He had compassion over the sick, a tenderness toward children and a yearning to save the lost. He healed, taught and performed miracles. Jesus was busy—busy loving and busy serving. Yet, Jesus still had to find moments to take a break and disconnect from people and things in order to connect with his Father.

Luke 5:15 tells us that, “Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.” On fasting and praying, Jesus said: “But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your father,

who is unseen... But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.” Matthew 6:6, 17-18.

Even Jesus had to disconnect from time to time in order to explore a deeper connection to the Lord. His example and counsel demonstrate that this was crucial to deepening His intimacy with the Father. In my life I have also found this to be true.

While I am not an expert on fasting and praying, I have experienced rich blessings from practicing disconnection in order to connect to the Lord. I encourage you to take a moment and assess your connection. The holidays are now behind us and the anticipation of this new year is now here. Could you use a few moments of disconnect in order to connect? Check out the ideas below and consider some other creative methods that may work for you. Give disconnecting a try and may the Life-giver fill your cup. 



DIGITAL FAST

Try fasting from all of your apps (and their desktop versions) for one weekend, or even a week! The mindless scrolling of news, socials, sports, games, etc. can consume a lot of our time. During this challenge, say a little prayer every time you reach for your device. It helps to pick a prayer request or topic each day, you'll be surprised how many times you will lift that request up to the Lord in prayer if you replace the impulse to check an app with a moment of prayer. Bonus: write down your prayers in a journal throughout the day.



OUTDOOR RESET

Nature has a way of nurturing our spirits and lowering our stress levels that can only be divine. Take a walk on a quiet path and feel the air rise and fall in your chest. Slow your pace and listen to the sounds around you. Embrace the chill on your face and focus your thoughts on the Lord. Not a huge walker? Find a body of water—pond, lake, beach—or a hilltop and watch the sunset. Express your gratitude to the Lord during this peaceful time. Take an hour, an afternoon or even a weekend to connect via nature.



SABBATH SABBATICAL

This may be particularly helpful for busy church leaders who often spend Sabbath overseeing some aspect of church operations. Step away from your responsibilities for one Sabbath and visit a nearby church. Let go of being in charge for one Sabbath and allow the Holy Spirit to work in your stillness. Pack a picnic or prep lunch the day before, keeping this Sabbath as responsibility free as possible. Spend the extra time being present with your spouse, children, family or just yourself. Pray and listen in your stillness.

VEGAN TOMATO KALE NOODLE SOUP

By Ashley Melillo, Author, Recipe Writer and Photographer at Blissful Basil



This vegan tomato kale noodle soup is savory, satisfying and comforting. It requires less than 10 ingredients, little more than 15 minutes of active kitchen preparation and a fairly hands off simmer. This soup comes together in a pinch, making it the perfect meal for those busy weeknights!

Prep Time: 15 mins

Cook Time: 25 mins

Servings: 6

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 large white onion, thinly sliced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 can whole peeled tomatoes (28-ounce)
- 8 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- 4 rosemary sprigs
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 8 ounces uncooked pasta shells
- 1 bunch lacinato kale, chopped
- Handful fresh thyme sprigs
- Freshly ground black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat olive oil in a large stockpot or dutch oven over medium-low heat. Add onion and sauté for 5 to 7 minutes, or until soft and translucent. Add garlic and continue to sauté for another minute, or until softened.
2. Use your hands to gently crush the tomatoes into the pot (you'll want to use an apron for this step), add tomato juice from the can as well. Stir in the vegetable broth.
3. Use kitchen twine to tie the thyme and rosemary together into one bundle. Add the herb bundle to the pot along with the sea salt.

4. Increase the heat to medium-high, and bring the soup to a boil. Then, add the pasta shells and continue to boil until the shells are al dente (this will vary from 6 to 14 minutes based on the size and type of shells you use), stirring occasionally to prevent the pasta from clumping.
5. Reduce the heat to a simmer. Use tongs to carefully retrieve and discard the herb bundle. Stir in the kale and cook for 5 minutes, or until the kale begins to soften and wilt.
6. Turn off the heat, taste, and season with more sea salt and black pepper, to taste.

More delicious plant-based recipes at BlissfulBasil.com. 



Ministering to the Most Wonderful

By Lori Fatcher, Record Freelance Writer

It was a Vacation Bible School program that brought Sonia Canó into the Seventh-day Adventist Church as a 14-year-old in Mexico. After joining the Church, her first involvement in ministry was working in a Sabbath school class. No wonder Canó has a passion for children's ministries!

Canó, the Southwestern Union children's ministries director, has served in the area of children's ministries for more than 35 years, bringing resources and training to volunteers around the world. "Children's ministries is the most fun way to teach the Gospel," said Canó. "You can do it—with crafts, with games, with music and songs, and with activities—to the most wonderful people in the world."

The children's ministries department connects volunteers with a wide array of resources and training to help them reach and involve children in ministry. One of the newest resources is the North American Division (NAD) GoFish program, which helps children discover their spiritual gifts and train them in how to use those gifts for God.

Other resources include training for child evangelism, tools for involving kids in stewardship and plans for putting on a children's health expo.

And, of course, there's Vacation Bible School (VBS). "VBS is our number one evangelistic tool," said Canó. Every year the NAD produces a new VBS program. This year's VBS theme is *Fiercely Faithful*, focussing on the story of Ruth.

Children's ministries volunteers who are interested in learning more about the VBS program and experiencing it for themselves won't want to miss the annual children's ministries retreat happening the weekend of March 10-12 at Lone Star Camp in Athens, Texas. Presenters from the NAD will introduce the VBS program, as well as the new




GoFish program. Attendees will have the opportunity to experience both of these programs the way that children will—as participants.

The theme for this year's retreat is "Seek and Find." Seminars and classes will focus on children's mental health, providing volunteers with tools to help children understand and deal with their emotions in a healthy way.

But it isn't only children's emotions that will be affected by this retreat. One of the most important aspects of the retreat is the gathering of children's ministries volunteers, who sometimes feel alone in their work. "A lot of times those leaders are worn out," said Canó.

This retreat provides them a place to gather with others who have the same spiritual calling—and to be motivated for another year of service.

Every volunteer who works with children is serving a vital role. "One person cannot do a job for five conferences. It takes the hard work of volunteers," said Canó, who believes the Church would have less problems keeping young people in the Church if more time and energy were devoted to children.

Learn more about the Southwestern Union children's ministries retreat at SouthwesternAdventist.org/Children or call 817.295.0478. 

The North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists Nondiscrimination Policy Statement For Adventist Schools

The Seventh-day Adventist Church, in all of its church schools, admits students of any race to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at its schools, and makes no discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnic background, country of origin or gender in the administration of education policies, applications for admission, scholarship or loan programs, and extracurricular programs.

A complete list of all academies and elementary/junior academies is listed below:

Southwestern Union 2022-2023

ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

Bentonville SDA School.....2522 SE 14th Street, Bentonville, AR 72712
Ewing Adventist Jr. Acad. 709 Adventist Church Rd., Bonnerdale, AR 71933
Greater New Orleans Chr Acad..... 5220 Irving St., Metairie, LA 70006
Harrison SDA School.....4877 Hwy. 392 West, Harrison, AR 72601
Hot Springs Adventist School..... 401 Weston Road, Hot Springs, AR 71913
Jones Creek Adventist Academy4363 Jones Creek Rd, Baton Rouge, LA 70816
Little Rock Adventist Academy 8708 Rodney Parham, Little Rock, AR 72205
Ozark Adventist Academy20997 Dawn Hill East Road, Gentry, AR 72734
Ozark Adventist School..... 21150 Dawn Hill East Rd, Gentry, AR 72734
Shreveport Adv Chr School 3217 Colquitt Road, Shreveport, LA 71118

OKLAHOMA CONFERENCE

Ardmore Adventist Academy 154 Beavers Academy Rd., Ardmore, OK 73401
Bristow Adventist SchoolP.O. Box 1074, Bristow, OK 74010
Heritage Adventist School.....20555 S. 4170 Rd. Unit B, Claremore, OK 74017
Ketchum Adventist Academy35369 S. Hwy 82, Vinita, OK 74301
Muskogee SDA Christian Acad..... 170 N. Country Circle Rd., Muskogee, OK 74403
Parkview Adventist Academy ..4201 Martin Luther King, Oklahoma City, OK 73111
Pioneer Adventist Chr SchP.O. Box 1245, Guymon, OK 73942
Tulsa Adventist Academy900 S. New Haven, Tulsa, OK 74112

SOUTHWEST REGION CONFERENCE

Applegate Adventist Jr. AcademyP.O. Box 729, Round Rock, TX 78680
Bethel Adventist School..... P.O. Box 660, Texarkana, TX 75501
Emmanuel Adventist School 702 N. Cherry St., Hammond, LA 70401
Excel Adventist AcademyP.O. Box 2240, Missouri City, TX 77489
MLK Christian Academy4295 Prescott Court, Baton Rouge, LA 70805
New Orleans Adventist Academy 4500 Gawain Drive, New Orleans, LA 70127
Shiloh Excel Christian School..... 2400 S Maple St., Little Rock, AR 72204
S.W. Adventist Jr. Academy 1600 Bonnie View Road, Dallas, TX 75203

TEXAS CONFERENCE

Advent Ridge Academy.....1523 Old Ranch Road 12, San Marcos, TX 78667
Burlleson Adventist School 1635 Fox Lane, Burlleson, TX 76028
Burton Adv. Elem. School 4611 Kelly-Elliott Road, Arlington, TX 76017
Chisholm Trail AcademyP.O. Box 717, Keene, TX 76059
Cleburne Adv Christian School..... 111 Meadowview Drive, Cleburne, TX 76033
Coggin Memorial School..... 6645 Downing St., Corpus Christi, TX 78414
Conroe Adventist Academy..... 3601 S Loop 336 E, Conroe, TX 77301

TEXAS CONFERENCE (CONTINUED)

Cypress Bend Adventist School.....2997 FM 728, Jefferson, TX 75657
Dallas Christian Academy..... 4025 N. Central Expressway, Dallas, TX 75204
Ft. Worth Adv Jr. Academy.....3040 Sycamore School Rd., Ft. Worth, TX 76133
Garland Chr Adventist School 1702 E. Centerville Road, Garland, TX 75041
Houston Adventist Academy11735 Grant Rd., Cypress, TX 77429
Joshua Adventist Multi-Grade.....1912 Conveyer Road, Joshua, TX 76058
Katy Adventist Christian Sch 1913 East Avenue, Katy, TX 77493
Keene Adventist Elementary Sch 302 Pecan, Keene, TX 76059
Killeen Adv Jr. Academy..... 3412 Lake Road, Killeen, TX 76543
Knowledge Seekers Chr Sch 1471 W Corporate Dr., Lewisville, TX 75067
North Dallas Adventist Academy2800 Custer Pkwy, Richardson, TX 75080
Scenic Hills SDA School..... 11223 Bandera Road, San Antonio, TX 78250
South Texas Christian Academy 7001 N. Ware Rd., McAllen, TX 78504
Stonehill Christian Academy 4301 Kelly Lane, Pflugerville, TX 78660
Tyler SDA School.....2931 South S.E. Loop 323, Tyler, TX 75701

TEXICO CONFERENCE

Abilene Junior Academy2542 E. Overland Trail, Abilene, TX 79601
Adventist Academy of Santa Fe62 A Van Nu Po, Santa Fe, NM 87508
Amarillo SDA Christian Academy 1511 S. Seminole St., Amarillo, TX 79104
Canyon Christian Academy 1000 S. Canyon Road, Alamogordo, NM 88310
Crestview SDA Academy.....6000 Ouray Road N.W., Albuquerque, NM 87120
El Paso Adventist Academy 3510 George Dieter Dr., El Paso, TX 79936
Las Cruces Seventh-day Adventist Academy....3520 Elks Dr., Las Cruces, NM 88005
Lubbock Junior Academy.....5302 Elgin Ave, Lubbock, TX 79413
Sandia View Academy 65 Sandia View Ln., Corrales, NM 87048
Sandia View Christian School..... 24 Academy Dr., Corrales, NM 87048





January

9-11

ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

Minister's Meeting, Shreveport, La.
FAlcorn@arklac.org

20-21

SOUTHWESTERN UNION

Fanning the Flames of Evangelism
Evangelism Rally and Training Event
Wyndham El Paso Airport, El Paso,
Tex., SouthwesternAdventist.org

21

ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

South Louisiana Teen Prayer
Conference, Hammond Convention
Center, LBieber@arklac.org

27-29

ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

New Orleans Spanish Evangelism
New Orleans area churches
MPagan@arklac.org

27-28

SOUTHWESTERN UNION

Fanning the Flames of Evangelism
Evangelism Rally and Training Event
Franklin Avenue Baptist
Church, New Orleans, La.
SouthwesternAdventist.org

28

TEXAS CONFERENCE

ReCharge, Men's Ministries Event
San Antonio Fil-Am Seventh-day
Adventist Church
TexasAdventist.org

February

16-18

SOUTHWESTERN UNION

Brighten Their Corner
Adventist Community Services
Convention, Lone Star Camp,
Athens, Tex.
SouthwesternAdventist.org

17-19

TEXAS CONFERENCE

Teen Leadership Training (TLT)
Retreat, Lake Whitney Ranch
TXYouth.org

18

TEXAS CONFERENCE

ReCharge, Men's Ministries Event
Georgetown Seventh-day Adventist
Church, TexasAdventist.org

25

ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

South Louisiana Elders Retreat
Training, Baton Rouge Seventh-day
Adventist Church
MPagan@arklac.org

25

TEXAS CONFERENCE

Junior High Music Festival
TexasAdventist.org

25

TEXAS CONFERENCE

ReCharge Men's Ministries Event
Tyler Seventh-day Adventist Church
TexasAdventist.org

March

1-4

ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

Ozark Adventist Academy Music
Festival, Ozark Adventist Academy,
Gentry, Ark.
RPatterson@ozarkacademy.org

3

SOUTHWESTERN UNION

Growing the Kingdom
Voice of Hope Seventh-day
Adventist Church, Oklahoma City,
Okla., SouthwesternAdventist.org

4

SOUTHWESTERN UNION

Growing the Kingdom
Edmond Seventh-day Adventist
Church, Edmond, Okla.
SouthwesternAdventist.org

10-12

SOUTHWESTERN UNION

Children's Ministries Training
Retreat, Lone Star Camp, Athens,
Tex., SouthwesternAdventist.org

Leaders Challenged to Deepen the Wholeness Agenda



ORLANDO, FLA. – The closing statement that Path of Life Ministries CEO Chris Oberg gave to a room of AdventHealth Board members, executives, key representatives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and local community leaders who attended AdventHealth’s 32nd annual Conference on Mission in Orlando, Fla., was: “I commend you—you are already doing so much for the whole person. My question is, what haven’t you tried yet?” Oberg challenged attendees to live up to the AdventHealth brand promise to feel whole.

Over the course of the three-day conference, presenters responded to that challenge through a deep exploration of what wholeness is, how it’s quantified and how to help communities feel whole.

Hosted by AdventHealth, this annual event brings together key leaders from the Adventist Church and AdventHealth to discuss foundational issues, industry trends and the delivery of transformational whole-person care to millions of individuals. For the last five years, AdventHealth has been on a journey to understand and live its brand promise in a way no other organization has done. In this multi-year process, attendees have grappled with what

wholeness looks like for the body, mind and spirit. Previous years of the event invited attendees to work through key issues such as mental health, spiritual care and health equity.

This year’s Conference on Mission, with the theme “Guided by Purpose,” gave attendees the opportunity to explore the results of the years-long research that AdventHealth has dedicated to defining wholeness. The event began with an opening keynote from Oberg in which she challenged those present to go beyond what was already being done and look for what more can be done.

“When you put wholeness in your brand, you’re taking on a big responsibility,” said Terry Shaw, president and CEO of AdventHealth (pictured). “We started this journey by putting spiritual care in the outpatient setting and adding mental health services into primary care. Now we have a wholeness model to help us look at, from a business perspective, what it means to feel whole. And we have our diversity, equity and inclusion councils to better enable us to help people feel whole.”

Carla Park, executive director of wholeness and faith strategy for AdventHealth, led conference attendees

through an overview of the AdventHealth wholeness model.

“For our concept of wholeness at AdventHealth, there is no such thing as an individual,” said Park. “We are each a connected entity: to self, to God and to others.”

Park’s statement came alive throughout the entire event. Each element of the conference—speakers, environment, storytelling, integration of the arts and mission threaded throughout—created a unique experience that was truly a conference on mission. The key takeaway for attendees was their readiness to work on connecting together with God to move forward in a way that will change AdventHealth and change the world.

“God’s presence was felt,” said Park in reflection of the conference. “It wasn’t just us collaboratively working together, but the presence of the Holy Spirit was there. God worked through humans to do something beautiful.”

To close out the event on Sabbath morning, attendees heard an inspiring message from Sam Leonor, Jr., mission and spiritual care executive at Adventist Health. Leonor spoke on the unchanging mission of Adventist health care and how it connects to wholeness. The message highlighted how the healing miracles performed by Jesus during his time on Earth did more than just heal a broken body, but rather His miracles healed the mind and spirit of the recipient too.

“We must be the kind of people who see people as Jesus did, and we must enter into the work ahead with our eyes wide open,” said Leonor. “We must choose to see the real need, what people actually seek: belonging, fulfillment and meaning. Once our eyes are open to that, it is impossible to ignore. This will make AdventHealth an organization more closely aligned with the mission and values of our founder, Jesus.”

*By Elizabeth Camps
Senior Communications Specialist*

More Than 200 Invest in Scholarships at Annual Gala



KEENE, TEX. – Southwestern Adventist University held its Annual Scholarship Gala this year at the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History. The unique venue highlighted the university's science departments. More than 200 friends, supporters, faculty, staff and students gathered to invest in the education of Southwestern Adventist University's students. Donations given during the evening totaled \$115,000. The university also made a special presentation at the event to former Professor and Department Chair of Biology and now Professor Emeritus Arthur Chadwick.

During the Gala program, Southwestern Adventist University President Ana Patterson welcomed to the stage three students, recipients of scholarships. As she interviewed them, each shared their academic story and gave their sincerest thanks to donors. Following the interviews Patterson expressed, "It was a scholarship applied to my bill that helped me to finish college. That helps me put into perspective what these students are going through to try to finish their education." She continued, "We all know that debt is real, and there are struggles, but we want our students

not to worry about that. We want them to be able to focus on their studies and what they want to do with their lives in the future. That is why we are here tonight, to try to support them," she said.

Later in the program, Patterson and Jared Wood, Ph.D., asked Vern Johnson and Carolyn Hanson Johnson to join them on stage to thank them. For more than 25 years the Johnsons have exclusively partnered with Southwestern Adventist University and allowed former faculty and students to dig for dinosaur bones on their Wyoming ranch.

Patterson then recognized Chadwick, the one who forged this partnership with the Johnsons by offering a faith-based research approach to studying their fossil collection and for sharing their contribution to the field of paleontology at large. She presented him with the first annual Arthur Chadwick Scientific Impact Award for excellence in paleontology, research and education. A large dinosaur on exhibit at the museum set the backdrop as guests stood and applauded Chadwick and all his accomplishments on behalf of the university.

"I had no clue the school intended to honor me tonight, which they certainly

did," Chadwick humbly stated afterward. When asked why he thought the Dino Dig is so important to the university, he answered, "It gives us the opportunity to acquaint our students with our belief in creation. It also enables them to answer questions about dinosaurs, which all of us get when we are talking about creation or evolution." He concluded, "I feel like we have enabled our students to stand strong when they are confronted with these kinds of questions."

Southwestern Adventist University is grateful to sponsors and individuals who helped make this year's annual scholarship gala a success, in turn making graduation a reality for many students, as it continues inspiring knowledge, faith and service.

*By Michelle Bergmann
Freelance Writer*

The University Singers Perform at Westminster Abbey

KEENE, TEX. – “The opportunity of a lifetime,” “a mind-blowing experience,” “the best week of my life,” “unforgettable memories,” “an experience beyond my wildest dreams,” “my most treasured memory,” “a once-in-a-lifetime experience” and “the highlight of my university years,” were just some of the remarks from members of The University Singers after their recent concert tour to the United Kingdom. From Aug. 11-18, The Singers, together with British composer Philip W. Stopford, were invited to perform at Westminster Abbey, Quarr Abbey on the Isle of Wight and Portsmouth Cathedral. Off days were filled with visits to Windsor, Oxford and London, where The Singers immersed themselves in the country’s rich traditions, history and culture.

“Having been invited to Southwestern Adventist University last February to premiere ‘God Is Our Hope and Strength,’ it was an absolute delight to welcome the Singers to the United Kingdom,” said Stopford. “The concert at Quarr Abbey and church services at Portsmouth Cathedral and Westminster Abbey were utterly wonderful. I was so impressed not only by the sound and musical mastery of this choir but by the way these young people engaged in the requirements of the liturgy and style of music required for worship in the Anglican Church which they performed so beautifully. It was a proud moment for me to have recommended this choir to sing at Westminster Abbey and for them to be immediately invited back at some point in the future.”

The Singers were accompanied by a string quartet led by music professor, Rogério Nunes, D.M.A., for the entirety of the tour. “If there is something that thrills, excites and motivates us as musicians, it is having the opportunity to perform in places where most of the music composed was meant to be performed,” said Nunes. “On this trip, performing in centuries-old churches was a sublime experience and definitely one that our students will never forget!”



The Singers and Strings were also musical guests on the weekend at the Newbold Seventh-day Adventist Church on the campus of Newbold College of Higher Education. Sandra Rigby-Barrett, Ph.D., former director of Adventist Colleges Abroad and fine arts faculty at Newbold College, was one of the many generous tour hosts. “The congregation at Newbold church in Binfield were deeply blessed by the music ministry of the Southwestern Adventist University choir and instrumentalists. Indeed, it was a great honor to host this beautiful and highly accomplished choir.”

Ana Patterson, Southwestern Adventist University president, shared, “Invitations to perform in London at Westminster Abbey, Quarr Abbey and Portsmouth Cathedral are a true testament to the Department of Music’s

dedication to excellence. Under the direction of a distinguished team of professors, students are able to fine tune their talents and share them for the Glory of God. We are so proud of their performances and grateful for the many opportunities for Southwestern Adventist University students to excel through music.”

Since 2012, The University Singers have traveled to 18 countries sharing the gospel message through music.

For more highlights from the tour, read the full article at SWAU.edu/news.

*By Jonathan E. L. Wall
Associate Professor of Music*

Fall Executive Committee Highlights

BURLESON, TEX. – With 40 members present, in person and virtually, the Southwestern Union executive committee met for its regularly scheduled meeting on Nov. 10, 2022. The meeting began with an encouraging devotional given by Southwestern Union Vice President for Church Ministries Tony Anobile.

PROGRESS REPORTS

James Shires, Oklahoma Conference president, reported on the wonderful progress in Oklahoma. Furthermore, the executive committee continued to be encouraged by departmental reports given by Sonia Cano for Sabbath school, and children’s ministries; Helvis Moody for young adult, youth and prayer ministries; Letty Craig for women, ministerial spouses and family ministries; Carol Campbell for education; Tony Anobile for ministerial and church ministries; Osvaldo Rigacci for multicultural ministries.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The Southwestern Union Executive Secretary Stephen Brooks presented the membership report for Sept. 30, 2022. The Southwestern Union reported 2,327 baptisms and professions of faith for through September, with an adjusted membership of 120,928 members. Praise God for continued growth in His Kingdom!

FINANCIAL AND REVOLVING FUND

Southwestern Union Treasurer John Page presented the September 2022 financial statement and revolving fund report. Page stated that the Southwestern Union is continuing to experience tithes increases. We thank God as He continues to resource His Church for ministry.

It was voted to increase Revolving Fund interest rates by one and a half percent for both loans and deposit accounts effective Jan. 1, 2023.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE

Jason North of the Southwest Region Conference and Jeff Villegas of the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference were voted as members of the Southwestern Union constitution and bylaws committee due to two vacancies.

CHURCH PLANTING AND LVP COORDINATOR

Robin Lopez was voted to serve the Southwestern Union as church planting and volunteer lay pastor coordinator. He will assist the conferences in the areas of church planting, setting-up a volunteer lay pastor programs and church revitalization on a part-time basis, while continuing to fulfill these responsibilities for the Texas Conference.

The next Executive Committee Meeting will be held March 22, 2023.

*By Stephen Brooks
Executive Secretary*

MARCH 10-12 | 2023
LONE STAR CAMP

SEEK & FIND
CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES TRAINING RETREAT

Seventh-day Adventist Church
SOUTHWESTERN UNION

EARLY REGISTRATION \$119
DEC 5 - FEB 5

REGULAR REGISTRATION \$139
FEB 6 - MAR 3

LAST DAY TO REGISTER
MAR 3

TOPICS TO BE PRESENTED:

- Children's Mental Health
- **GoFISH** Program where Kids Explore their Spiritual Gifts
- **Fiercely Faithful VBS for 2023**
- Children's Prayer Stations

LONE STAR CAMP
6829 FM317 | Athens, TX 75752

SCAN ME for Registration



GROWING
The Kingdom

MARCH
3-4



JOIN US!

¡Presentaciones en Español!

The Southwestern Union presents inspiring training for:
Church Board Members | Ministries Leaders
Elders | Deacons and Deaconesses

Friday, March 3 | 7:00 pm

Voice of Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church
3300 NE 23rd St., Oklahoma City, OK 73121

Sabbath, March 4 | 4:00 pm

Edmond Seventh-day Adventist Church
4701 E Danforth Rd., Edmond, OK 73034

www.SouthwesternAdventist.org | 817.295.0476

BRIGHTEN THEIR CORNER

SOUTHWESTERN UNION ADVENTIST COMMUNITY SERVICES CONVENTION

Encouragement and ideas for church leaders to develop
community outreach ministries.

FEB. 16-18, 2023

LONE STAR CAMP | ATHENS, TX

EARLY BIRD | DEC 1-JAN 5 | \$100

REGULAR | JAN 6-JAN 26 | \$125

LATE | JAN 27-FEB 9 | \$150

SOUTHWESTERNADVENTIST.ORG



MAY 19-21, 2023

EMBASSY SUITES

1001 E McCarty Lane
San Marcos, Texas

THIS SOUTHWESTERN UNION
WOMEN'S MINISTRIES RETREAT
TAKES PLACE EVERY FIVE YEARS

Arkansas-Louisiana Conference
Oklahoma Conference
Texas Conference
Texico Conference
Southwest Region Conference

Brave & Bold

Facing my Fears
SPIRITUAL WELFARE

Women's Retreat

RETREAT REGISTRATION

Early Bird Rate: \$140
until February 28

Regular Rate: \$160
through March 30

Late Rate: \$180
through April 25

Registration fee is per person

TEENS PROGRAM

This is a great opportunity for our teens to get away and listen to the Lord as He assures them that they are loved, cared for, and valued.



SCAN ME

for registration

HOTEL REGISTRATION

Rooms: \$154 plus tax per night
up to 4 people

Reservation Deadline: April 25

Phone: 512.392.6450
Booking and general questions

Hotel has no obligation to provide room nights beyond this date



FANNING THE FLAMES OF EVANGELISM

SOUTHWESTERN UNION EVANGELISM RALLY & TRAINING JANUARY 20-21, 2023

WYNDHAM EL PASO AIRPORT
2027 AIRWAY BLVD. | EL PASO, TEXAS

Presentaciones en Español



Lee-Roy Chacon Carlton Byrd Robin Lopez Tony Anobile Sonia Canó Stephen Brooks Osvaldo Rigacci Carlos Craig Helvis Moody

LEARN ABOUT: Small Group Evangelism | Church Planting | Discipleship | Christ's Evangelism Method | Retention After Baptism | Winning Children, Youth, Young Adults



REGISTER BY JANUARY 12!

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FANNING THE FLAMES OF EVANGELISM

SOUTHWESTERN UNION EVANGELISM RALLY & TRAINING JANUARY 27-28, 2023

FRANKLIN AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH
2515 FRANKLIN AVE. | NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

Presentaciones en Español



Vanston Archbold Richard Dye Robin Lopez Tony Anobile Sonia Canó Stephen Brooks Osvaldo Rigacci Carlos Craig Helvis Moody

LEARN ABOUT: Small Group Evangelism | Church Planting | Discipleship | Christ's Evangelism Method | Retention After Baptism | Winning Children, Youth, Young Adults



REGISTER BY JANUARY 12!

WWW.SOUTHWESTERNADVENTIST.ORG | 817.295.0476





A Fresh Start

Twenty years ago, I found myself coming out of a coma in intensive care at the hospital. I had a port of six IVs in one arm and a port of eight IVs in the other. I had a port put in for dialysis and almost bled out on the operating table. Suffice it to say, I shouldn't be alive to share this with you.

The good news is that God worked a miracle and I have been able to tell of His wondrous work for many years since then. I am extremely grateful to Him and all those who prayed earnestly for my recovery. He gave me a fresh start on life once more.

That is the business that our God is in. He is always working to move on the hearts and lives of His creation. He is interested in doing that which will bring about a growing and deepening rela-

tionship and walk with Him.

David, the great king of Israel, learned much of God's miraculous, saving power throughout his lifetime. God continued to work in a powerful way in David's life, even when faced with serious falls and struggles. Did God discipline? Yes. But God also heard David's anguished cries and continued to move in his life.

When David prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me," God heard and delivered. Psalm 51:10 (NASB).

The good news is that it is the same with all of us. We only need to cry out to our Lord, like David. I challenge you to do so and see what great things He can do in you and through you. As we begin a new year, may 2023 be a fresh start

in your walk with God. And may you be blessed beyond measure.

*By Richard C. Dye, Sr.
President*



Bikers in Baton Rouge Ministry

BATON ROUGE, LA. – The Baton Rouge Seventh-day Adventist Church members are a diverse group, in both our physical makeup and our interests. We love to fellowship together, bless one another in any way that we can, welcome community guests and to pray together.

Motorcycle Ministry Sabbath took place on Aug. 6, 2022. Earlier last year, when Michael Cerda, pastor of the Baton Rouge church, first shared with the congregation that the Southwestern Union asked us to host “bikers” from all over the country, there was a unified laugh followed by thoughtful silence. We weren’t sure how to host bikers. But we could read the excitement and confidence from Cerda and we, too, became excited. He said, “We’ll dress like them and welcome whoever comes through the door.” And we did!

During the annual National Bikers Roundup, over 1,000 motorcycle clubs (three of them Seventh-day Adventists) and 30,000 bikers would make the Baton Rouge area home for five days. The Southwestern Union would have a booth under the direction of Helvis Moody, youth and young adults director. Moody once served in Baton Rouge and still has friends in the city, many of them bikers, who were happy to assist with the booth and with the events of the weekend. At the Southwestern Union booth, the group were eager to share Jesus by handing out special editions of the book *Steps to Christ—The Ride of Your Life*.

Church service on Sabbath was an inspiring and memorable time. Baton Rouge church member Kevin Jenkins taught the Sabbath School having ridden to church on his Harley and comfortably attired in the fashion for the day. A Southwestern Union representative explained the concept of *Steps to Christ—The Ride of Your Life* books and shared a copy with all in attendance. During the 11 o’clock hour, Moody led an arousing prayer and Henry Jones of the Baton Rouge Berean Seventh-day Adventist Church shared a beautiful



special music “Falling in Love With Jesus.” The speaker of the hour was Donald Clark of Oklahoma. He shared a message entitled “His Return”, and led in an anointing, along with Cerda, anyone who felt the heart tug of the Holy Spirit.

After the service, the many motorcycles and bikers in the parking area were blessed in a special ceremony and prayer by Moody; then everyone was invited to stay for a fellowship meal. A young man whose mother was once a member, just happened to be passing by the church on his motorcycle and saw all the other motorcycles parked at the church. He decided to stop and see

what was going on. We believe the Holy Spirit led him and we pray that he will come back as we all remember the Sabbath day which was full of Christ-centered fun and inclusion for all of God’s children. “May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.” Romans 15:5-7.

By Tracy Francis

Hurricane Laura Led Us to 3ABN

LAKE CHARLES, LA. – Dean and Hilda Day were living in Lake Charles when Hurricane Laura plummeted the Gulf Coast in August of 2020. They lost power as did most of the entire city, but Dean stayed behind to work and help other people during the aftermath of the storm. When the power came back, Hilda returned home to be with her husband. As they were surfing through the channels, they came upon a program called Amazing Facts. They were mesmerized with the things Doug Batchelor was saying and they continued to watch. As the days followed, they tried to find Amazing Facts again and saw that it was a part of a network called 3ABN. They started watching 3ABN and all the programs they were airing. They agreed with all the Bible truths they were hearing and were amazed that the preaching was backed up by Bible scripture.

They continued to watch 3ABN for almost two years, learning many things. In March 2022, with the COVID-19 pandemic response winding down, they desired to have Christian fellowship with other believers and so they looked



for an Adventist church near them. They found Lake Charles Seventh-day Adventist Church and began attending. Dean was raised Methodist, and Hilda was raised Baptist. They both had questions that their churches could not give them answers for. Hilda was taught that when you die you go straight to heaven, but as she watched the programs on 3ABN, she learned that the Bible says we are asleep when we die. She is so happy that the programs of 3ABN have given her permission to

accept the work of God as it is written and not to rely on the traditions of men. Dean has totally changed his life; he no longer drinks alcohol and the things he used to do on Sabbath he doesn't do anymore. After receiving additional Bible studies from Malcolm and Darla Gibson, Dean and Hilda were baptized on July 16 by Hillis Jeffries, pastor of Lake Charles church. They are happy to have found 3ABN and a new church family.

By Rosemarie Jeffries

Baton Rouge Celebrates Aubrey Fautheree's 90th Birthday

BATON ROUGE, LA. – On May 19, 1932, Aubrey Fautheree was born into a loving Christian home in Smackover, Ark. and eventually made his way to Baton Rouge, La. Fautheree continues to live



a Christ-centered life. Over the years, Fautheree has served our nation in the Army and worked as an industrial electrician by trade for power plants and other businesses. For many years, he has served our Savior at the Baton Rouge Seventh-day Adventist Church, as head elder, head deacon, school board chair and Sabbath school teacher over time. He has been a friend to all, with his fantastic memory serving him well. Bill Wilson recounts a story of them sitting in Sabbath school talking to a lady who was a new believer and Fautheree mentioned her birthdate and year. The lady's eyes widened, and she didn't know what to make of him having that knowledge. She learned

that Fautheree has a memory unlike most, and he blesses others by reminding them of upcoming family member's birthdays and anniversaries.

Fautheree was given a 90th birthday party by his wife of 20 years, Joycelyn and their combined five children and more than 30 grandchildren and great-grandchildren. The Baton Rouge church family and many friends were invited to help celebrate his special milestone. "My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart, for they will prolong your life many years and bring you peace and prosperity." Proverbs 3:1-2.

By Tracy Francis

Springdale Adventist Fellowship Opens God's Closet

SPRINGDALE, ARK. - In the vision statement of Springdale Adventist Fellowship (SAF), it states: "Impacting others by making disciples who inspire hope and reflect the character of God." On Aug. 7, 2022, SAF made a huge impact in their community by opening God's Closet. This event had been put on hold for the past few years due to limitations with the COVID-19 pandemic, but it was so exciting to see the hard work of so many come to life again. Within the first hour of opening, over 80 families from the community were served. In less than four hours, almost 300 individuals from the Springdale area were blessed by this project. Cynthia West is our project leader and with her dedication and hard work, and that of the many vol-

unteers and God's blessing, this event was a huge success. God's Closet is a ministry that helps churches engage with their communities. SAF collected new and gently used children's clothes and shoes and had community families come and shop for children's clothing for only a \$1 entry fee.

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me." Matthew 25:35-36.

The world is changing and there are more families that are having a tough time, now more than ever. In addition to

providing clothing, volunteers from our church prayed with participants and assessed community needs. If there were additional needs such as food shortages, they were referred to the food pantry at Springdale Adventist Fellowship that is open every Thursday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Plans are already in place for future "God's" events at SAF, and they are already collecting additional donations for this. With the resounding success of the first event, and with the increased challenges putting a strain on the world, these missions serving our community are more important than ever.

By Danita Mullins



Bonnerdale's Cowboy Camp Meeting



BONNERDALE, ARK. - There were new friends to meet and friends that we hadn't seen in a long time at Bonnerdale's Cowboy Camp Meeting this year. There were inspiring sermons and music that thrilled the ears and mind. There were haystacks and hot dogs and watermelon and ice cream - food for body and soul.

We were inspired by the messages from speakers Max Holland, Eric Bray and Mitch Elrod. We were challenged to explore the topics: Are you desperate for Jesus? Preparation for service

takes commitment—We must be prepared for the long haul. Stay in the race no matter what is happening to you at any particular moment.

Max Holland corralled the ideas into the following, "The only help I have for this disease of sin is Jesus. He is the one that can save me from myself, who accepts me with all my sinful desires, who loves me unconditionally and I need to know how good Jesus is every day. I need the Holy Spirit in my mind and God in my life. I need Grace."

By June Bates

The Anchor Holds: 2022 Women’s Retreat

TEXARKANA, TEX. – The Arkansas-Louisiana Conference Women’s Retreat was held Sept. 9-11, in Texarkana, Tex., with over 100 women participating. Lanette Bieber, who serves as both prayer ministries and women’s ministries director, coordinated the event with a lot of help from many wonderful ladies across our two states. It was a joint retreat with both English and Spanish members and friends in attendance. Southwestern Union Women’s Ministries Director Letty Craig led out in the Spanish breakout sessions and Dr. Marjorie Belizaire presented to the English group. There was some overlap, and a lot of wonderful, fun interaction during meals, prayer times, music, crafts and so much more. Morgan Martin blessed the meetings with music. We are very grateful to have been able to meet in person for this event and hope to be able to do more in the future!

*By Francis Alcorn
Communication Director*



Arkansas-Louisiana Conference Teachers 2022-2023 In-Service



SHREVEPORT, LA. – For the 2022-2023 school year, the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference has 22 teachers, of which eight are new teachers. Ozark Adventist Academy hosted the annual teacher in-service, Aug. 1-3, for both the elementary teachers and the academy teachers. Rick Dye, Arkansas-Louisiana Conference president, was the keynote

speaker for morning and evening worship, focusing on the theme of “Choosing Jesus Daily.” During the Aug. 2 session, Martha Ban, North American Division Technology and Support director, gave a morning presentation on most of the educational software and technology that is available to Adventist educators. In the afternoon, Human

Resources Director Jeff Villegas and Human Resources Assistant LaVonae Dye updated the teachers on employment policies, benefits and other items. The in-service gave the teachers a chance to meet new Education Superintendent Tim Kripps, and his wife, Angeliqua, who is his education assistant.



Staying Connected

David had a heart for God, and they shared a close relationship. God called him a man after His own heart; that means David's heart and God's heart were intertwined. They were intimate friends. David is the one who wrote the words in Psalm 42:1, 2: "As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?" We see that he had a soul thirsty for a connection with God. So, it's understandable that after his sin with Bathsheba and Uriah, David felt disconnected from God. His soul longed to have this relationship back to normal.

He prayed the prayer of penitence in Psalm 51 for mercy, forgiveness, washing and cleansing from his sin. David acknowledged his sinfulness and wanted to restore the broken trust. Then he prayed for God to do a work inside him that he could not do for himself.

He prayed, "create in me a clean heart." The Hebrew word for create is "bara" which means make something out of what is not there. It's the same word that is used in Genesis 1, where God created the world out of nothing by His Word. The creative power at the beginning of the world is what David asked to be used to create in him a totally new heart, a heart that is steadfast and responsive to God. He prayed, "renew in me a steadfast spirit." He wanted a spirit that doesn't wander away from God. A heart that remains faithful and loyal to God.

Jesus also recognizes in us a hunger and thirst for God that only He can fill. He says that He is the Water of Life and that all who come to Him will find their thirst quenched.

In this new year, we can pray the prayer that David offered for a new and steadfast heart by daily coming to Jesus for a fresh portion of the Holy Spirit

who will keep us steadfast and connected to Jesus.

I have the same desire that David had. My heart longs for God just like the deer longs for water. I'm sure you do as well. Let's all pray the same prayer daily this new year.

*By James Shires
President*



Gideon Rescue Company

ARDMORE, OKLA. – On Aug.30, 2022, seven members of Gideon Rescue Company (GRC) made a commitment to attend and complete a training put on by Oklahoma State University at the Oklahoma City Riversports training facility. The training’s intended demographic was first responders involved in water rescue at a professional level, yet our Lord’s plan overrides the systems of man and God paved the way for this no-name team to participate at a discounted rate. We requested permission from the Oklahoma Conference to camp on the grounds in Oklahoma City to save drive time and fuel costs. The response was one of kindness, generosity and encouragement. We at GRC want to express our gratitude for the hotel rooms as a base of operation and billet, so thank you!

The currency that GRC operates in is souls, and during our stay at the hotel, a baptismal class was conducted on one of the evenings for a team mem-

ber we affectionately referred to as our “Centurion.” Finances are supplied by the Lord either through the blessings of our professional lives or the generosity of persons or bodies of persons, such as the Oklahoma Conference, who responded to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Colossians counsels us to never miss an opportunity to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Inevitably, relationships were opened up with a number of different fire departments nationally, as well as one team from Australia.

Between the instructors and the various teams, we were able to share our core values with them in conversation and conduct. Most conversations came about as a result of their curiosity about us, and seeds of truth were planted in many minds! The training itself was fantastic.

Many practical methods were taught, and the water time in legitimate white water (though a controlled environment) was invaluable.

As a team who has family in mind, we were able to glean some of the organizational methods employed in the hopes of doing some similar training for families, including the families of first responders themselves. The idea is to have it be spiritually themed for the sake of ministry and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Lord will make it happen if He wishes it to be. The long-term benefit is the team cohesion that results from training together. In the end, it is not GRC’s desire to win the admiration and recognition of men, nor is it our desire to be so self-reliant that we forget who God is. God has given us minds and physical capabilities to use. They are to be used for His glory!

By Wils Teal



Tulsa Adventist Academy High School Challenge 2022



TULSA, OKLA. - "Getting to know you, getting to know all about you" is one of those songs that is an oldie but goodie, and they are fitting words for Tulsa Adventist Academy's annual High School Challenge. In late August, our high school embarked on a fabulous "challenge" at Fall Creek Falls State Park near Spencer, Tenn. After a trip to Chattanooga's Tennessee Aquarium, we continued to the wooded, hilly park, set up camp, and enjoyed five days of hikes, waterfalls, swimming and playing volleyball at the park.

Andrew Spooner, pastor of the Bristol and Okmulgee Seventh-day Adventist churches, and math teacher, Larry Seery, inspired us with daily dialog from 1 Timothy and its application today. Spooner also was an incredible listener and counselor to our students, and he presented daily stories/practical lessons on living in the world but not of the world.

The purpose of the challenge was to help students get to know each other

and the high school teachers better and bond at the beginning of the school year. All students were put into groups with different grades to help them collaborate on preparing food, cooking and cleaning up afterward. Some students learned how to use a manual can opener; others who excel at food prep helped those who have never ventured into the kitchen by showing them how to properly dice, slice and serve.

Through strenuous hikes to stunning waterfalls and chilling natural pools, students relied on each other to pull through and step way outside their comfort zones. "I'm not going down that trail," said a freshman, "I am terrified of heights." With encouragement from teachers and students, she hiked up and down and faced her fears bravely, overcoming many scary moments.

Other students bonded through tears of caring and sharing similar heartaches such as losing a parent or other loved ones. In particular, several students, Spooner and some teachers

became a tight-knit circle one evening after the realization that they had more in common than not. Students allowing each other to be vulnerable in this safe environment strengthened their resolve to tolerate each other and admit that their "dislike" of others may be misplaced. Some were amazed that they could share their emotions without creating conflict with each other, so the teachers counted this as a win for all!

Despite the racoons, blisters, bruises and hyper humidity, we were blessed by deer and fawn passing near us, no rain until the last day (we ate ice cream and played games to pass the time), safety while traveling, good food, new friendships, starry skies and a clearer understanding of how to navigate as a Christian teenager in this sinful world. Visit Tulsa Adventist Academy on Facebook or Instagram to see photos!

By Caroline Fisher

Oklahoma Conference Leadership Training Weekend

WEWOKA, OKLA. – “I believe I am in church today because of the role that the Pathfinder ministry played in my life.” This statement by Maxine DeCocq, a long-time youth leader, sums up the goals of the Oklahoma Conference Annual Youth Leadership Training Weekend held at Wewoka Woods Adventist Center on Sept. 9-11, 2022.

The training for the Oklahoma Youth, Pathfinder, Adventurer, Master Guide and Children’s Ministries Department was centered on the theme “Fear Not: Moving Forward in Faith,” based on Isaiah 41:10. Oklahoma Conference President James Shires visited the participants on Sabbath afternoon.

The event was a power-packed beehive of activities regarding Pathfinder basic staff training (entrenamiento básico para Conquistadores), Adventurer basic staff training (entrenamiento básico para Aventureros), Master Guide, Pathfinder counselor, Pathfinder instructor, Pathfinder director, Adventurer instructor, Adventurer director and children’s ministries. Some sessions were conducted in Spanish. Topics included information on club ministries, programming, discipline, child development, teaching and learning, conflict resolution and safety issues.

Participants stated that the major takeaways were that they will serve their young people with love, share the love of Jesus with everyone and that training was needed for directors and staff to have a successful programming year. With a few minor hiccups including air

conditioning challenges, all went well.

Four worship services were conducted. On Friday evening, Apple Park, Oklahoma Conference executive secretary, encouraged directors and staff not to fear what lies ahead because God always works with willing individuals to tackle challenging issues. During the Sabbath divine service, Matthew Hansen talked about the need for leaders to speak uplifting words that lead to action, as well as leaders who provide opportunities for their followers to impact the lives of others. On Sabbath afternoon, participants witnessed the baptism of Eastyn Becker from Arbuckle View Pathfinder club, surrounded by the participants, family members and friends. Rex Shepherd officiated over the baptism.

The Oklahoma Conference established the Paddle Leadership Award five years ago. Each year, the award is given to a former director who had/has impacted the lives of young people in Oklahoma.

During Sabbath School, the Paddle Award was presented to Maxine DeCocq (and her husband Eddie) from the Edmond Seventh-day Adventist Church for their leadership during the last part of the 1990s and early 2000s. They felt the need to re-establish the Pathfinder club after several years, and the club has been in existence since then. Responding to the award, Maxine remembered her Pathfinder days in the 1950s: “We paid \$0.10 a meeting. I am glad I was a Pathfinder.”

Additionally, every year, leaders are recognized for the number of years they serve the church in the youth, Pathfinder, Adventurer and children’s ministries. Among those who have served the longest time were Oklahoma Pathfinder Director Rex Shepherd (45 years) and Norma Shepherd (43 years); Charles and Donna Hill (each 50 years); and Bob Holbrook (60 years). We can only say, “Look at what a blessing God has brought among us.”

Closing the Sabbath, Annette Park reminded the participants that they had an awesome responsibility of impacting the lives of young people who may have challenges that today’s directors and staff may not have encountered when they were young. Coming from diverse home situations, some may only find refuge in the ministries for which the directors and staff were responsible.

On Sunday morning, Chongo Mundende stated that directors and staff had chosen a good thing, impacting the lives of young people, and that their reward may not be realized here on earth. They will only know the extent of their influence when they see Jesus and those whose lives they impacted at the Sea of Glass or before the throne of God and of the Son, who challenged them to go and make a difference in the lives of people.

*By D. Chongo Mundende
Central Oklahoma Area Coordinator*



24 Hours On A Mountain



INDIAHOMA, OKLA. – The family unit is under attack like never before. Movies and television often portray dad as a lovable goof who is easily ignored. It appears the value of fatherhood is downplayed across our culture. As a God-ordained head of household, men seem to have a lot of this world working against them. As a man, I have felt the need to band together, to find help; just the camaraderie and social aspect of having someone that can understand modern burdens is a big help. It is more challenging than ever to live as a Christian father. But where can we go to connect with others who are seeking to be faithful men of God?

Enter “The Summit,” the Oklahoma Conference men’s ministries whose theme is “Reaching New Heights, Together.” As I was visiting the newly redesigned OkAdventist.org website, I came across an event for a 24-Hour Summit Adventure. This event is one of three yearly events planned by Robert Quintana (Pastor Q), the men’s ministries director. The three events are the Summit Retreat, Summit Workshop and Summit Adventure. This year the Summit Adventure was held in the Wichita Wilderness Refuge in Indianhoma, Okla.

Following Sabbath worship at our churches, 20 men from across Oklahoma navigated to a spot deep in the woods with no cell service, free from

the burden that technology can add to our lives. We started a fire, communed together and built new friendships. We ate, we laughed and we chased raccoons out of camp as they stole our breakfast. We later joked about the experience as our tithe to nature. A large bison even wandered through our camp in the middle of the night.

Pastor Q grounded us with a much needed study on the need we have for accountability and the need to check in with one another. Hebrews 3:13 tells us, “Encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.” God designed so much of the world around us to work in unison. If you take cement, water and aggregate, you’ll make concrete that is very strong; add in steel rebar and you’ll have a structure that will stand the test of time.

On Sunday we bonded over the glint of sharpened axes as we hurled them at logs, developing a new skill together, challenging each other over who was more accurate. The final adventure was a 2.3 mile hike to a peak of 570 feet above the start. There were times I didn’t think I could make it. For a moment I thought that maybe I should just sit there and wait for the group to come back down. But being a part of the group encouraged me to continue, prodded me on to the summit reaching



heights I’ve never reached before. And I reached the peak, standing on top of the world, laughing with my new friends next to me. It was a memory that won’t quickly fade, creating a longing for the next journey.

Scripture tells us that, “Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.” Ecclesiastes 4:12. We are crafted for companionship, called to community, consecrated by camaraderie and connected to Christ. That’s what Summit Men’s Ministry is chartered to facilitate for the men of the Oklahoma Conference.

The Summit Retreat will be held at Wewoka Woods, Jan. 28-29, 2023, so make plans now to join us there!

By Jason Diehl



God's Purpose for Our Lives

Although God has a purpose for our lives, there are many people who wander throughout their entire life not knowing their purpose. Yes, they've achieved a measure of success and experienced accomplishments—received an education, have a nice car, have a nice house, a good job, etc... But they've never truly confronted the question, "Have I done the thing that God created me to do?"

But whether they know it or not, God has a plan for their life. And everything happens according to His sovereign plan. His plan was in place before the foundation of the world.

It's all about God's plan and no one can stop His plan and purpose for your life. Remember, a Red Sea couldn't stop God. A fiery furnace couldn't stop God. A lions' den couldn't stop God. Two fish and five loaves of bread couldn't stop God. God is sovereign!

In life, many people aspire to things that aren't in God's plan. Often, they want to do something important because they think if they do something important, that will make them important. But you can have more titles than space to put them. More degrees than a thermometer. More letters behind your name than the alphabet, but if it's

not what God has for you, you will be nothing more than sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. You will never be truly satisfied with anything less than fulfilling God's purpose for your life.

True purpose will make you leave a job that pays more and take a job that pays less. Purpose will make you pick up all you own and move to another city, state or country, because it's not about your earthly home, it's all about your eternal home.

Let me caution you to understand that purpose, however, doesn't start with fulfillment. Purpose begins with pain. Your purpose doesn't start with money, nor with a job, nor with an awesome wife or a wonderful husband. Purpose begins with pain, because when you know your purpose, it will make you a target. That's how it was for Jesus. So how could it be any less for us? In fulfilling God's purpose for your life, you will have to take up your own cross and follow Jesus.

"And He said to them all, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for My sake, the same shall save it." Luke 9:23-24 (KJV).

Your purpose in this life is to take up your cross daily and follow Jesus. That sounds painful, doesn't it? Losing your life for Jesus's sake? That sounds like it will hurt. But it's the only way to save your life.

As we begin this new year, know your purpose. And remember that God has something great in store for your life to fulfill the destiny He has for you! Jeremiah 29:11 says, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

*By Carlton P. Byrd, D.Min.
President*



Stronger Together Men's Ministries Summit

ATHENS, TEX. - Christian men gathered from all parts of the Southwest Region Conference to participate in the 2022 Men's Ministries Summit with the theme, "Stronger Together—Maranatha!" on Aug. 26-28, at Lone Star Camp and Conference Center in Athens, Tex. There was great expectation and excitement of this return of the summit, since these gatherings were discontinued during the COVID-19 pandemic of the past two years.

With the music leadership of Tim and Zachary along with the Hudson group, the sharing of gospel messages by Tony Anobile, Southwestern Union vice president for church ministries; Jason North, Southwest Region Conference executive secretary and Carl Ming, Southwest Region Conference youth/young adult director, the men participated in lifting praise and adulation to God in singing and the powerful, practical presentations from the Word of the Lord. Diversity was supported by Spanish language presentations by Vanston Archbold, Southwest Region Conference vice president for diversity and Tony Anobile, in adjacent spaces, adding to the Holy Spirit empowered preaching in diverse languages.

The afternoon sessions were anchored in a plenary session to the entire diverse gathering by Ainsworth M. Lightbody, Ph.D., psychologist/trauma

coach and Dr. Lyndon F. Barnwell, neurologist, with enlightened application and address to areas of trauma affecting our men and their families. These discussions connected the lives of men and their families and were continued in personal applications during the breakouts which followed.

In the afternoon, breakouts followed on finances by Lester Smith, C.P.A.; legacy, by McKen Carrington, Attorney at Law; youth and young adult issues, by Carl Ming and Jason North. Breakouts were also provided in Spanish with Dr. Jose Acevedo, Southwest Region Conference health ministries coordinator.

Carlton P. Byrd, D.Min., Southwest Region Conference president, closed out the sessions on Sabbath evening with a commitment and communion service for the gathering of the men of God. Joyous participation in these closing services, and the close of the Sabbath with vespers by Wayne Skinner on "Faith Sharing" provided a high occasion and climax to a blessed, tremendously successful Summit Sabbath.

The men's ministries planning committee under the direction of W.S. Lee, Southwest Region Conference men's ministries director, was affirmed and appreciated by the participants attending the summit. All felt the power of the Lord in their lives, and committed to take their outcomes to share with their



families, churches and communities. God's blessings attended the summit and provided safety and protection to all who traveled to and from the gathering.

*By W.S. Lee,
Men's Ministries Director*

Smyrna's Women's Ministries Health Fair



ALEXANDRIA, LA. - The Smyrna Seventh-day Adventist Church women's ministries department in Alexandria, La., sponsored a health fair for the community and church. We were blessed to have about 18 vendors from the area. They included Alexandria Community Technical College, Aetna Insurance, Office of Public Health, STI Department, United Way, Opioid Department and more. Our women's ministries department hosted a table, as well.

We were excited to offer this service to the community and encouraged to have some of our government representatives in our area with us.

Ariana Alexander, women's ministries assistant leader at our church sponsored this event. It was very well attended.

By Gloria Mitchell

Hattitude 2.0 Chosen for Royalty Retreat



HOUSTON, TEX. – Women from across the North American Division territory joined the Southwest Region Conference Women’s Bilingual Spiritual Retreat, “Hattitude 2.0 Chosen for Royalty,” on Oct. 7-9, 2022, at the Omni Houston Hotel, in Houston, Tex. Over 439 women were in attendance.

The retreat began on Friday evening with beautiful praise and worship by N’Harmony of New Orleans, La. The guest speakers were DeeAnn Bragaw, North American Division women’s ministries director; Lola Moore-Johnston, senior pastor of the Restoration Praise Center; Esmeralda Guzman-Harris, Southeastern Conference women’s ministries director; Nadine Collins, Ph.D., Women’s Leadership Expert and Spiritual Wellness Coach; and our own Southwestern Union Conference Women’s Ministries Director Letty Craig.

Other presenters brought a unique

perspective with their messages and workshop presentations and helped to remind us of our value to God. Many women of God contributed to making “Hattitude 2.0 Chosen for Royalty” a blessing for all, and we praise God for each of them. Rita Joseph and her team directed the Prayer Room with its daily devotional. It was a source of great excitement, and many hearts were stirred.

The attendees came seeking to be inspired, rejuvenated and make new connections. They enjoyed Christian fellowship and received a much-needed boost to keep moving forward in the work of God. Special guest speakers and workshop presenters challenged them to know their purpose and value, and like Esther, God sometimes calls us to do life-altering things “for such a time as this.” Testimonies and opportunities for prayer and fellowship were powerful and available.

The weekend retreat included a program called “God’s Daughters,” a program for young ladies ages 10-20. It teaches life skills, financial literacy and social graces to help inspire and motivate the next generation for Christ. Sixty-three young ladies completed the training, and 30 have achieved it with Pathfinder honors. A “Forever Princess Ball” to culminate the completion of this initiative was held on Saturday night. Many recipients received educational scholarships ranging from \$150-\$1,300.

With the great commission as a goal, seven women gave their lives to Jesus, and four were baptized at the “Hattitude 2.0 Chosen for Royalty” Retreat. To God be the glory!

*By Anysia Archibald
Women’s Ministries Director*

Ethel, The Bethel Eagle Mascot

TEXARKANA, TEX. - On Aug. 15, 2022, families and community members were met with its newest member in the community with waves and a great big smile! As students and parents entered the parking lot of Bethel Adventist Church School, they were greeted by its newest member, Ethel, the Bethel Eagle mascot! People driving down the street passed by with great big grins and smiles and waving of the hands as an early morning greeter.

Ethel, the Bethel Eagle Mascot, was also introduced during church service

and the students and members rejoiced with applause and big smiles. During the children's story hour, students and children took pictures with Ethel.

Our mascot is a loving and welcomed friend during any occasion, especially for Grandparent's Day which was celebrated at the school with a luncheon on Thursday, Sept. 8, 2022. Ethel will be going with the students to make their monthly delivery of care packages to the residents of Randy Sam's Outreach Shelter.

There will be no dull moments at Bethel Adventist Church School as long as there is Ethel, the Bethel Eagle mascot!

By Sandra Clemons



Voice of Hope Revival

OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLA. - Voice of Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church (VOH) in Oklahoma City, Okla., began their Summer Evangelistic meeting Aug. 13, 2022, and culminated on Aug. 27. To God be the glory as the church welcomed 49 new members into the fellowship of believers!

Southwestern Union Executive Secretary Stephen Brooks preached soul-stirring messages every night. Terrell McCoy, pastor of the Voice of

Hope church, assisted as associate evangelist with visitations, coordinator of nightly programming and baptisms. The church was blessed to have two dedicated Bible workers who faithfully followed up on VOH Bible School students and made contacts in the Oklahoma City Metroplex, inviting and transporting them to the meetings. The VOH ministry teams went the extra mile for the cause of Christ to ensure the success of the meeting.

Classes have begun to continue reinforcing the 28 Fundamental Beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church with new members and follow up to even more baptisms! It is our joy to nurture our new members and to encourage them to "Go" as Jesus has called us all to teach, and invite others to be a part of the Kingdom of God!

By Beverly McCoy



Appreciation for a Beloved Pastor



MISSOURI CITY, TEX. - With tears in his eyes yet beaming with joy and gratitude, Rolando Baysa stood on the pulpit as he thanked his congregation at the Metropolitan Seventh-day Adventist Church in Missouri City, Tex. for an unexpected pastor's appreciation segment.

It was the last Sabbath of October and it was already the end of the sermon during the divine worship service when Baysa stood up to thank the guest speaker, Howard Small. Unbeknownst to him, a few members of the

Metropolitan social committee ministry were already waiting for the perfect opportunity to surprise him, as well as the leadership team made up of church elders.

The social committee, along with a few members from the congregation, delivered their message of appreciation one by one. The church was filled with testimonies and tears as the members shared just how much Baysa touched their lives.

One of the members, Nordelina Santos, shared how Baysa has been instrumental in the decision of her son Edrey Santos to become a pastor himself. Another member, Beth DeGracia also shared how Baysa's prayers and Bible studies for her played a big role in her conversion to the Seventh-day Adventist faith. Many others also chimed in and shared their personal experiences of how much their pastor made a difference in each of their lives.

There's no doubt that Baysa is truly a

man of God who has gone above and beyond in his call of duty as a messenger of God. If time would have permitted, surely, everyone in his congregation would have stood up to share just how much Baysa is deeply appreciated and how he has been an instrument in leading their lives closer to God.

What a blessing that God had blessed the Metropolitan church with a well-loved pastor who is selfless and who truly cares for the flock God has entrusted him with. May God continue to bless the Metropolitan church and may God continue to give Rolando Baysa the wisdom to deliver His message to this lost world in these last days.

By Anna Nabas



Officers' Training.



Church Officers' Training will be provided for Local Church Clerks, Treasurers, Personal Ministries Leaders, and Youth Ministries Leaders. Additionally, our Conference President, **Dr. Carlton P. Byrd**, will provide our 2022 Conference Progress Report and the Conference Goals for 2023. For more information, please contact the Southwest Region Conference at 214.943.4491 #204 Zoom and Streaming Information TBA

www.southwestregionsda.org

zoom Virtual Only | **January 15, 2023**



10:00 AM - 2:00 PM



Dr. Carlton P. Byrd, President



Changed, Not Conformed

In Romans 12, there's this beautiful passage where Paul is speaking to the church in Rome. The first verse says, "Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship." Romans 12:1.

What a beautiful verse. It makes me want to offer everything, every ounce of my being, to God's kingdom and ways. So, it seems strange when Paul continues, "Do not conform to the pattern of this world..." Romans 12:2.

Apparently, Paul knew that when we try to live right the devil is going to do everything he can to sway us from that true and proper worship.

In verse two, Paul tells the church in Rome that if they want to live this kind of life, they have to be the kind of people who resolve not to allow outside pressures to determine who they are.

Sometimes, we don't even realize we are conforming "to the pattern of this world." Conforming can happen when we allow outside influences to change our inside focus. When we allow outside voices, outside perspectives and outside thoughts to change our inside view of ourselves, our identity and what we believe to be true.

Take a moment to ask yourself: How did you allow outside voices and pres-

ures to change you in 2022? Did you find yourself creating unhealthy patterns that were truly destructive to whom God intended you to be?

Can you relate to being in environments that dictate what we think and what we feel to be true about ourselves? We adapt. We keep it safe. We hide. We play. We earn. And all we're trying to do is find our identity in everything else.

Paul would say this is not worship. You can't offer everything in a way that's holy and pleasing to God if you are being influenced by your environment. That is going backwards.

Every day, especially every new year, you have the choice. You can keep the same patterns going or you can create a new story and have a fresh start.

Paul strongly encourages us to offer everything to God. That requires us to be aware of our patterns of brokenness. We must resolve to make the decision to no longer conform to those lies but focus on the bigger picture.

Our earthly home is only temporary. "But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ." Philippians 3:20.

Paul understood where his citizenship was held. He stood for every value that is represented by Jesus: love, radical grace, incredible hospitality and

unbelievable generosity.

Paul knew there would be challenges but trusted in God's will. "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will." Romans 12:2.

We have that opportunity today; to be transformed, to give God the battle in our minds, to change into something entirely new. When we allow God's will in our lives and trust that He knows best, He will help us become the fabulous people God intended for us to be sharing His love with those around us.

*By Elton DeMoraes, D.Min
President*



The Meyer Legacy

ALVARADO, TEX. - Jo Frazier-Meyer (pictured left) was a vibrant, joyful, talkative and social person. A graduate of Southwestern Adventist College and Academy (now known as Southwestern Adventist University) in Keene, Tex., Frazier-Meyer studied to become a social worker.

"Working in the nursing home, and as a social worker, were really her cup of tea," Zela Padon-Denny, Frazier-Meyer's sister, shared. "She liked it; she was good at it." Frazier-Meyer worked many years as a social worker helping others in Arlington and Fort Worth until her retirement.

A person of strong faith, Frazier-Meyer would often underline or write in her Bible. One such text was "Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust," Psalm 16:1 (KJV). Having been divorced decades prior, Frazier-Meyer highlighted Genesis 2:18 (KJV), "And the Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an

help meet for him.'" She wrote beside it, "You said it, Lord. You do it." About four years later, "He did."

She and her new husband, Richard "Dick" Meyer, would volunteer at the Gainesville Seventh-day Adventist Church in Gainesville, Tex. "She would sing and play the piano," Padon-Denny recalled. "He was quiet; she was a talker. They loved their church family." They were married for 25 years before Meyer's death in 2019.

Desiring to give even more to the church, the Meyers started buying, remodeling, renting and selling properties.

"That buying and selling allowed them both to give more to charity," Padon-Denny shared.

Frazier-Meyer joined many mission trips to Rwanda as an evangelistic speaker.

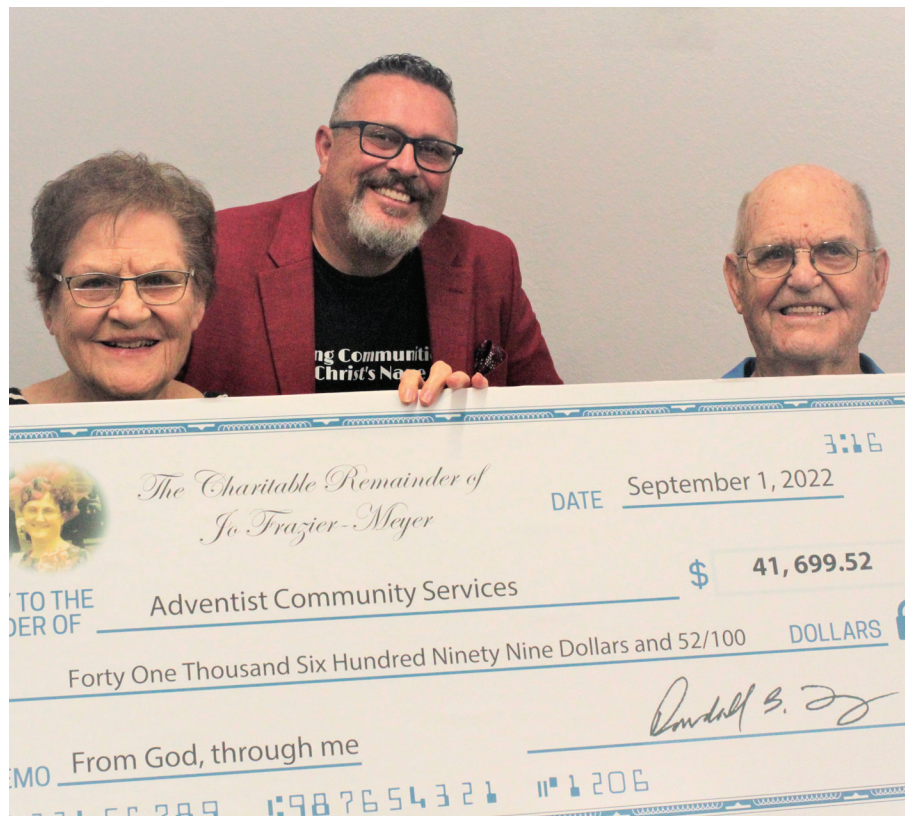
Wanting to continue supporting church work after her death, Frazier-Meyer set up a Last Will and Tes-

tament and a Charitable Trust with the Texas Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. This allowed her to support the ministries she valued the most.

Padon-Denny and her husband, Walter Denny (pictured right), were present when a check was presented on behalf of Jo Frazier-Meyer during the Adventist Community Services Open House in Keene, Tex., on Sept. 1, 2022. In addition to supporting Lake Whitney Ranch in Clifton, Tex., Frazier-Meyer's charitable bequests also supported evangelism and church-building projects in the Rwanda Union Mission of Seventh-day Adventists.

Thank you for your life of service Jo Frazier-Meyer. Eternity alone will tell of the impact you had on earth and for eternity.

*By Uzziel Maldonado
Associate Director for Planned
Giving and Trust Services/Stewardship*



Time to ReCharge



ALVARADO, TEX. – To say the past two and a half years have been challenging is an understatement. All of us have faced challenges, frustrations and separations. Sometimes for men, however, it is hard to articulate exactly what we are feeling. We want to be the leaders of our households or friend groups or the spiritual guide for those at church, but we are still human. We hurt and get frustrated just like everyone else.

That is why men's small groups are important. Whether it is a regular pickup basketball or soccer game, a Bible study or social gathering, regular time together helps us connect.

Sadly, many churches don't have an active men's ministries group. It is a missing, but vital evangelistic tool. Inviting a neighbor or friend to a casual social event provides an opportunity to grow the relationship and talk about beliefs and their connection with Jesus in a natural and non-threatening way.

To help reignite men's ministries programs in our local churches, and to give men an opportunity for community and connection, the Texas Conference

men's ministries English team is coordinating ReCharge events throughout Texas during the first part of 2023.

These afternoon events are designed to help men 'ReCharge' their spiritual life, connect with other men in their area for fellowship and growth and learn how to have a vibrant men's ministries program in their local church. Hearing from others may spark ideas. There are so many available resources from the beginner to advanced leader, and AdventSource.org is just one website with a variety of books and guides.

You don't need to be the men's ministries leader to attend these ReCharge events, but we encourage you to invite your leader(s) to join you at an event near you. ReCharge locations include Jan. 28, 2023 for the San Antonio area at San Antonio Fil-Am International Seventh-day Church at 9190 Abe Lincoln in San Antonio, Tex.; Feb. 18, 2023 for the Central Texas area at Georgetown Seventh-day Adventist Church at 5105 S Interstate 35 in Georgetown, Tex.; Feb. 25, 2023 for East Texas area at the Tyler Seventh-day Adventist Church

at 2935 S Southeast Loop 323 in Tyler, Tex.; March 25, 2023 for the Dallas/Fort Worth area at Dallas First Seventh-day Adventist Church at 4009 N Central Expy in Dallas, Tex.; April 15, 2023 for the Valley Area at McAllen All Nations Seventh-day Adventist Church at 6105 N Ware Rd, McAllen, Tex.; May 6, 2023, Houston area at Houston United African Seventh-day Adventist Church at 9595 Braes Bayou Dr. in Houston, Tex. All ReCharge events will begin at 2 p.m.

If you are on Facebook or Instagram, join us @TexasAdventistMen. For additional updates and resources, visit us at TexasAdventistMen.org.

Thank you for joining me in prayer that we can ReCharge the men in the Texas Conference so that others may see the joy of Jesus in each one of us.

*By Tom Grove
Ministry and Evangelism Associate
Director and Men's Ministries, English
Volunteer Coordinator*

Adventist Christian Fellowship Chapters Make a Difference



SAN ANTONIO, TEX. – Arturo Montoya (pictured above) holds a dual appointment as an associate professor in the departments of civil and environmental engineering and mechanical engineering at the University of Texas San Antonio (UTSA). He is also an elder at the San Antonio Scenic Hills Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Sharing about his time at Columbia University in the city of New York, he recalled finding himself in transition. Away from his family and in a big city, he felt young, alone and susceptible to all kinds of influences.

Thankfully, Montoya found Adventist Christian Fellowship (ACF), a gathering of college and university students hosted by New York Manhattan Church of the Advent Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church. “Without that group,” he shared, “I don’t know where I would be

right now.” The group was an oasis for Montoya where he discovered belonging, connection and purpose.

When Montoya moved to San Antonio, one of the first things he did was search online for a local Seventh-day Adventist Church.

“It was a little awkward at first,” he recalled. “No one really said hi or talked with me. I sat in the back and made my rounds. But I knew that I wanted to get used to this place, to connect, belong and serve eventually.”

After persevering for a few months, he connected with a few young adults and began to serve, eventually as an elder for the church. Montoya is now collaborating with Texas Conference Young Adult Ministries to relaunch the ACF chapter at UTSA.

Approximately 80 percent of high school graduates are currently on

public university campuses looking to belong, connect and serve with fellow young adults. We need to be intentional about creating and providing safe spaces for students to learn and grow.

Currently, we have 16 public campuses with an ACF presence. There is also a Texas Conference ACF Retreat scheduled for Feb. 10-12, 2023, in the San Antonio area.

To learn more about Adventist Christian Fellowship (ACF), an official organization endorsed by the North American Division encouraging campus ministries programs on non-Adventist college and university campuses, visit YoungTexasAdventist.org/acf or email: ACF@txsda.org.

*By Justin Yang
Young Adult Ministries Director*

Together As One: Todos Unidos

ALVARADO, TEX. - "J17:21, Together As One: Todos Unidos," has been the prayer ministries focus for the Texas Conference of Seventh-day Adventists since 2022, so it only seemed natural to continue it for the Quadrennial Constituency Session theme.

The Texas Conference is one of the few conferences in the North American Division (NAD) that gathers church delegates together every two years to conduct business for the conference with elections held every four years.

In between Quadrennial Constituency meetings, the Texas Conference executive committee, elected every four years, acts on behalf of the constituents (members voted into a Texas Conference church) to elect or remove for cause persons elected at a constituency meeting including conference executive officers, vice presidents, department/services directors, members

of boards and committees whose election or appointment is a result of a constituency meeting or executive committee meeting action and to fill, for the remaining portion of the term, any vacancies thus created. They also vote on conference business-related items.

Since delegates are chosen by their respective churches as the Texas Conference membership grows, so does the number of delegates attending each session. The large delegate size limits the places we can hold the sessions. We no longer fit in any of the Texas Conference churches. Plus, we need a place that can accommodate us for lunch with a room for the nominating committee to meet, when necessary. Information about regular and at-large delegates will be shared in the March/April 2023 issue of the *Record*.

"We are a wonderfully diverse conference, mission-minded and dedi-

cated, as John 17:21 reminds us, to be Together As One: Todos Unidos," Elton DeMoraes, Texas Conference president, said. "As our membership has grown, we have become the third-largest conference in the NAD, a division of the General Conference. We give thanks to God and our dedicated members for this blessing as we continue sharing His love with others."

The Texas Conference town hall meetings conducted this past fall gave Texas Conference church members an opportunity to celebrate God's goodness as well as discuss any concerns going forward. Questions can always be emailed to Questions@txsda.org.

Please keep the Quadrennial Constituency Session in your prayers as we work to bring God glory and honor and conduct His business in the Texas Conference.

By David Montoya, Secretary

OFFICIAL NOTICES

TEXAS CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

Notice is hereby given that the Quadrennial Constituency Session of the Texas Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will convene at the Killeen Civic and Conference Center at 3601 South W.S. Young Drive, Killeen, Tex. 76542 on Sunday, June 11, 2023, at 9 a.m. The purpose of this meeting is to elect executive officers, vice presidents, directors and associate directors for the ensuing quadrennial term, to consider changes in the Constitution and Bylaws and to transact business that comes before the constituents. Each church shall be entitled to one (1) delegate for the organization and one (1) additional delegate for each sixty (60) members or major fraction thereof and who hold membership in the local church which accredits them. Such delegates shall be voted by the business meeting of their respective local church.

Elton DeMoraes, President; David Montoya, Secretary; Randall B. Terry, Treasurer

TEXAS CONFERENCE ASSOCIATION OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

Notice is hereby given that the Quadrennial Constituency Session of the Texas Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists will convene at the Killeen Civic and Conference Center at 3601 South W.S. Young Drive, Killeen, Tex. 76542 on Sunday, June 11, 2023, at 9 a.m. The purpose of this meeting is to elect twenty-one (21) persons, including officers [president, who shall be the president of the Texas Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (an unincorporated body), one or more vice presidents, one or more secretaries, and one or more treasurers], to act as directors for this Corporation, at least eleven (11) of whom shall be laypersons. All shall hold their offices for the ensuing quadrennial term or until their successors are duly elected and appear to enter upon their duties. Delegates may also consider changes to the Bylaws. Delegates, regular and at-large, duly accredited to the Quadrennial Constituency Session of the Texas Conference of Seventh-day Adventists are also delegates to the Texas Conference Association Quadrennial Constituency Session.

Elton DeMoraes, President; Lynette Ecord, Secretary



How About a Makeover for the New Year?

As 2023 breaks across the horizon, we have a wonderful opportunity to review the previous year. What kind of year was it for you? Are the highlights happily playing in your memories, or do you find your attention being drawn to some 'make rights' or 'do-overs'?

This new year stretches out before us like a blank page waiting for the next chapter of our stories to be written. It is in these moments that we find perhaps the best vantage point from which to renew our need for our relationship with God to go deeper, and our love for Him, and for all those whom He loves, to grow stronger than ever before.

This relationship with Jesus is a transformational experience. As our hearts are drawn to His, and we get to know Him more each day, we actually become more like Him. Over the years many of us have heard God's call on our lives and have likely experienced glimpses of a vibrant, living and growing relationship with Him.

In Psalm 51, we find perhaps the most profound illustration of someone who is not only aware of his own personal brokenness, but who also realizes that his need for confession, forgiveness and renewal has never been greater.

After having been chosen and anointed to be the next king of Israel,

David spent a lot of years running from one challenge to another just trying to survive. When he finally ascended to the throne, it is clear that he didn't always keep his focus on God. As with all of us, David was often very interested in what he wanted, attracted to things and experiences that pleased him.

We remember the horrible part that he played in the Bathsheba and Uriah chapter of his story. Not until the prophet Samuel explained things in graphic detail did it finally strike home to him. And when it did, he was wrecked emotionally, spiritually and physically!

2 Samuel 11-12 shares the devastating details, however his journey to renewal with God is in Psalm 51. In spite of his faults and failures, after this journey, God described David as a man after His own heart. This is going deeper in a relationship with God.

Perhaps it all begins with time that is intentionally invested in getting to know God as we have never known Him before. Such a focus will lead us to His Word where we will find very important counsel. Then, we engage Him in conversation, sharing our thoughts and challenges, with thanksgiving for His Grace. He promises to "guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus" and to give us the "peace that passes all

understanding." In these times of communion and a deepening relationship, we will grow in our understanding of how absolutely cherished we are by the Creator God who has redeemed us with the assurance of our eternal salvation.

When we tell others about this Jesus who adores us, saves us completely, walks with us daily, is present in our lives and is coming back to take us to be with Him very soon, we actually bear witness to His personalized blessing in a single life - our life. When another person becomes excited about Jesus, we have done exactly what He has called us to do: inspire another to become His follower. May 2023 be our best year yet!

*By Phil Robertson
Executive Secretary/Treasurer*



Texico Conference 42nd Regular Constituency Session

ALBUQUERQUE – The Texico Conference held its 42nd Regular Constituency Session on Sunday, Sept. 18, 2022, at the Albuquerque Heights Seventh-day Adventist Church where 201 delegates met to elect officers for the 2022-2027 quinquennial term.

The morning began with a powerful devotional message from Southwestern Union President Carlos Craig. Basing it on Acts 1:7, he challenged the delegates to pause and ask themselves, “what are we doing here?” Craig encouraged attendees to not let fear, trepidations and agendas keep them from doing the will of God. “Handle the business at hand. Represent the Lord, and the Lord only in all that you do. We must make it clear that we don’t represent each other, churches, ethnic groups or cultures, we represent the Lord in everything that we do, and He holds us responsible for it.”

During the session, delegates voted to elect Lee-Roy Chacon, president; Phil Robertson, executive secretary/treasurer; Michael Jon Cookenmaster, Ed.D., superintendent of education; Antonio Cano, ministerial director; and Eric Chavez, youth, young adults and

club ministries director, to serve for the next five years.

The El Paso West and Santa Fe Airport Spanish Seventh-day Adventist churches were voted into the sisterhood of churches officially changing their status from company to church. In addition, the Santa Fe Rabbit Road and Rancho Viejo Seventh-day Adventist churches merged to become the Advent Life Seventh-day Adventist Church and the San Angelo English and Spanish churches merged to become the Advent Hope Bilingual Seventh-day Adventist Church. Notably, the delegates voted to accept changes to the Constitution and Bylaws, which included the adjustment that the Texico Conference Constituency Sessions be convened every five years, changing the term of service from a quadrennial to a quinquennial term.

Reelected President Lee-Roy Chacon was moved and grateful for the opportunity to serve another term. “Thank you for your confidence. It is always an honor and pleasure to serve the Lord.”

Phil Robertson, executive secretary/treasurer, also expressed gratitude after his reelection. “It has been a great

privilege to serve in this conference and, to work alongside Chacon has been a real blessing,” said Robertson. “I am humbled, and I want to continue to serve however the Lord wants me to, so it is with great joy and humility that I say, ‘praise God’ for the opportunity of working together with all of you.”

During the financial report, Phil Robertson, treasurer, was thrilled to share that, despite the financial challenges throughout the country, the Texico Conference remained in steady and healthy financial condition over the past five years. Following the meeting, many delegates commented that the session ran smoothly and Southwestern Union Vice President for Ministries Tony Anobile, stated that the presence of the Holy Spirit was felt throughout the day. He offered a special prayer of dedication for the officers, the departmental directors, the new executive committee and for every member of the Texico Conference.

*By Debby Marquez
Communication Director*



“After the Storm” Texico Women Reconnect After the Pandemic

ALBUQUERQUE – After a three-year hiatus, more than 200 women gathered for the 2022 Texico Conference Women’s Ministries Retreat on Oct. 14-16, 2022 in Albuquerque.

The three-day event included general sessions, breakout seminars, worship services, and also featured a full program in Spanish and a community service project.

“We are thrilled that we were finally able to get together after not being able to meet for the last several years,” said Nancy Monge, Texico Conference women’s ministries director.

“The theme [After the Storm] was chosen prayerfully, and with a lot of intention,” said Monge. “We wanted to present a message of hope and remind attendees of their resilience and that, ultimately, God is our anchor through the storms of life.”

Becky House, a licensed family and marriage therapist, was the keynote speaker for the English program. On the Spanish side, the keynote speaker was Adly Campos, an international lay evangelist, family counselor and current director of the independent ministry “Family Well Being International.” Campos shared, “There is a way to witness by saying ‘thank you Lord for the trials that come my way.’ When people see that Christians can go through difficulties and can still smile and praise the Lord amid any situation, they will understand the beauty of our message. Jesus is with us; He is in control of our life and that has been my answer to life’s problems. We must hold on to Jesus as the true anchor.”

An exciting highlight of the retreat came during a community service project that was led by Teresa Flores. Prior to the retreat, Flores received assistance from Adventist Community Services and from women who attended the retreat who in turn received support from their local churches with donations for backpack care kits for the homeless community in Albuquerque. On Sabbath afternoon, 40 women



walked several miles through downtown and handed out approximately 70 backpacks filled with personal care products and other treats.

“We had a great experience,” said Flores. “We were able to pray for many people. At one point, a homeless man prayed for us. It was a blessing!”

Lorene Ballew, member of the Dalhart Seventh-day Adventist Church was among those in attendance. She said she had recently been in a serious car accident that almost took her life. She asked God to give her the strength, healing and lift that she needed.

“I feel God said to me that I needed to come to the women’s retreat because I needed the healing by all the sisters that are here,” said Ballew. “He said, ‘I will take care of you as long as you keep your eyes focused on me.’”

“Sometimes I think I am a strong woman of faith, but I was touched and amazed by the powerful testimonies that I heard from different women this weekend,” said Nina Jaquez. “These women are amazingly strong warriors that have been able to overcome difficult times through God’s power. My prayer is that as life’s storms come my way, I can cling to our Heavenly Father the same way they have.”

The Texico women’s ministries team is eagerly looking forward to the next retreat when they can continue to encourage and equip women to experience a deeper relationship with Jesus.

*By Debby Marquez
Communication Director*

Called and Chosen: Texico Pathfinder Camporee

ELEPHANT BUTTE, N.M. – We are all called by God and Chosen by God even before we walk this earth! We are told in Jeremiah 1:5 that, before we were formed in the womb, He knew us; before we were born, he sanctified us and called us to be a prophet to the world. This was the theme for the Texico Pathfinder Camporee that took place in Elephant Butte State Park in central New Mexico on Oct. 7-9, 2022.

As Texico’s new youth director, I spent the weekend sharing with Pathfinder area coordinators; Norah Graham, Eliseo Mauricio and Chris and Aimee Clapp how God has “Called and Chosen” each of them, and how He’s “Called and Chosen” every Pathfinder that was present.

It has been many years since the Texico Conference has had a conference-wide Pathfinder Camporee and the clubs in attendance expressed much gratitude and excitement to have a time of fellowship for the young people of Texico. The weekend started out rainy and cold but miraculously cleared in time for all of our weekend’s events. The Lord really held back the rains and allowed us to have a great weekend.

The Gallup Nizhoni Onyx were present with only two Pathfinders, but the staff said they felt it was worth coming no matter how small their club was at the time. The Panhandle Conqueror’s had all but one Pathfinder get sick the week of the camporee, but they still arrived ready for a wonderful week-

end. The San Angelo Rams arrived with an impressive crew after only forming three weeks prior. Overall, we had eight out of 16 clubs for a total of 146 Pathfinders and staff from around the Texico Conference to celebrate the start of what we know is going to be a great year for the Texico young people!

As we continue to work with our Pathfinder clubs, I am confident that God will continue to show up and provide opportunities for fellowship and encouragement for our young people. He will also help our club leadership keep working hard for our young people in our churches and communities.

By Eric Chavez, Youth, Young Adults and Club Ministries Director



Beloved Pastor Retires After Long Career in the Texico Conference

CORRALES, N.M. - One of Texico's beloved pastors, Nehemias Basit, retired in 2022. Basit officially concluded his pastoral career that spanned more than four decades in October 2022.

Basit, an ordained minister, was pastoring the Los Lunas, Belen, Socorro and Truth or Consequences district prior to his retirement. He also served as the Sabbath school director of the Texico Conference for over 15 years. Before joining the Texico Conference, he was a district pastor, academy teacher and principal in the Philippines. Basit holds a Bachelor of Arts in History and Philosophy, and a Master of Divinity degree.

"Basit has impacted many lives through his ministry contributions, and we are grateful for his faithful service in the Texico Conference," said Phil Robertson, Texico Conference executive secretary/treasurer.

When he arrived at the Texico Conference, Basit started as a literature evangelist and has since served as a pastor

in Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, Santa Fe and Corrales. When his three children were of college age, he moved to Texas and pastored in the Texas Conference while they attended Southwestern Adventist University. He soon returned to the Texico Conference and served the Clovis district for seven years. Joining him in retirement is his wife Evita, who has been a big supporter of his ministry throughout his career.

"Like the Apostle Paul, I can say that I have finished my course," said Basit. "After no less than 45 years of serving the Lord in many different capacities, I can say, 'thank you Lord for the opportunity to serve your people'. I had the best years of pastoral experiences with the Texico Conference members and its lay leaders."

Basit will long be remembered by members for his dedication to serving the Lord, sense of humor, passion for Sabbath School training and his love of golf.



"Both Evita and Nehemias will always hold a special place in our hearts and will continue to be a part of the Texico Conference family," said Robertson.

*By Debby Márquez
Communication Director*

Odessa Welcomes New Members



ODESSA, TEX. - The Odessa English Seventh-day Adventist Church recently celebrated the addition of two new church members. On Oct. 8, Devona and Gary Edwards from Andrews, Tex., gave their lives to Jesus through baptism and were welcomed into membership.

"I had a dream that Jesus was coming," said Devona. "That day, I was sitting on the porch of our house and I felt it - the Holy Spirit impressed me to give my life to the Lord. I just knew I had to be baptized."

Devona was raised in an Adventist home but left the faith early on when she got married and had a family of her own. However, she knew that God was always with her, and she felt He was calling her to come back to the fold. Last year, Gary and Devona started Bible studies, driving 80 miles on Wednesday evenings to meet with Ab-

ner Razon, Odessa English pastor.

This was Gary's first time being baptized, but he feels it is never too late to give your life to the Lord, even at a later age. He was also very supportive and instrumental in Devona's decision to come back to the Lord. Gary and Devona were visibly happy as they entered the baptismal waters during the special ceremony and are thrilled to belong to the family of God.

"What a beautiful sight to see these individuals' hand in hand, together, giving and surrendering their lives fully to Jesus," said Razon. "There is true joy in heaven!"

By Nef Razon

Classified Ads

EMPLOYMENT

Union College, Lincoln, Neb., is seeking applicants for two positions in our academic library: Director of Library and Reference and Instruction Librarian. We also have other faculty and staff opportunities with generous benefits packages. See job descriptions and application instructions by visiting UCollege.edu/employment or emailing Human Resources at Lisa.R.Forbes@ucollege.edu.

Union College is seeking applicants for the position of plumber. This person is responsible for maintaining the flow and drainage of water, air and other gasses by assembling, installing and repairing pipes, fittings and plumbing fixtures campus-wide. Prefer five or more years of plumbing experience. Must be knowledgeable of plumbing repairs, maintenance, installation techniques and plumbing codes. Please see the full job description and

instructions for application at UCollege.edu/employment. Contact Paul Jenks for more information at Paul.Jenks@ucollege.edu.

Adventist Media Ministries

is seeking a full time Information Systems Department Director to oversee the daily operation of the IS Department. The IS department supports the IS functions of the seven ministries served by AMM Support Services. For more information you may email HR@sdamedia.com or apply at AdventistMediaMinistries.com/available-positions.

The Arkansas-Louisiana Conference

is seeking to fill the position for Accountant/Accounts Payable. This is a full-time, in-person position. Our office is located in Shreveport, La. For more details on the job description, please contact DRodriguez@arklac.org

Andrews University Seeks Salaried Staff – Staff Therapist.

Description: Provide Individual, couple and group counseling for after-office hours, clinical consultations and student crisis interventions. Should maintain an assigned caseload and provide consultations on issues related to mental health. Reports to the Director of the Counseling and Testing center. For more information

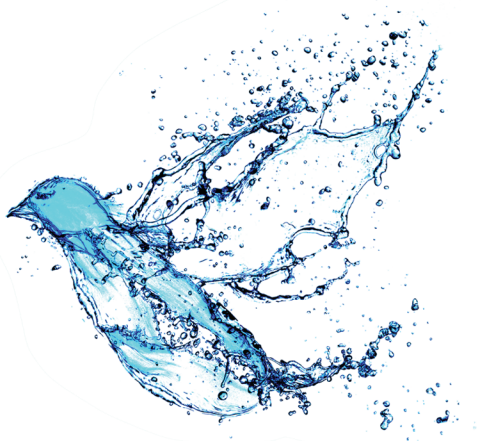
and to apply, please visit: Andrews.edu/admres/jobs/show/staff_salary#job_7.

Texas Conference, in Alvarado, Tex., has a full-time, onsite position open in Information Systems. It requires a bachelor's degree in Computer Science and/or equivalent experience and certifications. Candidate should be familiar with web application development and support, network management, Microsoft 365, Apple support and more. Find job description at TexasAdventist.org/HR.

REAL ESTATE

Summit Ridge Retirement Village, an Adventist community in a rural setting, offers affordable homes or apartments and caring neighbors, with a fellowship you will enjoy. On-site church, planned activities and transportation as needed. Onsite Wolfe Living Center offers independent living and nursing homes. Contact Bill Norman [405.208.1289](tel:405.208.1289) or visit SummitRidgeVillage.org.

COUNTRY PROPERTY FOR SALE. Moyers, Okla., top of the hill SDA country living community. Nice view. Lots of trees. Cleared lot with a septic. Internet/cell tower close by. Two access roads to the property. Two lots; 2 acres \$15k, 2.6 acres \$20k. Text [817.919.7034](tel:817.919.7034).



**POWER TO HEAL
HEALTH SUMMIT
2023**

April 2-8, 2023
Lexington, KY



"The power of the Lord was with Jesus,
enabling him to heal." Luke 5:17



nadhealth.org/events

MISCELLANEOUS

Move with an award-winning agency. **Apex Moving & Storage** partners with the General Conference to provide quality moves at a discounted rate. Call us for all your relocation needs! Adventist beliefs uncompromised. Contact Marcy Dante at [800.766.1902](tel:800.766.1902) for a free estimate. Visit us at ApexMoving.com/adventist.

NEW/USED Adventist Books: **TEACH Services** helps authors publish their book, including editing, design, marketing and worldwide distribution. Call [800.367.1844](tel:800.367.1844) for a free evaluation. Visit LNFBOOKS.com for used books and your local ABC or TEACHServices.com for new book releases.

Come enjoy a 7-day Health and Healing Retreat with Wellness Secrets! You may be dealing with some serious health challenges or you sense a need for change but as of yet haven't developed anything serious. For more information contact [479.752.8555](tel:479.752.8555) or send email to Contact@wellness-secrets.com.

ADVENTIST TOURS 2023. Israel: April 16-25 & June 4-13 with Andy Nash, and June 18-27 with Clifford Goldstein; Revelation's Seven Churches/Patmos/Greece: March 22-April 2; Egypt/Jordan/Israel: March 28-April 16, 2024; British Reformation: June 9-17, 2024; German Reformation: June 17-28, 2024. For information contact TabghaTours@gmail.com, visit TabghaTours.com or call [423.298.2141](tel:423.298.2141).

2023 Great Controversy Prophecy Tours, March 17-30 or Sept 15-27 with Dr. Gerard Damsteege, retired professor of Andrews University. See prophecies of Daniel and Revelation come alive! Visit Reformation sites in Italy, the Waldensian Valleys, Switzerland, Germany, France. A most exciting experience! Call [269.815.8624](tel:269.815.8624), or email GcTours@mac.com.

The 2023 Association for SDA Librarians Conference Committee invites presentation proposals for the 43rd annual conference to be held June 27-29, 2023, on the campus of Adventist University of Africa in Nairobi, Kenya. The theme of the conference is Library Research and Internationalization. We encourage proposals that explore the role of libraries and librarians in a global research environment. For further information, visit our website: ASDAL.org.

Obituaries

Anderson, Helen B., born Sept. 28, 1930, Thorp, Wis.; died Sept. 21, 2022, Belleville, Ill. Preceded in death by husband, Marvin B.; one sister, four half-brothers and one granddaughter. Survivors: brother; daughters, Nadine Finley (David), Gwyann Anderson (Richard), Melody Senecal (Beaman) and LaQuita Anderson; eight grandchildren and one great-granddaughter.

Bedford, Henry, Jr., born Jan. 1929; died Nov. 22, 2022. Survivors: his children, Genni and John Kerbs, Bruce and Jennifer Bedford and Melinda and Steve Brown and their grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Coler, Wallace, born Sept. 8, 1939, Thibodaux, La.; died June 30, 2022, Alexandria, Va. Preceded in death by his parents, Walter and Albertha Coler; wife, Irma Jean Coler and siblings, Walter, Issac and Annabelle. Survivors: sons, Stacy McGull of Baton Rouge, La. and Tracy McGull (Sarah); brothers, Raymond Coler of Patterson, La. and George Coler of Detroit,

Mich.; sister-in-law, Rosa M. Hayes of Morganza, La. and three grandchildren; plus a host of nieces, nephews, cousins and other relatives and friends.

Cox, Lucille Marie, born Dec. 28, 1939, Duluth, Minn.; died Sept. 21, 2022. Church membership: Tontitown Seventh-day Adventist Group. Survivors: 13 grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren.

Gomez, Jorge Paul, born Sept. 29, 1992; died Sept. 26, 2022. Church membership: Little Rock Seventh-day Adventist Church. Survivors: his mother, Martha Pacheco and step-

Douglas Blackwell was born Oct. 12, 1941, in Minden, La., and passed away on Aug. 20, 2022, in Arlington, Tex., at 80 years of age. He was raised in Jefferson, Tex. and Keene, Tex.

Douglas met the love of his life, Gail Dowden, and married in 1959. They were married for almost 61 years at the time of her death in 2020. He enjoyed working on cars, doing woodwork and model cars, and leatherworking. He insisted on a Christian education for his children and instilled a strong work ethic in them. He enjoyed being on his property in Berea, Tex.

He was a member of the Grand Prairie Seventh-day Adventist Church and was well-known and loved. He had a special appreciation for all babies and children.

He is predeceased by his wife, Gail Dowden Blackwell and brother, Dwight Blackwell. He is survived by his daughters, Debra Webb of Arlington, Tex., Carmen Blackwell of Arlington, Tex., and Barbra Blackwell of Arlington, Tex.; sister, Karan Fugler of Marshall, Tex.; granddaughter, Amanda (Tony) Maldonado of Austin, Tex.; grandson, Danny (Lisa) Blackwell of Benbrook, Tex.; great-grandchildren, Murphy and Maeve Maldonado; Olivia and Harper Rose Blackwell; and several nieces and nephews.





Dr. Russell Gene Owens, 90, died peacefully on Oct. 1, 2022, in Burseson, Tex. Russell was born Aug. 18, 1932, to E. Russell Owens and Viola Bayliss Owens. He grew up in Keene, Tex., attending the Southwestern Adventist schools. He was accepted into the University of Kansas City, Missouri

Dental School in 1955 and joined the U.S. Air Force as a First Lieutenant in 1959.

Russell practiced dentistry in Denver before returning to Fort Worth, Tex., in 1966. Russell loved dentistry, teaching and his patients. When some of his favorite World War II pilot patients would make any appointment, his office staff knew to schedule extra time because he loved visiting with them. He operated his Fort Worth practice for 45 years.

Russell married his wife, Paula, on Dec. 25, 1972. He was a wonderful husband and a loving dad to Tracy and Tony. Russell and Paula purchased land in the country. Although he played plenty of golf and snow skied a lot while practicing in Denver, his spare time was spent building fences, caring for his cattle and mowing the pasture when he moved to the country.

Russell was a lifelong member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He served the Lord and his church as a deacon, elder and church school board chairman. He had a servant's heart. He and Paula traveled the world on many mission trips including five blessed trips to their favorite, Africa. Russell loved Africa and the people of Zimbabwe. He and Paula sponsored a young man's college education at Solusi University in Bulawayo. If you were lucky enough to hear his stories about Africa, you know he was a magnificent storyteller. His favorite Bible text was John 3:16.

Russell is lovingly remembered by his wife, Paula Springfield Owens; daughter, Tracy Owens Jahn (Patrick Jahn); grandchildren, Leah Abigail Grainery (Matthew), Sara Elizabeth Jahn and,, Sophie Grace Jahn who had the honor of sharing her Aug. 18th birthday with her Granddad. Russell is also survived by his brother, Jere Knox Owens (Linda); sister, Eddy Lou Owens Ayers (Robert); as well as, step-grandchildren, Emily and Anthony Peterman. Russell was preceded in death by his parents; and stepson, Tony Gene Peterman.



Buford Dwayne Janes, 90, of Keene, Tex., died Nov. 23, 2022. Buford was the first child of Frances (nee Auvenshine) and Jessie Nile Janes, born Dec. 22, 1931, in Comanche County, Tex. The family moved to Keene in the late 1940s where Janes attended Southwestern Junior College

before graduating from Union College in Lincoln, Neb. It was at Union College where he met a student from Napoleon, N.D., Marjorie (Betty) Harr. They were married April 9, 1955, in Lincoln.

Janes served in the U.S. Army from 1955-57, stationed at Fort Meyer, Va. He began a career in blood banks in Fremont, Neb., before relocating to Dallas, Tex. After attending the University of Texas at Galveston for certification in blood bank management, he and Betty moved to San Antonio where Buford started the blood bank at the University of Texas San Antonio and served there seven years.

Janes earned a master's degree in health administration from Southwest Texas State University and served as director of quality control for the Southwest Region Blood Bank in San Antonio.

A lifelong Seventh-day Adventist, Janes attended the Laurel Heights Seventh-day Adventist Church in San Antonio where he served as elder, deacon, Sabbath school superintendent and president of the school board.

He enjoyed building model boats, driving his two sports cars, travel and good music.

Buford was preceded in death by his parents, Frances and Jessie Janes; and an infant son, Bryan. He is survived by his wife of 67 years, Betty; a sister, Geraldine (Geri) Montgomery of Keene; a brother, Von Ray Janes (Barbara) of Cleburne, Tex.; nieces, nephews, cousins and many friends.



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father Jose Luis Pacheco; maternal grandmother, Isabel Radales; father, Jorge Gomez; sisters, Emily Gomez, Mia Pacheco and Madeline Gomez; brothers, Robert Gomez, Julian Gomez, Daniel Pacheco and Jordan Pacheco.

McKinney, Oscar J., born March 30, 1936, Washington, D.C.; died Aug. 18, 2022, Dallas, Tex. Church membership: Bethesda Seventh-day Adventist Church and Dallas City Temple Seventh-day Adventist Church. Preceded in death by parents, Oliver Sr. and Lucy McKinney, and brothers, Daniel McKinney, Oliver McKinney, Jr. and Charles McKinney,

Sr. Survivors: his ex-wife, Bertha McKinney of Dallas, Tex.; their four children, Sharon McKinney and Carolyn McKinney, both of Dallas, Tex.; a son, Michael McKinney of Albuquerque, N.M.; and a daughter, Debra (Richard) Cuadro of Orange, Mass.; six siblings, John (Gloria) McKinney of Albuquerque, N.M., Samuel (Brenda) McKinney of Atlanta, Ga., Lucy McKinney of Atlanta, Ga., Elizabeth McKinney of Albuquerque, N.M., Lavinia (Chico) Young of Arlington, Tex., and Jerome (Thao) McKinney of Seminole, Okla.; seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Woods, Linda Nell Peterson, born Dec. 15, 1945, Jennings, La. Church membership: DeRidder Seventh-day Adventist Church. Preceding her in death are her husband, Lawrence E. Woods; parents, Edmond and Jennie Peterson; sister, Sheila Jones and brother, Kirby Peterson. Survivors: her daughters, Carmen Tanner of Baton Rouge and Latrelle Tellis (Michael) of DeRidder; sons, Andrez Woods of Lafayette, Delyle Woods (Anyssa) of Houston and Marlon Woods (Lindsey) of Dallas; sisters, Cynthia Vincent (James) and Francis Peterson of North Carolina; and brothers, Granville Peterson (Brenda) of Florida, Marcus Peterson

(Suisan) of Louisiana and Lloyd Peterson (Annie) of Colorado. 12 grandchildren, three great-grandchildren and a host of nieces, nephews and cousins.



“But let all who take refuge in you be glad; let them ever sing for joy. Spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may rejoice in you.

Surely, Lord, you bless the righteous; you surround them with your favor as with a shield.”

PSALM 5:11-12

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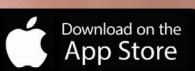
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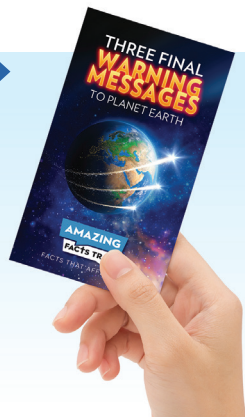
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