
AA UPDATES

STORIES OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES – FALL WEEK OF PRAYER

Andrews Academy's Fall Week of Prayer took place October 5 - 9, 2009. *Pastor David VanDenburgh* presented a week of prayer that was filled with relevant and challenging spiritual thoughts for our students. (Pastor VanDenburgh is father of Mr. David VanDenburgh English teacher at AA).



Programs occurred both in the morning at 8:55 am and in the evening at 7 pm. The pastor wanted this week to be a week of awareness and awakening. The prayer for the first morning was led by Livvy Knott, praying that the "eyes of our hear" will be opened to receive this awakening.





The morning began with song service. Following the special music Pastor VanDenburgh began this morning's talk, "Life Is Difficult". He pointed out that when people abused God's gift of free choice in the garden of Eden and introduced sin into the world, the world changed for ever. Satan is wanting us to be so busy in our world's activities that we don't focus on the beginning and the ends of our Earth's history... he want's us to just see the world as it is now. Jesus came to emphasize Earth's beginning and more importantly the end of the world as we know it, and recreating the world as God intended it to be. The Kingdom of God actually begins now... we are to be in the world but not of the world. Satan has been very successful at getting people to be so involved in the world's activities that we forget that our existence is just a speck in God's history. The perfect and joyful conditions of the world before the fall and what it will be like after God's return is the majority of the universe's history... we sometimes forget to remember our perspective.



On Tuesday he very effectively, by use of a modern day parable, helped us see a different perspective of our existence here on Earth. So many people on Earth just see world events through their own "one dot" perspective, while God wants each of us to see in full color God's purpose for our existence and the plans He has for us. To "see the invisible" that God want's us to experience.

Throughout the week Pastor *David VanDenburgh* helped each student "open the eyes of their heart" to gain a deeper understanding of God's love for each of us.

The skit preceding the talk helped us visualize some of the “invisible” that Christ wants us to experience. God’s reassuring protection even while in danger. As we live close with God we affect those who do not see the “invisible”, start to see glimpses of the “invisible”, and as a result their lives change. The pastor encouraged each to share our Christian perspective with all we interact with



Each worship service began with song service that was lead by various students to help focus our thoughts on God. Throughout the week we experienced an “opening of the eyes of our hear”. Another skit “opened our eyes” to experience the true forgiveness Christ wants us to experience even when we are experiencing anger over things that may have happened in our lives.



The pastors talk after the skit illustrated the true joy of accepting God into our lives. An example the pastor shared with us was to imagine for a moment that you are stranded in a stormy ocean and are about to die when a rescuer jumps down from a rescue helicopter to save you... we would be overjoyed. But to often on the spiritual level people would reply that I can handle things I don’t need Your help. To many people reject the Rescuer, Jesus, who has jumped down from Heaven to this Earthly mess to rescue us... it doesn’t make sense.



Pastor VanDenburgh encouraged each person to accept the “Rescuer” and to experience the joy of His Heavenly Kingdom starting today. The concluding song for the morning was “I Can Only Imagine” a song that wonders what our emotions will be when Christ returns to take us to His Heavenly Kingdom. This song was led by Pastor VanDenburgh’s colleague from Kettering Medical Center in Ohio



Friday morning’s program was the highlight for the entire week. The service began with song service followed by scripture and prayer by Chris Fa’soa. A special music by Gielle Kuhn playing the harp set our minds on the focus of the morning’s program - the baptism.

A number of months ago Wayne Imel requested that he be baptized (at school during a Week of Prayer chapel program. It was at last year's week of prayer that Wayne shared his testimonial of God working in his life. He wanted to experience his baptism in the Week of Prayer setting, the same setting that impacted his life last year. Pastor Stan Hickerson of Stevensville SDA church baptized Wayne.



Christina Cribari was baptized by Pastor Alvin Glassford, Bible teacher at Andrews Academy. While in elementary school she first had Bible studies with pastor Glassford. She was recently convicted to choose this Week of Prayer as the time for her baptism. We are so pleased these two students have chosen to follow God and express this choice in the public expression of baptism. Please be praying for these new individuals of God's family.



Pastor VanDenburgh then concluded the service with an insightful thought describing how some who is buried by the act of baptism is raised a new person in Christ . The pastor has a gift of “opening the eyes of our heart” to the basic Biblical truths such as baptism, the cross, the plans God has for us. He used the symbols that where all around him on the stage... the cross, the baptismal tank, and the newly designed banner for the school year. The banner expressed our theme for the year “Dying to Live” based on John 12:24. (The unvailing of the banner was delayed till Friday when two Andrews Academy students were “dying to live” - their baptismal service). The pastor used each of these symbols to help us clearly see God’s desire that each of us will be one of His children.



The last program of the week was worship and communion in the commons of the Academy. After a few songs and prayer Pastor VanDenburgh led is in communion again sharing with us a deeper understanding of the meaning of communion and the symbolism involved. And preparing our hearts as we experienced communion.

Thank you Pastor VanDenburgh for giving of your time in helping make our relationship with God stronger and for helping students to choose to follow God. Thank you Alvin Glassford and the many student volunteers for the many hours put into planning for and running this Week of Prayer. Thank you to the many volunteers who were praying for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit during this Week of Prayer.... please continue to pray that the choices made this week will stay in the hearts of individuals for their entire life.