

Lake Union HERALD

JANUARY 2018



LAWRENCE LEROY AND CLOIE LOGAN

INDIANAPOLIS HAUGHVILLE CHURCH PASTOR AND WIFE

NICHOLAS MILLER ON
THE CHRISTIAN'S CALL TO
PROTEST AND DEFEND LIBERTY

MAKING A DIFFERENCE
FAITH AND PUBLIC SERVICE





Jesus described us as *the salt of the earth* (Matthew 5:13). The definition of this phrase offered by dictionary.com is “an individual or group considered as representative of the best or noblest elements of society.” I’ve heard a number of sermons on this passage that talked about the properties of salt and the permeating, preserving, even healing effect it can have, making the connection that we are to have this kind of influence in our communities.

A few sentences later, Jesus also described us as the *light of the world* and that we should be careful to make sure that our light is visible and making a difference to others (see Matthew 5:14). Yet Jesus said he was the *Light of the world* (see John 8:12), which may suggest that we are to be like him to those around us.

So, which way do you lean? Are you on the salty side, the lighter side, or both? You’ll be inspired as you read the stories of what God is doing through some of our salt-and-light people in the Lake Union.

Gary Burns
Editor



FEATURES

14

The Christian’s Call to Protest and Defend Liberty

By Nicholas Miller and Janna Quetz

18

Making a Difference — Faith and Public Service



PERSPECTIVES

President’s Perspective	3
From My Perspective	4
Lest We Forget	8
Conversations With God	9
Conexiones	11
One Voice	38

LIFESTYLE

Family Focus	6
Alive & Well	7

EVANGELISM

Sharing Our Hope	10
Telling God’s Stories	12
Commission Culture	37
On The Edge	39

CURRENT MATTERS

Adventist Health System	24
Andrews University	25
News	26
Announcements	33
Mileposts	34
Classifieds	35

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My Lord, What a Morning!

As I drove into work this morning and saw the first rays of light begin to trickle over the horizon, I thanked God for the glorious mornings each of us experiences, anticipating the day ahead with its many unique challenges, pregnant with the promise of Jesus' presence.

The promise of a new year is much like the dawning of a day. As Seventh-day Adventists, we understand we are subject to time, and more specifically the God who established time, as evidenced by our keeping of a weekly Sabbath rest, between which are interspersed our personal itineraries, the infamous to-do lists or the symphony of our smartphones and watches, tablets and personal computers, from whence we get a chorus of reminders that "it," whatever "it" is, has to be done by. . . With all of the things we attempt to accomplish, we must never forget that God is with us — not just through each day; he is with us through each year.

With that thought in mind, the question I would like each of us to ponder is, "How will we use our gift of time in 2018?" Are we here simply to enhance our personal efficiencies, ever improving, ever enhancing our gift and skill sets so we can squeeze more into our day? Or is there more?

I'm issuing a presidential challenge for 2018. Let's make this a year of getting to know Jesus better than ever before. Let's use the blessing of time given to us each day to let the light of his love trickle over our thoughts, hopes and dreams. Let's devote the time given to us each morning to allow the light of his love and the power of his grace to dominate the landscape of our attention, so we can make godly decisions throughout the days of 2018 and beyond. Would you join me in a quest to seek him in the life of an Old Testament personage we enjoy reading about, or see him in the New Testament in the market square, leaning in the direction of a suffering woman just within her reach?

Let's even amuse ourselves with his responses to those who attempted to trap him with their words about many things, resulting in their own befuddlement, concluding, "We better not ask him anything anymore." Moreover, let's devote ourselves to reading one of the Conflict of the Ages series through in one year. You make the choice in prayer.

Let's also spend more time with Jesus in his Word. I like the story of Peter and John when they were told they should no longer even speak of the name of Jesus, retorted, *For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard* (Acts 4:20 KJV).

Can we do better at, *Go ye therefore . . . ?* The Adventist work ethic is firmly rooted in getting things done. It is implied in our name. "Seventh-day" specifies the weekly cycle in which we are to get things done, at the close of which, we worship God and thank him for his watch care and blessings over the activities we accomplished, just like he did at the end of creation week. "Adventist" denotes something larger than just the activity of any given week. It denotes a finite time in which all our work is to be done, and that each week's activity builds on the previous week. Consequently, there is progression in my life and in the lives of those in my sphere of influence. I'm not *waiting*, I'm *working* for his appearing. And, oh, what a glorious morning that will be! ■

Maurice Valentine is president of the Lake Union Conference.



▲ Maurice Valentine

Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Is a Ministry, Not a Service

By Edward Woods III



▲ Edward Woods III

GROWING UP SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST, have you ever pondered how we could transform Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL) from a service to a ministry with an evangelistic focus based on relationships? Surely, there's more to PARL than the Sabbath accommodation letter, legislative and judicial updates impacting Adventists and the *Liberty* magazine campaign. At some of our local churches, we call PARL, religious liberty. However, PARL encompasses more of a ministry than a service. As a biblically-based ministry, PARL draws from many texts in the Bible.

From a public affairs perspective, some have recited this Scripture: *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God* (Micah 6:8 KJV). This text speaks to Christian behavior and relationships. From a religious liberty standpoint, you may have heard this: *Choose ye this day whom ye will serve. As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord* (Joshua 24:15 KJV). This verse focuses on liberty of conscience.

As a ministry, PARL requires advocacy (Proverbs 31:8–9), learning to do right (Isaiah 1:17), justice (Proverbs 18:5 and James 4:17), conviction of the Holy Spirit (John 16:8–9), true love (I John 4:20), and deeds in truth (I John 3:16–18). That is right, the Bible provides a mandate for us to: advocate; speak out and defend the oppressed; ensure justice; enable the Holy Spirit (not people) to convict; embody agape love and empower action, as opposed to rhetoric. This begs the question: Do you view and practice PARL as a biblically-based ministry?

“But Jesus, the Master, was poor, and he sympathizes with the poor, the discarded, the oppressed, and declares that every insult shown to them is as if shown to himself. I am more and more surprised as I see those who claim to be children of God possessing so little sympathy, tenderness and love, which actuated Christ” (*Welfare Ministry*, p. 170).

Essentially, PARL requires Christians to get involved in their communities, especially the neighborhoods around their church. Your neighbors should know your church for your outreach and ministries, rather than the church's traffic patterns for Sabbath school, divine worship, prayer and church board/business meetings. Nurturing relationships requires understanding the challenges affecting the neighborhood. If crime is a problem, is your church an active participant in the Neighborhood Block Club (NBC)? If student scores are low, is your church offering a tutoring program and partnering with parents? Does your church ever host an NBC or PTA?

It's through compassion and interaction that we are able to sympathize with the poor, the discarded and the oppressed. We should not allow divisions of class, race, gender, education, age, etc., to prevent us from building and sustaining relationships. Addressing felt-needs can lay the foundation for building a

Gary Burns

relationship, instead of creating a mere list for promoting evangelism campaigns.

In initiating these relationships, we seek to understand the residential discrimination associated with living in public housing or trailer parks, gender disparities and age discrimination. We inquire about police misconduct and its disproportionate impact on minorities; why Mexicans are the only undocumented immigrants; the labeling of Muslims as terrorists; and its relevancy to Ian Haney Lopez's book, *Dog Whistle Politics*. Instead of sitting back, we protest against injustice and represent the evidence of a living Christ.

From an evangelistic perspective, public affairs lets people know you care about them, but religious liberty respects their right to make a choice to worship the God that you serve. What good is a religion or an individual who cares little about human needs, sufferings or rights? "A religion that leads men to place a low estimate upon human beings, whom Christ has esteemed of such value as to give Himself for them; a religion that would lead us to be careless of human needs, sufferings or rights, is a spurious religion. In slighting the claims of the poor, suffering, and the sinful, we are proving ourselves traitors to Christ" (*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 137). Ponder this question: Are we traitors, or are we loyal to Christ?

Today, religious liberty seems hijacked to interest groups versus the individual right to worship according to the dictates of one's conscience. Can you imagine the harm to religious liberty in repealing the Johnson Amendment? Repealing the Johnson Amendment would enable 501(c)(3) corporations to engage in electioneering and raising campaign funds. Instead of houses of worship being a place for all people, they become a potential cesspool for partisan politics. Tithe and offerings are collected along with campaign contributions. When a family evaluates a church, the labels "liberal," "moderate" or "conservative" would not only apply to worship style, but also where it leans politically. How does that assessment affect the mission of the church? Would the repeal of the Johnson Amendment really increase church attendance and/or make church more relevant?

As Seventh-day Adventist Christians, we embrace and respect our right (and the rights of others) to

worship according to the dictates of our conscience. Consequently, we do not codify our religious beliefs into law, i.e. the Sabbath. We serve a God of unconditional love, not coercion. Religious liberty emphasizes that God does not want anyone to perish, but all to come to repentance (see 2 Peter 3:9). It also identifies the residents of heaven (see I Corinthians 6:9-10). Nevertheless, the choice belongs to the individual whether they respond to the promptings of the Holy Spirit (see John 16:8-9). This makes public affairs and religious liberty a ministry. ■

Since 2008, Edward Woods III has served as the PARL director/minister of the Lake Region Conference. As an alumnus of Ruth Murdoch Elementary, Andrews Academy and Oakwood University, he's passionate about the pursuit of liberty of conscience and justice in reflecting the agape love of God. A recent Princeton Theological Seminary fellow, Edward also serves as the chairman of the regional conferences' Conscience and Justice Council.

Here are seven tips to make PARL a ministry:

1. **Seek** a daily and fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit through prayer, fasting and Bible study.
2. **Recruit** your pastor to join the Ministerial Alliance or community-based organization (see *SDA Ministerial Manual*, p. 25).
3. **Identify** a PARL director and team that are passionate about conscience and justice to facilitate and execute the PARL ministry.
4. **Join**, host and participate in your local Neighborhood Block Club and/or Parent Teacher Association.
5. **Strengthen** police-community relations in the neighborhood surrounding your church.
6. **Address** conscience and justice issues at Public Affairs and Religious Liberty rallies.
7. **Network** and build relationships with civic, religious and community stakeholders.

Surrendering Our Children to God

“We had to give him the EPI . . . peanuts in an ice cream bar . . . EMTs here . . . waiting for the ambulance . . . cell coverage very bad . . . hospital about 45 minutes away . . . we are very remote . . .,” my husband’s voice wavered.



▲ Ingrid Weiss Slikkers

My oldest son has life-threatening allergies to nuts and, now, our greatest fear was happening in the wilds of Utah. This backpacking trip had been planned for a long time. My husband and teen-aged sons would go ahead, and I would join them for the last part of the trip to Yellowstone. Earlier that evening they had shared great reports of their day as we chatted on the phone. “Mom, Bryce Canyon was so great!” And now this.

Almost midnight and alone in our Michigan home, I reached out to friends who immediately started a prayer chain. Another text, “Ambulance here.” Then seconds passed into minutes with no texts. Nothing. Just silence. I felt my body flood with an electrical rush, which I knew was an acute stress reaction. The weakness was so intense I had to lie down.

The silence was now deafening. I knew I needed to breathe; with each breath, came a prayer. A gasped, “Lord, save my son!” came with an exhale but, as I started to inhale again, thoughts of losses came. Others came to mind who had said the same words; parents from my therapy practice that had lost their children from illness or accident who also had prayed this prayer. Why would God answer *my* prayer for a miracle of life?

For someone who strives for control, in this weakened state I felt I needed to respond to my thoughts

with words of obedience — words I hoped would take my thoughts captive, words I had been repeating since I was a child and needed to say now, “Thy will be done.” The lump in my throat expanded. I could hear the word “Surrender” in my mind. “Surrender,” it came again. I knew I had to give my son to God completely and accept whatever that meant. I wanted to yell in anger but I was too limp, and I already knew what I had to do. But why was it so quiet!?!?!?

“Surrender. Surrender. Give it all to me,” came the words again. “I’ve got this. I have the end. I’ve already taken care of it. Just quit thrashing. Be still and know that I am God . . . I gave you this silence so you could hear me. Just yield.”

My son lived through this episode and we are able to talk about it being a miracle. But for me, it was more than that — it was my Mt. Moriah. Although I had verbalized many times that I had given my children to him, it had not been utter release. I had needed that dreadful silence to truly hear.

As this New Year begins, I pray you and I will live our lives in continued, daily submitting of our children to God. ■

Ingrid Weiss Slikkers is assistant professor of Social Work at Andrews University, a child and family therapist, and is constantly learning more about God because of her sons.

Orally Speaking: Body-Mouth Connections

I hadn't seen Alicia in three years. She was a busy 41-year-old mother who neglected her dental care until her gums started bleeding when she brushed.

Her weight had crept up since the last time I had seen her, and she looked tired. In spite of the fact she had developed diabetes, she did not exercise or watch her diet, so her blood sugar was not well controlled.

Alicia's oral examination reflected her health condition. Her gums were inflamed, tender and infected. A comprehensive exam and x-ray revealed significant periodontal disease with bone loss. The first line of defense was to treat her gum disease and encourage more healthful lifestyle choices to help her get her diabetes under control. This combined approach reduced her inflammation by 97 percent and helped her save her teeth — and her health.

What is periodontal disease?

Oral health problems are common, costly and painful. Because people are living longer, gum disease, also called periodontal disease, has overtaken tooth decay as the most common cause of tooth loss in adults. It affects every age group, and about 8 out of 10 Americans over the age of 65.

Poor brushing and flossing cause plaque — a gummy film of germs — to build up on teeth, potentially causing more serious gum disease. When gums become inflamed and bleed, it means your immune system has stepped in to attack harmful bacteria. Smoldering inflammation can lead to periodontitis, a more serious form of gum disease. At advanced stages, inflammation breaks down the connective tissue that anchors teeth in their sockets, pulling the gums away from the teeth and forming pockets of infection that can spread throughout the body.

Body-Mouth Connections

Dentistry and medicine traditionally have been worlds apart. But Alicia's story and increasing evidence reveal that there is a powerful connection between oral and body health which cannot be separated. Once harmful oral bacteria from gum disease leak into the blood, they trigger the body's immune system to heighten inflammation in other areas of the body, such as the arteries.

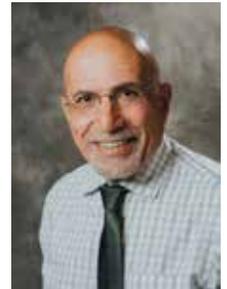
Just as the condition of the mouth affects the health of the body, chronic conditions that create inflammation also affect the risk of gum disease and infection. Obesity, diabetes and heart disease are among several inflammatory conditions that ramp up the frequency and severity of infections throughout the body, including the mouth.

Fit Body, Healthy Mouth

To reduce the risk of gum disease, make the decision to add personal fitness goals to your oral hygiene routine. Choosing fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, beans, water and healthful fats, such as walnut, other nuts and olive oil reduces inflammation at the systemic level. Add daily exercise — especially in the fresh air, stress management, positive relationships, adequate rest and trust in God, and you will be on your way to a healthy body and a healthy, happy smile! ■

John Mashni practices dentistry in East Lansing, Michigan.

This article has been reprinted, with permission from the author, from the Lifestyle Matters Balance: Mind, Body, Spirit magazine, Vol. 1, No. 10, pp. 5, 6.



▲ John Mashni

Two Kinds of Righteousness, Part III

All our righteousnesses [or “righteous deeds,” RSV] are as filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6).



▲ George R. Knight

Are they?

That is the position Waggoner took in the face of the emphasis by Smith and his friends on justification by works. “Human righteousness,” Waggoner penned, “is of no more value after a man is justified than it was before.” The justified Christian “*shall live by faith.*” Therefore, “the one who has the most faith will live the most upright life.” That is true because Christ is “*THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.*” For Waggoner, faith was everything and the equation of faith + works = justification found its roots in “the spirit of the antichrist.”

Jones stood firmly with Waggoner. In May 1889, for example, he told his hearers that the law was *not* the place to seek righteousness. All “our righteousness is as *filthy rags.*”

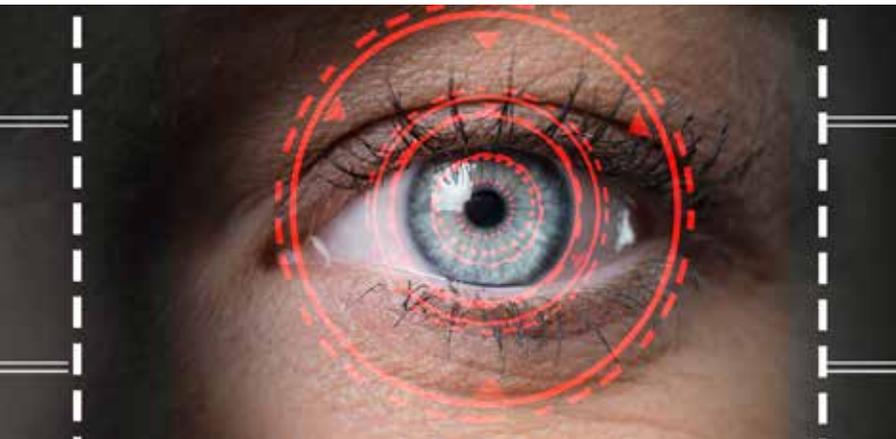
Smith took exception to such comments. A month later, he fired off a broadside at Jones in the *Review* entitled “Our Righteousness.” He noted that some of the correspondents of the *Review* were playing

into the hands of those who would do away with the law by making remarks about our righteousness being “*filthy rags.*” The *Review* editor went on to say that “perfect obedience to the [law] will develop perfect righteousness, and that is the only way any one can attain righteousness.” “We are not,” he asserted, “to rest on the stool of do-nothing, as a mass of inertia in the hands of the Redeemer. . . . ‘Our righteousness’ . . . comes from being in harmony with the law of God. . . . And ‘our righteousness’ cannot in this case be filthy rags.” There is, he concluded, a righteousness that is “to be secured by doing and teaching the commandments.”

When that article came out, Ellen White was preaching that faith must come before works at camp meeting in Rome, New York. When the people couldn’t harmonize what she was saying with Smith’s article, her response was that Brother Smith “doesn’t know what he is talking about; he sees trees as men walking.” She pointed out that just because Jesus and his righteousness are central in salvation, that does not mean that we discard God’s law (MS 5, 1889). To Smith, she wrote that he was on a path that would bring him to a precipice and that he was “walking like a blind man” (Lt 55, 1889).

How is our spiritual eyesight? Are we clear on the relation of faith and works, law and grace? Maybe not. But that’s what the 1888 emphasis is all about. Answers will come as we follow God’s leading through this bit of Adventist history. ■

George R. Knight is a retired professor of Church History at the Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University. This article is from his book, Lest We Forget, a daily devotional, published by the Review and Herald Publishing Association, page 265, printed by permission.



Praying for Difficult People

Do you intercede for others during your conversations with God? How about when someone doesn't "deserve" your prayers? Praying for difficult people can be a real challenge at times.

There's a remarkable string of conversations recorded in the Bible that has deeply impacted my passion for pursuing God through prayer. At the core of these conversations are some amazing insights regarding prayer and praying for difficult people.

While spending time in the intimate presence of God, Moses learned that the very people he had been called to lead were involved in outright rebellion against him and the God he served. This was not some small, quiet, insignificant resistance. The rebellion was so loud that Moses and Joshua could hear the Israelites' revolt before they saw them dancing around the golden calf.

Aaron, God's appointed spiritual leader, had allowed himself to be pressured into trying to appease the people while Moses was receiving the Ten Commandments on the mountain. How differently this story might have unfolded if Aaron had led the people in forty days of prayer. It's an important reminder. When there's an absence of praying leadership, humans may fill the vacuum with the false god of self-importance and seeking their own way rather than God's way.

Moses' response to the blatant rebellion of the people and God's plan to destroy them was truly remarkable. *[Moses] fell prostrate before the LORD for forty days and forty nights* (Deuteronomy 9:18). Imagine Moses interceding without food and water for the very people who had rejected him and his leadership! What an amazing rebuke to any reluctance we may have to intercede for those who offend or rebel against us.

Exodus 33 reveals that, as Moses continued his intercession for the Israelites, he learned a disturbing truth. While God did not destroy the rebels as Moses

had feared, God indicated he would not personally go with the people to the Promised Land and suggested he would simply send an angel ahead of them to drive out the enemy.

If this happened, what good would the tabernacle be? The Levites would be packing around a reminder of a God who had vacated the premises. It would no longer be a place for God to dwell among his people. Gone would be the need for the Most Holy Place. Gone would be the need for the Ark with its Mercy Seat. Gone would be the Shekinah glory of God!

Moses' prayerful perseverance sought assurance. *If you are pleased with me, teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you. Remember that this nation is your people* (Exodus 33:13). God graciously responded to Moses' persistent intercession: *My Presence will go with you* (Exodus 33:14). In response, Moses stated a profound truth that applies to those of us who are bound for the Promised Land and we would do well to keep in mind: *If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. . . . What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?* (Exodus 33:15, 16).

We find in the intimate, intense, passionate conversations Moses had with God a reminder that it is God's presence (not merely correct beliefs) that must distinguish us as a last-day, disciple-making people. May we keep in mind that any intercession we do for others, including interceding for difficult people, is grounded in the truth that Jesus always lives to intercede for those who come to God through him (see Hebrews 7:25). ■

Ron Schultz is the prayer coordinator for the Illinois Conference.



▲ Ron Schultz

Wisconsin Church Improves Lives of Ugandan Children

By Kristine Truax and Donna Peters



Marshall Foster for Sole Hope

▲ Ritah's health improved after her infestation of jiggers was treated. Her new shoes will help keep her jigger-free.

WHEN MEMBERS OF WISCONSIN'S RHINELANDER CHURCH learned of children in Uganda contracting a painful foot disease, they knew they wanted to help.

Since many Ugandan children walk around bare-foot, the jigger flea, an insect the size of a half-grain of rice, can easily burrow into the soles of their feet. This can often lead to bacterial infection and eventually amputation.

Last year the entire Rhinelander congregation partnered with a U.S.-based Christian organization, Sole Hope, to help make 63 pairs of shoes. Members happily donated their used blue jeans. The Northern Lights Pathfinder Club cheerfully traced patterns for the shoes onto plastic and cut out plastic pieces for the heel portion of the shoes. Our church ladies readily met five afternoons to trace the plastic patterns onto the denim and then cut them out. It takes eight cut pieces of denim and two plastic pieces for each pair of shoes.

The church then sent them to a central location in the United States where they were processed and shipped to Uganda. When they arrived, the local

women sewed them and the men placed rubber soles from recycled car tires on the shoes and were paid for this service.

After the jiggers were removed at the local clinic, children, such as Ritah (pictured at left), were given a pair of shoes.

It's stories such as Ritah's that mobilized the Rhinelander Church into action. She was infected by jiggers and her health declined. First, she contracted pneumonia, then malaria, and then her kidneys began to fail.

"Whenever I looked at my daughter, I could see she was going to die," her mom said.

Her mother had no funds for medical care, so she kept farming, praying, and getting ready to bury her youngest daughter.

Until help arrived — in the form of Sole Hope.

Ritah received proper treatment and, over the weeks, she came back to life, physically and emotionally.

"I was always sickly," says Ritah, her face radiating joy. "Now I'm very fine."

Ritah is now completely healthy and free to live her best life. She loves to jump rope and eat fresh fruit. She loves to study and, if there's work to be done, she helps with a smile.

Ritah's new chance at life impacts the rest of the family as well. Mom exudes joy and thankfulness. She had planned to bury her baby girl. Now that girl is completely healthy. "I'm very happy that finally there has been salvation for my child," her mom said. "This is what I prayed for."

Anyone interested in cutting out shoes or donating money can get more information at: <http://www.solehope.org> ■

Kristine Truax and Donna Peters, Rhinelander Church members, with Lake Union Herald staff

El Valor de dar Estudios Bíblicos

En el mes de noviembre del año 2017 tuve el privilegio de asistir a una convocación de las iglesias del distrito del pastor Eusebio Lima que se llevó a cabo en la Iglesia del Norte, en la ciudad de Milwaukee, estado de Wisconsin.

EN EL MES DE NOVIEMBRE DEL AÑO 2017

tuve el privilegio de asistir a una convocación de las iglesias del distrito del pastor Eusebio Lima que se llevó a cabo en la Iglesia del Norte, en la ciudad de Milwaukee, estado de Wisconsin. Asistieron más de 200 personas con el propósito de celebrar lo que Dios había hecho ese año en la ganancia de almas y el establecimiento de una nueva iglesia. Me impresionó mucho el reconocimiento que se dio a aquellos que dan estudios bíblicos. Fue una sorpresa para mí ver subir a la plataforma a veintinueve personas que comparten el pan de vida cada semana con personas interesadas en conocer la verdad

Ese reconocimiento me hizo recordar a los esposos Padilla que en el año 1966 venían a nuestra casa cada martes para darnos estudios bíblicos. Era evidente que a pesar de que ambos padecían de ciertos desafíos de salud, tenían un gran deseo de compartir la Palabra de Dios; a pesar de eso nunca faltaron a ninguna cita para dar estudios bíblicos a la familia Mercado en nuestro pequeño apartamento en el Bronx.

Algunos piensan que es el pastor quien debe dar los estudios bíblicos pues es para eso que recibe el salario. Pero éste no es el método de Cristo para compartir las buenas nuevas al mundo. El plan de Dios es que cada discípulo nazca en el reino como misionero. Aprendí esta lección de laicos con los esposos Padilla. Y tan pronto como me bauticé empecé a compartir la Palabra de Dios con otros, repartiendo literatura y dando estudios bíblicos. Más tarde, al trabajar como pastor

de iglesia mi prioridad fue siempre buscar a personas interesadas en estudiar la Palabra de Dios.

Estoy convencido que en el mundo actual donde aumenta la violencia, los desastres naturales e injusticias de toda clase, hay muchos que buscan algo mejor. Dios nos llama hoy como adventistas a compartir el evangelio de esperanza por medio de su Palabra. En el comienzo de este nuevo año quisiera desafiar a cada hermano a que busque a personas a quienes dar estudios bíblicos. Si nunca ha compartido con otros la Palabra de Dios, su pastor le puede enseñar cómo hacerlo. La Iglesia Adventista tiene muchísimos recursos disponibles que le pueden ayudar (Para ver ejemplos de esos recursos se puede ir al sitio web (www.adventistbookcenter.com)). Mi oración es que Dios guíe a los que lean este artículo para que sientan el deseo de compartir su Palabra y se conviertan en una fuente de agua de vida. ■

Carmelo Mercado es el vicepresidente de la Unión del Lago.



▲ Carmelo Mercado



▲ Miembros de las iglesias en Wisconsin que participan en el programa de dar estudios bíblicos, en momentos de recibir un reconocimiento

Caught Up in a Life of Good

By Felicia Tonga



Photo provided by Toson Knight

▲ *Toson mentoring incarcerated young men in Detroit.*

IT'S A GLOOMY AFTERNOON and a nattily dressed young man with dark-rimmed glasses storms into an empty Detroit classroom. Toson Antwan Knight glances at his watch and quickly organizes the room in preparation for his mentees.

"I always tell my mentees, there are a lot of smart people in prison," says Toson, founder of Caught Up Mentoring, an organization which connects at-risk teenagers to positive mentors. "In fact, there are a lot of smart people in the grave but, unfortunately, the court doesn't care about their story and how they could've been this great kid."

Staring out of the classroom window, the 31-year-old reminisces of his own childhood. Kicked out of 13 schools, Toson's life seemed to be spiraling out of control. It wasn't until the faculty at Peterson-Warren Academy, a Seventh-day Adventist school in Inkster, Michigan, took Toson under their wings that his life steered into the right path.

As he thinks about his mentees and the pressure they face to follow role models who are drug

dealers, gang members and basketball players, he remarks, "Seeing someone who is professional and doing well for themselves changes their perspective. I tell my kids all the time, 'You need to start caring for yourself so that you can make an impact on this society.'"

Suddenly the bell rings. Students anxiously race toward the school gates, ready to embrace the afternoon freedom. It is Friday and the weekend is fast approaching. You can hear the squeakiness of the tennis shoes thumping against the floor as the halls empty into a quiet catacomb, vacant for another weekend. This public high school is located in the heart of Detroit. The once economically booming city, now a desolate graveyard of abandoned houses, bears little witness to what is taking place in a small classroom at Denby High. Little light manages to shine through the barred classroom windows, yet young, teenage Black men eagerly walk in. Taking a seat, you can't help but notice the look of anticipation on each young man's face.

As Toson takes center stage, his voice silences the room and the boys turn to him. "We are doing this program to help you out," he says. There is a look of admiration in their eyes. "I want you to be focused on life. All of you have potential, and I see it in you. You are smart, but you make silly decisions."

Toson introduces the guest speaker to his students. Their eyes are fixated on the young man who is dressed differently from themselves: a bow tie, a tucked-in shirt, slacks and leather shoes. He is another young Black man, and he begins by reading a poem:

"I've only just a minute,
Only sixty seconds in it.
Forced upon me, can't refuse it,
Didn't seek it, didn't choose it,
But it's up to me to use it.

I must suffer if I lose it,
Give an account if I abuse it,
Just a tiny little minute,
But eternity is in it.”

Staring intensely at the students, the guest speaker elaborates, “The poet is referring to life in and of itself.” A moment of silence follows as the students absorb the words, “Meaning we only have a short amount of time. The moments that you spend here — you will not get back, so you need to use your time wisely.”

An aroma of freshly cooked food takes over the atmosphere. Mac and cheese, mashed potatoes, fried chicken, and salad are all on the menu today. The boys, however, are not focused on the food, but on the subject that has captured their undivided attention. A discussion on improving their circumstances, scholarships, the dream of going to college, and having a better future is brought to the floor. Their curiosity is sparked and the interest is obvious. The desperation for positive attention is subtle but, at the end of the program, their hands shoot up with a conspicuous eagerness, ready to ask questions and soak in the knowledge that is given.

This is just a glimpse of one of the programs that Toson has founded for at-risk youth in Southeast Michigan. Currently serving in the Mayor’s office, Toson is the deputy manager for Department of Neighborhoods. He helps the community, police and various organizations resolve issues effectively. In the evenings, Toson dedicates his time to working with the young men in the community.

“I grew up in Highland Park, Michigan. I saw many of my friends go to prison. One day, as I was driving back to Oakwood University, I realized that many of my friends did not get the same break. If it wasn’t for Adventist education, I wouldn’t have had this opportunity,” he admits.

Today, Toson believes that God has called him to work with the youth living in the inner city. The vision of a mentor program was conceptualized out of his experiences and, thus, Caught Up became a reality and was incorporated as a nonprofit entity in January 2015. This special organization not only has changed the lives of many young men in the Detroit community, but it also has introduced many to Jesus.

Caught Up consists of three branches: Project Re-entry, Saturday Night Live, and Project Empower. Each program is specialized and serves a specific purpose.

Project Re-entry focuses on juveniles. “Young men who get out of jail either recommit crimes or are murdered. After realizing that fact, I wanted to start a program that would help these youth become successful.” During the juveniles’ last eight weeks of their incarceration, Toson and his team work with them before they re-enter society. “Working with each member of the program, one-on-one, is very important to ensure their success. Upon getting out of juvenile hall, Program Re-entry helps the young men secure jobs, and gives them food and gas money to get to work,” Toson says.

The second program is called Saturday Night Live. “It’s pretty simple,” says Toson. “It’s just Bible study, basketball and food.” Many of the young men who come to this program on Saturday night are from the community. “There are many bad things that can happen on a Saturday night after 6 p.m. so, [instead], what you have are 30+ young men off the street from 6-11 p.m. doing something positive,” Toson explains. “As a result, many have been baptized.”

Lastly, there is Project Empower. This mentoring program is taken into different public high schools throughout the East side of Detroit. Every week a guest speaker is invited, a life-skill session takes place, and food is shared with those who attend. “Our goal every week is to keep young men off the street,” he says.

Toson’s passion to lead youth to Christ, and to show them a better way of living, is evident in his daily routine. The amount of work that needs to take place in Detroit can be overwhelming, however, he is taking it one young man at a time. At the end of our interview, Toson adds, “Something that I had always promised myself is that I will never let a kid down. I know what that is like. So, when I promise a kid that I will be there, or that I will do something, I do everything in my power to keep that promise.” ■

Felicia Tonga is a Lake Union Communication intern.

THE CHRISTIAN'S CALL TO

PROTEST & DEFEND LIBERTY

By Nicholas Miller and Janna Quetz



LAST YEAR, THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH CELEBRATED the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's initiation of the Protestant Reformation. It was in October 1517 when Martin Luther nailed the 95 theses to the door of the Wittenberg Cathedral. But more important than when or where Luther nailed the theses, is what was in them. It consisted of a series of statements about the importance of repentance towards God and prayer in seeking forgiveness of sins, rather than seeking that forgiveness through a series of indulgences and special acts or payments to leadership in the church. For a video of the very stairs in Rome that Martin Luther climbed on his knees, go to: <http://bit.ly/zhNqWWA>

Martin Luther is often known for *sola scriptura* (by Scripture alone) and *sola fide* (by faith alone), but many scholars and historians realize that those doctrines were understood by others before Luther. It was Luther's boldness of taking these doctrines and applying them to the abuses of his day that drew the attention of the church and the world. These indulgences were being used to raise money for the rebuilding of St. Peter's in Rome until Martin Luther intervened with his message of repentance, grace and free forgiveness of sin. This put a stick in the wheel of the medieval world and ground it to a halt, drawing attention to this monk setting down this challenge. For a video of the Cathedral doorway where Luther nailed his theses, go to: <http://bit.ly/zzRO3q4>

It's not enough to be a Protestant and believe in a few solas. It's what Luther did with those truths that changed the world. He applied them to the abuses of his day — the combination of spiritual and financial abuse of the oppressed and poor people of his day. We may think we are Protestant by accepting *sola scriptura*, *sola fide*, *sola gratia* (by grace alone) but, if we don't apply them and live them out to relieve and challenge the combination of spiritual and social injustices and abuses of our day, we do not know the true spirit of the Protestant Reformation. This past year, the Lake Union Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department saw a number of opportunities to speak out on behalf of human dignity and freedom in a number of areas.

with its command to allow servants, visitors and animals to rest, of the call to social equality and fairness found in Scripture.

To promote this message, we have run programs with our conferences to help raise awareness of the important roles that Adventists can play in the life of their communities. In Chicago, we partnered with the Lake Region Conference to run a weekend conference on religious liberty and social justice where we focused on what churches and members can do to help respond to the recent gun and gang violence in Chicago. Representatives of the Police Department and City Council were able to dialogue with Christian leaders and citizen groups on how churches can help with educational and outreach efforts to the neighborhoods, and build trust and partnership with the police departments.

In October in Indianapolis, we had a "Martin Luther, Religious Liberty and Social Justice Today" program. We remembered Luther's protest against the combined spiritual and social injustices of his day and reflected on how Luther's protest could be relevant in our day as we talked about the role that Christians could play in speaking against injustice and working for the poor and oppressed. We had a panel that included a state judge, a city council member, a lawyer, as well as several religious liberty leaders, talking about practical involvement in the life of the city. We explored how the gospel could wear shoes, and come to the practical aid of those in the city.



THE SABBATH AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

The Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL) Department not only helps members who have issues with employment on the Sabbath, but also those who seek exemption from labor union membership, as well as those who need citizenship letters regarding the Adventists' position on the bearing of arms. Our early Adventist pioneers sought justice and freedom for slaves, and protected the rights of women and children by opposing the use and sale of alcohol.

We are seeking to emulate their strong stand on these social justice issues by raising awareness that the PARL Department is concerned with more than just Sabbath accommodation issues. Indeed, Sabbath itself reminds

HELPING THE IMMIGRANT

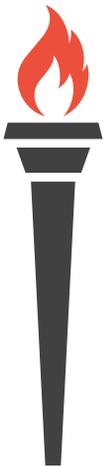
In September, an opportunity came to be of practical help to our immigrant members with the cancellation of the Deferred Action of Childhood Arrivals (DACA) immigrant dreamers' program by President Trump. The Bible is not silent about our responsibility to the stranger and immigrant within our community. The Children of Israel were commanded to *love ye therefore the sojourner; for ye were sojourners in the land of Egypt* (Deuteronomy 10:19 KJV). *Cursed be he that wresteth the justice due to the sojourner* (Deuteronomy 27:19 KJV). There certainly are immigrants listed in the Bible when you stop to think about it; and some exited or entered countries against the will of the local authorities — Abraham, Jacob,

Moses, the Israelites, Ruth as well as Mary, Joseph and Jesus to name a few.

Some may argue that immigrant dreamers should not legally be here, and thus should have no rights. But, in thinking about this, it helps to understand the difference between *malum in se* (things evil in themselves, like murder, theft, adultery) and *malum prohibitum* (things that are wrong merely because humans have passed laws, like traffic laws, zoning regulations and immigration laws). All laws should be respected and usually obeyed, but there is much greater basis for punishment regarding laws based on *malum in se*; and much greater latitude for flexibility, mercy and even exceptions for violations of *malum prohibitum*.

Indeed, there is a strong moral case to be made that immigrants who have entered illegally, but we then use their labor and efforts to build our country and benefit our businesses and homes, that after a time we have a moral relationship to treat them fairly, as a matter of *malum in se*, that outweighs their violation of the *malum prohibitum*. Certainly, children, like the dreamers, who never formed the intent to violate our immigration laws, should be treated with the greatest mercy and justice of all.

In response to this dreamer policy change, the North American Division (NAD) released a statement in support of dreamers. The NAD noted that this group included students in our universities, church members, and even some of our pastors. The Union PARL Department took practical steps to help. We made information sheets available to help dreamer immigrants reapply for an extension and distributed these to area churches, and published them online as well. Our immigrant members are generally faithful attenders, offering givers and tithing payers, and were looking to their church for a response in their time of need. The DACA action sheet enabled pastors to help them as their stability here was turned upside down. Much appreciation was expressed by members of our immigrant communities that the Adventist Church took an interest and concern in their challenges. (See our DACA information sheet here: <http://bit.ly/zzQkWDt>.)



RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND LGBT RIGHTS

In this court term, the Supreme Court has agreed to hear one of the most divisive issues of our day, that which pits religious freedom against the rights of the LGBT community and same-sex marriage. As you probably know, a year or two ago the Supreme Court made same-sex marriage a fundamental right. This decision immediately set up a series of conflicts between the traditional religious community and the rights of LGBT persons. One area in which that conflict has emerged is that of the small business owner and the same-sex wedding industry.

Many Christian bakers, florists and photographers are convicted they should not use their creative skills and talents to support a ceremony that they fundamentally oppose on moral and religious grounds. A number of such small business owners have been penalized, even put out of business, for standing for their convictions and refusing to participate in same-sex weddings. As of this writing, the case of one such business is before the U.S. Supreme Court.

A number of groups are filing briefs in support of the conscience of this Christian baker. Because the case did not involve a church or a church institution, the Adventist Church chose not to get involved. But, at the Lake Union, we believe that it is important to stand for the rights of our members, many of whom are private business persons. Thus, we assisted in the drafting of a brief that was filed by a number of Christian colleges, including at least one Adventist college. Thus, the Adventist voice is heard in this case.

We respect the rights of all, and are not arguing that the LGBT community should always lose these cases. But we have argued that the religious freedom case should be taken very seriously. When other avenues exist for the product or service to be obtained, we believe that a conscientious Christian should not be forced to do so.

We respect the rights of all, and are not arguing that the LGBT community should always lose these cases. But we have argued that the religious freedom cases should be taken very seriously.

GUN SAFETY

While gun issues may not appear to relate to religious freedom, more and more religious people are asking what freedom means if you are in fear of being shot in your church. We have recently been reminded with the terrible shooting in the Texas Baptist church of the terrible results that assault weapons can have in the wrong hands. Just a month or so earlier, we saw that demonstrated in the even more terrible shooting in Las Vegas. Much as our pioneers spoke out against the public health hazard of alcohol, so our modern church has spoken out on the public health hazard of guns.

In 1990, the General Conference issued a position statement that there should be a ban on the sale of automatic and semi-automatic assault and military-style weapons to the public. They cited the example of Christ who came to heal and not to kill; who told Peter to put up his sword and said those that live by the sword will die by the sword (see Matthew 26:52). The sixth commandment prohibits murder (Exodus 20:13) and the spirit of that law as Christ says in the Sermon on the Mount is not just to prevent murder, but to act in the principle of preserving life (see Matthew 5:21-24).

Some people argue that guns don't kill people, people kill people. But people can kill in much larger numbers if they have access to military-style weapons. Others say that cars and planes can be turned into weapons of death. Yet, a car or a plane also have very helpful uses to the public, are highly regulated with regular licensing for pilots and drivers, and inspections of the vehicles themselves. These assault-style weapons are made to kill people at a high volume, do not have useful purposes for civilians, and the licensing connected with them is often much less demanding than owning and driving a car. What keeps this gun violence going is an unholy alliance between gun manufactures, the gun lobby and politicians who are willing to be bought. Christians need to protest these abuses in the name of God and humanity. (See <http://bit.ly/2iw386S> for our gun safety video, and <http://bit.ly/2hDtNoP> for the Seventh-day Adventist Church's statement.) ■

Nicholas Miller is an Andrews University Theological Seminary professor and Lake Union Public Affairs and Religious Liberty director. Janna Quetz is administrative assistant for the Lake Union PARL department.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1fl2cQYpnG4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d6FHUaAcpxE>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bx6BXyGULIHXT3dSS0t4VTRQTWs/view>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3t_T092863g

<https://www.adventist.org/en/information/official-statements/statements/article/go/-/ban-on-sales-of-assault-weapons-to-civilians/>





MAKING A DIFFERENCE

FAITH AND PUBLIC SERVICE

We asked a cross section of members across our union to tell us about their involvement in public affairs and religious liberty. The following are their responses.

YOUTH, LIBERTY AND JUSTICE

Blayre E. Marley currently works as an associate attorney at Faegre Baker Daniels, LLP, and is a member of the Glendale Church in Indianapolis.



▲ Blayre E. Marley

My first encounter with the concept of Christian persecution was around the age of 7. I was snooping around my big brother's room and found *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* on his dresser. The picture on the cover caught my attention and I began reading the book, instantly engaged. After reading a handful of narratives, I decided that I was going to help save persecuted Christians.

During my sophomore year of college at Oakwood University, I had the opportunity to work as an intern with the Department of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL) at the General Conference, under the supervision of Dwayne Leslie. While working with

Dwayne, I gained first-hand knowledge about our Church's vigilant protection of religious freedom around the world.

Having really enjoyed my first summer at PARL, I worked there for three consecutive summers. During my second summer, God called me to start a North American Religious Liberty Association (NARLA) chapter at Oakwood University. I talked to Dwayne about starting a chapter and he directed me to Melissa Reid, NARLA's executive director, who had a wealth of knowledge about starting and registering a NARLA chapter.

With my newfound knowledge, I returned to Oakwood for the fall semester of 2013,

hoping to start the Oakwood University Religious Liberty Association (OURLA). Thankfully, the Student Services application and registration process were fairly straightforward and, before I knew it, OURLA was one of the newest organizations on Oakwood's campus.

In addition to needing to be directed by God, it is my belief that in order to succeed, NARLA chapters require members who are dedicated to achieving true religious freedom, both domestically and internationally.

OURLA's goal was simple: spread awareness. Our biggest goal for the 2013-2014 academic year was to ensure that the student body knew how easy it is to lobby a bill with PARL, write a letter to members of Congress, and

spread awareness about religious liberty in their communities and worldwide. Those were, in my opinion, powerful, yet easily attainable goals. I thought it was important for our community to know that if one wants to make a difference, one can make a difference.

Starting a NARLA collegiate chapter is not difficult. To my knowledge, Melissa is actively looking for college students who have a passion for Christ and sense God's calling to defend and protect religious liberty. These students make great NARLA chapter leaders and can bring true change to their campuses and surrounding communities.

If the desire is there, the opportunity is there. ■

LOBBYING FOR THE FAITHFUL

Jonathan Fetrick is pastor of the Watertown and Wisconsin's Academy churches, as well as the Beaver Dam Group. As part of his duties, he plans to advocate for the Seventh-day Adventist Church at the Wisconsin State Capitol.

"The Seventh-day Adventist Church runs the second largest private school system in the world," I said to a Washington State Senator as I caught her in the hallway just after she finished chairing the hearing. "I didn't know that," she responded, "And what do you think about the proposed school voucher program?" I remember being surprised by the question. I thought I would be able to get in a short follow-up comment after my initial statement but, instead, the Senator wanted to talk for about five minutes.

I was unprepared for the conversation lasting that long, but God helped. I had not testified in the hearing. I attended the meeting in order to hear the testimony on a different bill, which had more direct bearing on religious liberty. The primary testimony on the bill espousing school vouchers was from a Catholic lobby. Their argument was basically that the public school system was established in order

to keep students in protestant "public" schools and out of Catholic private schools. Since public schools were instituted because of religious prejudice, we need to reverse that prejudice.

I got involved in lobbying for religious liberty because the North Pacific Union (NPUC) Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL) department runs a capital pastors' program. In each state capital in the NPUC, there is a pastor at a nearby church who watches the proposed legislation and lobbies for the religious liberty interest of all people. In consultation with the PARL director, the pastors craft testimony for hearings and talking points for interacting with legislators on various bills.

When I moved to Wisconsin Academy six months ago, I realized the church is only 45 minutes from the state capital. The Lake Union PARL Department invited me to work with them on the lobbying aspect of religious liberty. I have been enjoying learning about Wisconsin politics.



Greg Edge

▲ Jonathan Fetrick

The Seventh-day Adventist Church religious liberty lobby is generally well liked among legislators. Religious liberty is a good public face for our church, and is currently grossly underutilized. The evangelistic mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church must remain our primary focus; however, this should not keep us from using a variety of means to advance the gospel. Several reasons we tend to grossly underutilize religious liberty include an inability of our church members to understand the way government works and appropriate involvement, a lack of reading Ellen G. White's statements about engaging in social issues in context, and the fact that we often view theology as detached from the practical world around us.

Seventh-day Adventists tend to be more balanced in our approach to issues and less partisan than most religious lobbies. In Washington State, over the past decade, we have made significant contributions to legislation about homosexual discrimination, religious day observance, dress in work places, and labor unions. Areas on the horizon, which have implications for religious liberty, include funding schools, ethics in taxation, discrimination, relating to extremist groups and more. A balanced, practical approach in speaking to the issues of our day is something I believe God can bless. ■



▲ John Nay

Photo provided by John Nay

INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IS VITAL

After 36 years in the U.S. Foreign Service, John Nay and his wife completed their final overseas tour of duty (three years in Suriname) and returned to Michigan in 2013.

I had joined the Foreign Service directly out of graduate school at Andrews University. Earlier, I had lived in Japan as a student missionary, and Judy, now my wife, spent the same year in Bangladesh. That experience gave me a life-long interest in international affairs, leading directly to my Foreign Service career. In all, we've lived in eight countries on four continents.

When I returned home, I wanted to put my experience to good use. I found part-time work in education and we transferred our church membership back from Suriname. As often happens with new members, our church nominating committee soon phoned both of us and, to my surprise, they asked me to serve as our congregation's religious liberty chairman.

During my Foreign Service career, I had sought to advance human rights. Seeing

apartheid's results in South Africa, actively working to help protect press freedom in Suriname, and advocating for democracy and human rights elsewhere, all gave me background on the issue. So, after consulting with the pastor, I accepted. It has been interesting and educational.

Then, last year, Ganoune Diop, director of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL) at the General Conference, invited me to serve as President of the International Religious Liberty Association (IRLA), a church-affiliated, but multi-denominational religious freedom association. IRLA promotes freedom of conscience for everyone everywhere, including the freedom not to believe.

As Secretary General, Ganoune leads the organization on a daily basis, but I am able to



put my international experience to work for this vital cause. This past summer, for example, we held the 8th IRLA World Congress, which included a broad range of speakers — Adventists and members of other Christian denominations as well as Jewish, Muslim and other religions.

Looking both at home and abroad, it's easy to see the value of protecting freedom of religion. It was shocking, for example, when Russia's government outlawed

the Jehovah's Witnesses and confiscated their churches this past year, claiming that Witnesses are "extremists." Dozens of other examples demonstrate the suffering many have faced for their religion.

Concerns also arise here in North America. I am grateful that Adventists advocate for others to help protect the principle of freedom of religion. Freedom of religion is a matter of human dignity, and supporting it is one part of the effort we must make on behalf of social justice and human rights

FAITH AND PUBLIC SERVICE

Emeka Jackson-Hicks is one of a few Adventists holding elected office within the Lake Union. In addition to being mayor of East St. Louis, Illinois (pop. 27,000), she works for the Illinois Capital Development Board. She and her family attend New Jerusalem Church in East St. Louis.

Church and state have been, at times, forcefully kept separate since before Jesus walked the earth. However, Mayor Emeka Jackson-Hicks for the city of East St. Louis, Illinois, believes serving the community, which includes politics, is something that God has tasked all Christians to do as his children. "Being a Christian is not just about going to church and serving on the inside, because there's so much work that needs to be done on the outside," Emeka said.

Getting involved in politics may seem like a mismatch for some Christians, but Mayor Jackson-Hicks said that it is imperative that God's people share in the shaping of the community in which we live in. "It's an opportunity to be a light in a dark place. So many times people will look at it as politics, but we need good Christians involved in governing. God's people should be the best when it comes to

being an example on how to govern what it is that God has given us dominion over. I definitely think we need more Christians involved," said Emeka.

Having a Public Affairs and Religious Liberty department in our churches is a great way for Adventists to start engaging in local government. "I think it's very important because it helps us to stay knowledgeable about what is going on in government and how it affects us," Emeka said. The next step is getting involved in local neighborhood governing. "Grassroots involvement is what's important. From there you can kind of grow," she says.

Working on the Sabbath is a concern for the mayor, just like it is for other professionals. However, her perspective of guarding the Sabbath is unique. "I'm very protective of my Sabbath and you learn to be even more protective and appreciative of it when you're



Camille Phillips for St. Louis Public Radio

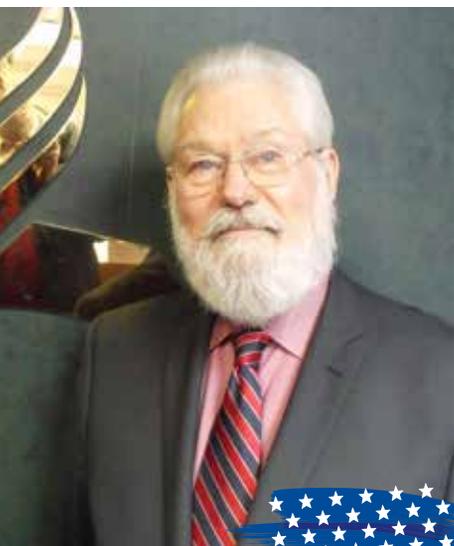
▲ Emeka Jackson-Hicks

working in the area I'm working in because you need that time to move away and focus on God," Emeka said.

Before becoming mayor in 2015, Emeka served on the City Council of East St. Louis, Illinois. She said her political career has been an unexpected, but welcomed journey, and that God directs her path and she will trust him

to see her through every single time. "When I look back over my experiences, and I look back over my career, I can see that God was preparing me for this." ■

Written by Detroit-based freelance writer, Malissa Martin.



Craig Martindale

▲ Vernon Young

KEEPING THE SABBATH AND KEEPING YOUR JOB

Vernon Young retired after 43 years in the business field, 23 of those as an executive. He's the PARL director of the Carmel Church in Indianapolis.

As a former businessman, I know the importance of hiring and keeping good employees. A business needs ethical and honest people for its success. Occasionally, there are problems (Sabbath accommodation and religious discrimination) where making minor changes to the working situation can benefit both employer and employee.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has a Public Affairs and Religious Liberties (PARL) Department which can be of great benefit to both parties. Whenever possible, without sacrificing one's religious principles, it may be necessary to "educate an employer" to applicable federal laws and the enforcement agency (EEOC) that comes into play when an employee requests legitimate accommodation and is denied by his/her employer. The legal consequences and potential penalties for a business can be severe.

Our goal is to educate Adventist employees about their rights and the means available to them when an employer is infringing upon these rights. The employee must be able to demonstrate to the employer that he/she can be a valuable asset to the business. The employee also must be prepared to offer beneficial alternative work situations to the employer.

This is what we must do. As a church organization, we must prepare a team of members to assist those in our church who encounter Sabbath accommodation problems. There are three steps that should be considered to protect the rights of our church members where their employment is concerned:

Planning — Conference PARL directors, including Indiana's Vialo Weis, have put together a plan of action and procedures to protect the rights of church members and minimize or prevent the possibility of "employer retaliation." This includes the necessary documents to be used in a three-stage plan as required:

1. Member's letter requesting Sabbath accommodation
2. Pastor's letter affirming and reinforcing the member's decision for Sabbath accommodation
3. Legal involvement by our PARL director as the situation dictates

Execution — By following this plan of action, the rights of church members are protected and the possibility of employer retaliation should be reduced or prevented. The PARL representatives will act as liaison between the affected church member and the respective PARL directors.

Best Practices and Results — The PARL representatives should create a case file in each instance and track effectiveness. Document and share results with PARL representatives throughout each Conference and with the Conference PARL Director. Our primary function

is not to create legal issues, but to find ways to assist members who may require Sabbath accommodation to best protect their religious liberties. This requires that we have a close working relationship with the legal arm within the church. ■

MINGLING WITH THE COMMUNITY

Lawrence LeRoy Logan is the pastor of the Haughville Church in Indianapolis. Since 1972, he, along with his wife Cloie, have used music to make friends in all denominations.

We're reminded that Peter opened his mouth and said, *Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him* (Acts 10:34, 35 KJV).

The world in which we live is complex. We are multi-cultural, multi-racial and multi-denominational with a whole spectrum of varied beliefs. Each of us has the freedom to choose with whom we prefer to mingle. My wife, Cloie, and I believe that if we are to walk as Jesus walked when he was on earth, prayer is really key. Nothing can be done in the spiritual world without the Spirit's guidance and direction.

So, when given opportunities to serve in diverse areas of Black gospel music for the Lake Region Conference, or in a public or community setting, if we could make ourselves available, we accepted the charge. Sometimes we were trembling but, because we trusted God to use us in his service, we moved forward. With soul-winning as our main focus, we tried to be sensitive to needs while interacting in love with all whom God allowed to cross our paths, trying not to come across as know-it-alls, superior or pharisaical.

Because music is a universal language — and a great evangelistic tool, it was easy for us to

maneuver into and through varied cultural, denominational and racial groups to demonstrate friendliness, love, respect — and most of all — to be witnesses of the truths according to God's Word.

We still hold membership with the Gospel Music Workshop of America (GMWA), a convention of gospel musicians founded by Brother James Cleveland in the early '80s. Its local Indianapolis Chapter consists of people of all ages and from varied denominations. The main requirement to be a member of the convention is to hold membership and work in an individual church.

Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we try to be friendly observers of the health and moral laws in every situation. But if questioned about our beliefs (because we seemed to be weird), that would be a prime opportunity to present a study regarding what the Bible teaches.

Whether encountering members of the Apostolic, Baptist, Catholic, Methodist or Seventh-day Adventist churches, to name a few, we believe we should always remember Acts 10:34, 35 (NIV): *Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right."* ■



Cloie Logan

▲ Lawrence LeRoy Logan



Dave Pfeleiderer

▲ Lanny Wilson, M.D., chairs an AMITA Health committee which seeks to help physicians improve their work/life balance.

Healing the healers

Physicians have a heartfelt calling to serve those in need of care. However, the joy of helping to heal others is often overshadowed by the demands of modern technology, a frenetic pace with little time for family and friends, and a heavy burden of financial, legal and regulatory concerns.

AMITA Health is focused on changing this dynamic. John Rapp, senior vice president and chief mission officer, has been working for more than a decade to help physicians at AMITA Health Adventist Medical Centers Bolingbrook, GlenOaks, Hinsdale and La Grange find outlets to relieve their stress and reconnect to their sacred calling. "Our mission to extend the healing ministry of Jesus also applies to the care we extend to our physicians," said Rapp. "For them to provide this level of compassionate care, they need to be personally cared for and supported as well."

At a recent meeting of the Illinois Health and Hospital Association (IHA), Rapp and Lanny Wilson, M.D., a specialist in obstetrics and gynecology at AMITA Health Hinsdale, shared their faith-based approach to supporting physician's spiritual and emotional needs.

"The Physician Well-Being Committee we created 12 years ago has made significant strides in helping doctors find balance," said Rapp. "This committee, chaired by Dr. Wilson, is a 'think tank' for generating solutions to combat physician burnout, enhance our physicians' work experience and improve their quality of life."

Some of these solutions include a Medical Arts program encouraging physicians to experience the stress-relieving benefits of creative pursuits, like painting and photography. Each year, physicians are invited to participate in international medical mission trips to reconnect

with their passion for healing others without the distraction of administrative responsibilities.

Schwartz Center Rounds offer physicians regularly scheduled times for open and honest discussion of the social and emotional issues they face in caring for patients and families, and chaplains are assigned to provide spiritual support to the medical residency programs. Counseling resources also are offered to anyone on the medical staff.

Wilson also represents Adventist Health System on a national committee for physician well-being because of the best practices he's helped develop around this issue. According to Wilson, he and Rapp were inspired by Don Jernigan, retired president and CEO of Adventist Health System, who first developed a physician engagement and well-being program 15 years ago.

"Dr. Ted Hamilton, senior vice president for Mission and Ministry for Adventist Health System, has worked diligently to expand upon Don's vision and encourages adoption across Adventist facilities," said Wilson. "Ted is now recognized nationally for his groundbreaking work in promoting personal and professional wholeness for physicians.

"Recently, significant resources have been allocated for this ministry. With a communication strategy and recruitment of physician champions, we are now at a point where we're better able to highlight this mission. The more physicians become aware of our work and the positive results we achieve, the more likely they are to become involved in the activities we offer to help them." ■

Julie Busch is associate vice president of Communications for AMITA Health.

A parent “village” covers students in prayers

This past summer, as Andrews University students finalized plans for the school year, a few parents began to interact for a very important purpose — praying for their children’s experience at Andrews.

Shirlean Seawood, who has two freshman attending Andrews, says, “Different parents here and there heard of other parents who had a child going to Andrews. The parents started communicating, started texting ... they were really excited to connect.”

Parents of current Andrews students made themselves available to parents of incoming students and answered questions ranging from what stores are in the area to what is essential for a residence hall room. The parent group grew from two to six, and plans developed for the parents to pray together for their students throughout the school year. When the fall semester started, the parent group, now expanded to 14 members, met in person for the first time and prayed together with June Price, University chaplain.

Seawood volunteered to coordinate the group and considered the best way to facilitate continued parent conversations. She created a website for the shared texts, emails, pictures and videos, and arranged for a monthly prayer conference call.

The first prayer call took place on Oct. 8, 2017, and 30 parents joined the call. The conference calls will continue the first Sunday of each month at 12 p.m. EST. Ten minutes are spent on welcome and announcements, and 10 minutes are devoted to sharing prayer requests. The last 10 minutes are spent in prayer for students, families and the University.



Shirlean Seawood

▲ At the beginning of the semester, a group of parents came together to pray for their children attending Andrews University.

Text message reminders also present names of specific students who are on the daily prayer list.

Cassandra Slade, who has a freshman at Andrews, says, “Knowing that a broader ‘village’ is praying for my daughter is so comforting. The group has been very supportive by sharing experiences that have guided me in providing impactful support to my daughter. My daughter has been covered in prayer, and when I ask her if she has prayer requests for the group, she provides them because she takes comfort in her prayer requests being prayed over.”

“It’s just encouraging,” says Seawood, “to know there are other people in the same boat who have the same issues and concerns and worries. Even though you’re going to pray for your child regardless, you have other people praying for your child, as well. It’s pretty powerful.”

Slade adds, “When we were able to meet up with other parents during Orientation, that also was a blessing. Chaplain Price invited us into her office and prayed over the students. My brother-in-law, who is not an Adventist, was very impressed by that experience. He and my sister had joined us that weekend to get my daughter settled. He still mentions that he had never heard of a group of praying parents like that before or that a college would support and promote such a group. What a powerful witness this group has been, is and will be!”

All parents and guardians of Andrews University students are welcome to join the Andrews University Parents’ Group. For more information, visit <https://auparentsgroup.wixsite.com/website>. ■

Gillian Sanner, Media Communications manager,
Andrews University

YOUTH NEWS

Youth leaders map out plans to impact Indianapolis at GC2020

MICHIGAN — In the basement of Pioneer Memorial Church, over 50 young adults and leaders gathered on October 17 in hopes that the Holy Spirit would guide them in planning for the youth and young adult programming that works in tandem with the General Conference Session.

The meeting to plan for the programming, dubbed IMPACT 2020, was organized by Ron Whitehead, Lake Union youth director, and Gary Blanchard, General Conference youth director.

The vision for the next General Conference meeting, scheduled to be held in Indianapolis June 24–July 4, 2020, is embedded in Scripture. *“Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children born in one’s youth,”* Blanchard said, quoting Psalm

Religion scholars are predicting that this generation will be the most influential generation on religion in the world.

127:4. Both Blanchard and Whitehead believe that young people are not supposed to be separated and uninvolved; they are the arrows that can shoot over the enemy lines. They should be trained and emboldened to go where only they can go, and reach whom only they can reach.

Generation Z (the generation for which IMPACT 2020 is designed) includes more than 2 billion people worldwide. The most racially diverse generation



▲ Center for Youth Evangelism director/Lake Union Youth director Ron Whitehead and GC Youth director Gary Blanchard with a group of students, youth pastors, educators and other youth leaders involved in planning for IMPACT 2020, the youth and young adult programming which will run concurrent with the General Conference Session.

to date, they are growing up in a world where only two in 10 Americans under 30 believe attending church is important. Fifty-nine percent of young adults who grew up in the church drop out, and 35 percent have an anti-church stance. This is statistically the least likely generation ever to attend church. According to an article by *The Truth Source*, published in 2017, “There is good reason to believe that they will be the most agnostic generation the world has seen since before the Medieval Period.”

Ron Whitehead hopes IMPACT 2020 will be a kick-off point for Adventist youth. He further said that we have to be conscious, as a church, of how to not just keep generation Z in our pews, but also include them in our ministries. The goal is that through the meetings and service they experience at IMPACT, they will be prepared to advance the Kingdom of God.

The planning session was filled with Andrews University students who wanted to be included in the discussion of how to organize such an event. Students felt service would need to be at the heart of the meetings. “At IMPACT, young people [will] hear messages geared toward them,

said Blanchard, “and have opportunities to make an ‘impact’ in the city through community service.”

Religion scholars are predicting that this generation will be the most influential generation on religion in the world. Blanchard and Whitehead are praying for God to show up in 2020. “I have come to believe that the youth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church are the wings of the Three Angels’ message!” Blanchard said. “Imagine what could happen if the Holy Spirit decides to show up and be the wind beneath their wings at IMPACT 2020! That would be amazing! and IMPACT 2020 would be the last one this side of eternity.” ■

Heather Thompson Day, Andrews University assistant professor in the Department of Visual Art, Communication and Design, was a member of the IMPACT 2020 advisory group.





Pieter Damsteeg

▲ Alanna Knapp represented Lake Union Public Campus Ministry students at the North American Division's Year-end Meeting.

Public Campus Ministry rep appointed to NAD Executive Committee

MICHIGAN — Alanna Knapp, teacher at Battle Creek Adventist Academy and M.A. student at Western Michigan University, represented Lake Union public campus students at the NAD Year-end Meetings in Columbia, Md., last October.

Having served in the past as a missionary, student and conference-wide leader, Knapp said she was grateful for the opportunity to represent Public Campus Ministry (PCM) students in the Lake Union and engage with church leaders at various levels. "I was thankful for the listening ears and the interest of the NAD leadership, especially that of Pastor Tracy Wood, the youth and young adult director for the NAD," said Knapp.

PCM has a unique opportunity to reach students in the U.S., and she said she looks forward to advancing that mission. "There are around 1.2 million international students to make their journey to the

public university campuses in the NAD from countries where our Church is not allowed to establish churches."

It was during the 2016 North American Division Year-end Meetings that delegates voted to appoint 10 Public Campus Ministry representatives to its executive committee. This was an unprecedented action that gave a much stronger voice to Adventist students who are studying on secular university campuses. Some General Conference and NAD statistics indicate as many as 70 percent of our Adventist young people attend secular universities.

In recent years, Adventist students on secular campuses from around the NAD have especially emphasized the need to better organize themselves and establish a student network. Adventist Christian Fellowship (ACF) appointed a student-led administrative body to better support student ministry on secular campuses. Lucien Nana-Yobo, a Ph.D. student in Geology at the University of Texas, Houston, currently serves as president.

Some of the leadership team has roots in the Lake Union. Jonathan Wheeler, former student dean at Andrews University, is now serving as ACF Communications director while completing his graduate studies at Stanford University. Alexander Delaola, from Chicago, oversees the ACF student senate. He's a Center for Adventist Ministry to Public University Students (CAMPUS) scholar, currently studying in Lansing. Roxanne Dobson and Michel Lee previously took a year off to serve as missionaries at Michigan State University and the University of Michigan, respectively. Dobson is completing her undergraduate studies at Stanford and Lee is completing her Ph.D. in History at the University of Texas, Austin. Their leadership has made a strong impact in this underrepresented ministry in North America. ■

Israel Ramos, Lake Union Conference Public Campus Ministry coordinator, with Lake Union Herald staff.

EDUCATION NEWS

Andrews University wins recognition from Communication association

MICHIGAN — Communication professionals and students from around North America gathered in Portland, Ore., from Oct. 19–21 for the 18th Society of Adventist Communicators (SAC) Convention.

The theme, "Building Bridges," helped formulate the various presentations and workshops. Organizers sought to encourage attendees to continually form and maintain strong communication channels with individuals and communities.

The conference climaxed with the awards banquet where students and professionals were awarded for their accomplishments in various categories that include design, writing, video and spoken word.

Andrews University students Nina Vallado, Jace McKinney and Felecia Datus walked away with awards for their work in film and print media.

Vallado's documentary, "Sisterly," which took four years to complete, captivated conference participants and was lauded for its unique perspective on autism. The North Pacific Union Conference intern said that this award was important to her. "I've received recognition from the outside world," she said, "but it's nice to have recognition from my church and from my community."

Jace McKinney's "Acts of the Messiah" also claimed an award in the web video category. The recognition pleasantly surprised the Communication/Divinity dual major graduate student who was happy for the opportunity to attend SAC. "The best thing about [SAC] is to meet like-minded individuals who want to push



▲ Andrews University award winners at the Society of Adventist Communicators Convention. Pictured from left: Patricia Spangler, Integrated Marketing and Communication (IMC) associate creative director and editorial manager; Felecia Datus, web video winner; Jace McKinney, web video honorable mention; Becky St. Clair, former AU IMC media communication manager; Paul Kim, Department of Visual Art, Communication and Design chair; Nina Vallado, short film winner

evangelism forward," he said. "You get to connect and bounce ideas off of them."

Meanwhile, Felecia Datus who won awards for her work with *Envision* magazine as well as for her video "My Faith and Fro," said that the awards are a huge boost. "Receiving an award from SAC for my documentary," she said, "really encourages me to be innovative and think outside of the box."

The Integrated Marketing and Communications team picked up an award for their response to the student-generated video, "It Is Time," which raised concerns about the handling of race issues on campus.

Dan Weber, Communication director for the North American Division (NAD), stressed the advantages of SAC for students and professionals in the communication field. "The most important reason is the networking opportunities it provides for students looking for employment and for organizations that may

have openings, and also the mentoring opportunities that are provided."

Weber, who has been directly involved with SAC since 2012, discussed future plans for the event. "We're going to be working with the Adventist Learning Center to provide SAC-sponsored training for local church communication directors and anyone wanting to brush up on their communication skills."

The next Society of Adventist Communicators conference is slated for October 18–20, 2018, in Columbia, Md. ■

Felecia Datus, special projects manager for Center for Online Evangelism, with Lake Union Herald staff



▲ Chicago's Shiloh Church young adults Nicole Wongk, Sabrina Webb and Gineya Norton were first runner-up winners at the Black Adventists Youth Directors Bible Bowl Championship.

Lake Region young adults study to show themselves approved

LAKE REGION — Young adults from the Chicago Shiloh Church had a strong showing at the Black Adventists Youth Directors Association (BAYDA) Bible Bowl Championship held Oct. 27–28, 2017, in Albany, N.Y.

The team, comprised of Nicole Wongk, Sabrina Webb and Gineya Norton, and coached by Margareth Webb, received the first runner-up placement in the Young Adult Division (ages 23–35). The young women were quizzed from the books of Acts, Deuteronomy, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians, and went through 16 rounds to make it to the championship level.

"Our young adults were true beacons of light," said Felicia Hunter, Lake Region Conference Bible Bowl coordinator, "witnessing, mentoring and sharing the Word of God."

Norton and Wongk are no strangers to top placement in Bible competitions. Last year they, along with Tia Brooks, received first place at the Bible Bowl All Stars Team Championships held during Youth Congress, and were first runner-up winners at the National Bible Bowl Championship.

The Bible Bowl All Stars Championship is held every five years and team members usually study after church each Sabbath, and via phone, FaceTime and text messages throughout the week.

Bible Bowl is an annual event for ages 6 to 106 in which people come together to study, learn, share and demonstrate their biblical knowledge.

The ultimate purpose of the Bible Bowl, as with all Bible study, is to bring the participants closer to Jesus, through study, sharing, fun and Christian fellowship.

While the competitive element may be there, competition is not the objective. There are no losers in Bible Bowl. Each participant is rewarded by drawing closer to Christ through his Word

and being able to face any challenge in life by saying, *Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee* (Psalm 119:11).

For more information on the books for study in 2018 or any additional information, please contact: LRCBibleBowl@gmail.com. ■

Felicia Hunter, Lake Region Conference Bible Bowl coordinator

LOCAL CHURCH NEWS

Chicago Church members bring hope and healing to Nigerian villagers

LAKE REGION — Last July, a team of health professionals and church members from the Nigerian Church in Chicago Heights, Ill., traveled to Nigeria on a six-day medical mission trip.

The team visited several villages in Abakaliki, the capital city of Ebonyi State in Nigeria, and administered care to over 1,000 people — many of them indigent and had not seen a physician in years because they cannot afford healthcare.

Patients were treated for such conditions as diabetes, hypertension, pain, infections and wound care. A host of services from free medication, optometry, clothing and daily health lectures were provided, along with spiritual literature.

One instance of how the medical team was used to save a life happened on the very last day of the mission trip. A young man came to the clinic with an extremely high blood glucose level and was given fluids and insulin. Since there was little change in his condition, he was sent to the local hospital.

Later that evening, a few members of the medical team arrived at the hospital to check on the young man and found him sitting outside and unconscious. The team immediately started an IV line and



Provided by Christina Wells

▲ Over one hundred people from several Nigerian villages came for medical care each day. The medical mission was a partnership between the Chicago Nigerian Church and Lake Region Conference, along with the Ebonyi State NGO (non-governmental organization), and the Ebonyi State Conference.

gave him fluids and glucose. When he finally regained consciousness, he explained that he was refused care because he had no money. The young man was so grateful to the team, which gave him food and paid for his hospital stay so he could be observed overnight.

On another occasion, a young mother brought her three-month-old child. The infant was not breathing or feeding well and not gaining weight. When the infant was examined, it was observed that something was wrong with the infant's heart. The infant's mom was instructed to take him to the hospital for further evaluation, but the mom had no money to pay for

the hospital stay and necessary testing. Operation Reach Back provided the funds. The family was overwhelmed by this gracious gesture! The team did all they could to ensure the infant was given the best care. It was a sad day when it was learned the infant passed away a few weeks after the mission trip.

Many lives were touched through the medical missionaries displaying the right arm of the gospel in action, revealing to others the love of Christ through the health message. ■

Christina Wells, Lake Region Conference Health Ministries director.

WOMEN'S NEWS

Lake Region women deepen their faith and "joy of the Lord"

LAKE REGION CONFERENCE — The Lake Region Conference women's retreat, held Sept. 22-24 at the beautiful Oakwood Resort and Spa in Syracuse, Ind., was a time of encouragement and healing for the 200 participants.

The theme, "Women on Strength" (Nehemiah 8:10), served as the backdrop for a time of joy and celebration. Doris Gothard, Lake Region Women's Ministries director said, "We learned to understand joy and protect it, own joy and verbalize it, grasp joy and explain it, love joy and embrace it, personalize joy and apply it."

A unique aspect of the retreat was that pastors and spouses were invited, a model in keeping with Ellen White who believed in bringing teen girls, men and women together.

One poignant moment during the retreat was when one of the resort workers, an Adventist from Jamaica, shared that this was the first time in three years she experienced a worship service because there are no Adventist churches in the Syracuse area. Hearts were touched and eyes filled with tears as keynote speaker and Lake Region Conference treasurer, Yvonne Collins, embraced her Jamaican sister during Sabbath worship service.

During the weekend, many other workshop presenters shared insights from God's Word, and some of the seminars geared toward women included the following presentations:

Kenneth and Monique Elliott: "The Psychology of Your Health: Emotional Turmoil, Neuroses, & Problems with Marriage"

Paul and Teresa Musson: "Good Grief! The Journey From Sad to Glad & No More Sorrow"

Cheryl Daly: "Estate Planning"



Richard Sylvester

▲ Lake Region Women's Retreat attendees enjoyed time with each other and the opportunity to strengthen their faith.

Tricia and Shawn Payne: "Unequally Yoked: Human Weakness in Need of Divine Strength"

Januari Nelson and Latita Thomas, teen seminars: "Sex, Social Media & Cardi B"; "Bullying"; and "Teamwork"

The General Session keynote speakers included: Emeka Jackson-Hicks, mayor of East St. Louis, Illinois; Timothy Nixon, executive secretary, Lake Region Conference; Ruth Letang Horton, associate Education director, Lake Union Conference

On Sabbath afternoon, attendees assembled for an Education think-tank panel discussion celebrating the legacy of Adventist education, hosted by R. Clifford Jones, president, Lake Region Conference. Panelists were: Ruth Letang Horton, associate Education director, Lake Union

Conference; Donald Gothard, retired General Motors executive; Helen Bryant, president of Life Learning Essentials and Operation Reach Back, Inc.; Renee Humphreys, Education superintendent, Lake Region Conference; William Lee, Men's Ministry director, Lake Region Conference

Many of the attendees said they found the retreat "tremendously inspiring," including Lee, who also serves as pastor of the Indianapolis Capital City Church and explored the "strength" of Samson with the men. "We laughed, worshipped, made friends, and left more inspired!" he said.

Another presenter, attorney Cheryl Daly, said: "I felt surrounded by Spirit-filled people, and frankly, it was a transforming experience. I am looking into a local chapter of Seventh-day Adventists — maybe I have finally found a church!" ■

Doris Gothard, Women's Ministries director, Lake Region Conference; Debbie Griffith, event registration coordinator; Zelda Solomons, program chair; Rosita Valentine Gabriel, music director

◀ Pastors and spouses were invited to the retreat.



Richard Sylvester

ACS NEWS

Local Adventist Community Services ministry receives two grants

Thanks to two significant donations, Neighbor to Neighbor (N2N), a ministry of Adventist Community Services in Berrien Springs, Mich., is closer to reaching its financial goal and its plans to break ground for their expansion in spring 2018.

On Oct. 11, 2017, Lakeland Health Foundations proudly presented a check for \$40,000; the following week, Frederick S. Upton Foundation donated a Challenge Grant check of \$20,000.

"We felt like Neighbor to Neighbor was providing a unique service that impacts the health and wellness of our community," says Brandi Smith-Gordon, president of Lakeland Health Foundations. "Our goal with our community wellness endowment is to be able to strengthen non-profit organizations in our communities that are doing health-related work and we felt that it [N2N] aligned with the goals of the endowment and the mission of our organization."

The 10,000-square foot addition to Neighbor to Neighbor is expected to cost \$850,000; they currently have a total of \$550,000 available for the project.

Executive director of N2N, Laura Meyer, says the organization was grateful for the financial help, which will help N2N better serve the local communities. "We feel honored and privileged," she says. "The responsibility to fulfill the goal is challenging, but we are determined to accomplish that task."

In explaining why N2N needs to expand, Lucy Randall, coordinator for Family Emergency Services, says, "We don't have enough space to do all the ministries that we want. For example, we have our counseling sessions, AA meetings, financial management sessions, and domestic



Felecia Datus

▲ Laura Meyer (left), Neighbor to Neighbor executive director, accepts a check from Brandi Smith-Gordon, president of Lakeland Health Foundation.



Felecia Datus

violence support groups. We can't have those things available all the time because we don't have enough space."

Because of this need, these ministries operate on the days when the thrift store is closed. The organization intends to erect a building to house the retail portion and reconfigure the current site in order to provide the services that address the needs in the community.

Most residents may associate N2N as only a thrift store but their work spans more than 10 decades, serving the surrounding communities. The organization

launched in 1914. What began as a small venture to purchase church pews mushroomed into an effort that would serve countless individuals. More than 100 years later, N2N has grown beyond its original intent. In addition to the thrift store, some of the services provided include domestic violence support, Narcotics Anonymous and professional counseling services for those having family issues. ■

Felecia Datus is the Center for Online Evangelism special projects manager.

AHS NEWS

Adventist Health System elects new Board Chairman

Gary Thurber was elected by the board of directors of Adventist Health System (AHS) to serve as its chairman, effective Sept. 14, 2017. Thurber, president of the Mid-America Union Conference, replaces retiring chairman Don Livesay, and assumed responsibilities immediately.

"Don has been instrumental in shaping the direction of our company over the last decade, and we are so thankful for his leadership," said Terry Shaw, president/CEO of Adventist Health System. "I look forward to working with Gary in his new capacity, as he brings deep insight and experience that will help guide our organization forward."

As Union president, Thurber is responsible for articulating the mission and vision of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Mid-America. Thurber began in ministry as a teacher at Redwood Adventist Academy in the Northern California Conference. From there, he served as an associate pastor and assistant director of Northwest Ministries Training Center at the Kent Adventist Church in the Washington Conference. He completed his bachelor's degree at Southern Adventist University, and earned his master's degree in religion at Andrews University. Ordained in 1987, Thurber has served as a pastor in the Kansas-Nebraska, Florida and Michigan conferences. He also has served as president of the Rocky Mountain, Indiana and Northern New England conferences. Prior to coming to the Mid-America Union Conference, Thurber was executive secretary of the Lake Union Conference. Additionally, Thurber chairs the board of Union College and works closely with its administration to ensure its success.



Provided by AHS

▲ Gary Thurber

"I am honored to be elected to serve as the board chairman for Adventist Health System," said Thurber. "I am thoroughly engaged in its mission of 'extending the healing ministry of Christ' and supportive of the committed leadership team that ensures the communities we serve are healthier because of our ministry."

Thurber succeeds Don Livesay who twice served as board chairman for Adventist Health System and was president of the Lake Union Conference before retiring in October.

"Serving Adventist Health System has been one of the finest experiences of my 43 years of ministry," said Livesay. "I've

been inspired to be a better leader by working with some of the most gifted, dedicated and godly leaders in the Seventh-day Adventist Church at AHS."

The board of directors for Adventist Health System consists of 64 members who are Seventh-day Adventist Union officers, Conference presidents from the AHS territory, appointed members of AHS corporate leadership or appointed members-at-large from each Union. These members serve either because of the church position they hold or by other appointment. ■

Mario Roberts, senior communications specialist at AHS

Churches, schools, conferences, institutions and organizations may submit announcements to the *Lake Union Herald* through their local conference communication directors. An easy way to do this is to visit the *Lake Union Herald* website at <http://www.herald.lakeunion.org> and submit the announcement online. Readers may verify dates and times of programs with the respective sources, as these events are subject to change. Submission eligibility guidelines are listed at <http://www.herald.lakeunion.org>.

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY

HOWARD PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

EVENTS: For more information on the following events and to purchase tickets, contact HPAC Box Office by phone at 888-467-6442 tollfree or 269-471-3560, by email: hpac@andrews.edu, or on its website at <https://howard.andrews.edu/events/>. Please verify dates and times of programs as these events are subject to change.

JAN. 21, 4:00 p.m.: Sunday Music Series ... Music Faculty Trio: Listen to a diverse program of chamber music presented by a trio of Andrews University faculty — Chi Yong Yun, Carla Trynchuk and Trina Thompson. Free admission.

JAN. 27, 8:00 p.m.: AU Music Department Young Artist Concert. Free admission.

JAN. 28, 7:00 p.m.: Jamie Grace Harper, an American contemporary Christian musician, singer, rapper and songwriter from Atlanta, grew up singing and playing instruments in both church and at home with her older sister. Said to have a somewhat unusual style, Jamie Grace combines elements of hip hop, folk and pop into one distinct sound. Tickets required.

FEB. 3, 8:00 p.m.: AU Wind Symphony Winter Concert, directed by Byron Graves. Tickets required.

FEB. 4, 7:00 p.m.: Septura brings together London's leading players to redefine brass chamber music through the uniquely expressive sound of the brass septet. Tickets required.

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY MUSIC & WORSHIP

CONFERENCE, APRIL 5–7: Hosted across the University campus, this conference will provide biblically-grounded training opportunities for church musicians, pastors, worship leaders, and anyone involved in worship ministry. Presenters will discuss principles and practices for incarnational worship ministry that glorifies God, transforms worshipers, and changes the world. As a participant, you will have access to a variety of seminars, workshops, and

worship experiences. Come and be inspired to honor God more fully in your worship. Be equipped to minister more effectively through worship and worship music, participating in God's healing and reconciling work. Connect with others who share your passion for God and commitment to service. Don't miss this exciting opportunity to worship and learn together! For more information, visit <https://www.cye.org/ministries/music--worship>.

LAKE UNION

Offerings

JAN. 6 Local Church Budget

JAN. 13 Local Conference Advance

JAN. 20 Local Church Budget

JAN. 27 Religious Liberty (NAD)

Special Days

JAN. 6 Day of Prayer

JAN. 13–20 Religious Liberty Week

MICHIGAN

MICHIGAN CONFERENCE OFFICE HAS

MOVED! Our new physical address is 5801 W. Michigan Ave., Lansing, MI 48917; mailing address is P.O. Box 24187, Lansing, MI 48909. The switchboard number is 517-316-1500 (direct line numbers will not change), and the fax number is 517-316-1501. Hours are Mon.–Thurs. 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and Fri. 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

THE NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

HEADQUARTERS has moved to a new location. Our new address is 9705 Patuxent Woods Dr., Columbia, MD 21046. The NAD offices are open regular business hours, Monday through Thursday, at this new address. Our new phone number is 443-391-7200 and our fax is 443-259-4884.

UNION COLLEGE HOMECOMING will be **APRIL 5–8**. Honor classes: 1948, '58, '63, '68, '78, '88, '93, '98 and 2008. For more information, contact the alumni office at 401-486-2503; 3800 S. 48th St., Lincoln, NE 68506; or alumni@ucollege.edu.

GNYC 30TH ANNUAL WOMEN'S PRAYER

RETREAT 2018 will be held **APRIL 19–22** at the Hilton Stamford Hotel & Executive Meeting Center, Stamford, Conn. We are celebrating 30 years of women coming together to worship, pray and celebrate God's love. All females thirteen and older are invited to attend. Featured speakers: Adrienne Townsend Benton, chaplain; Dorothy Macey, Southeastern California Conference; Doris Gothard, Lake Region Conference; Josian Frampton, pastor; and Shantel Smith, pastor. For more information on registration fees, lodging, meals, etc., visit <https://www.adventsource.org/as30/event-registration.details.aspx?event=478>.

LA SIERRA ACADEMY ALUMNI WEEKEND

2018 will be held **APRIL 27–28**. Honor Classes: 3s and 8s. Welcome Reception Friday, 7:00 p.m., at LSA Library. Sabbath Services: registration, 9:00 a.m.; Homecoming Service, 10:00 a.m., in LSA gym. Potluck, campus tours, reunions, varsity basketball. Please update contact information: email JNelson@lsak12.com; visit <http://www.lsak12.com>; or phone alumni office at 951-351-1445, ext. 244.

Sabbath Sunset Calendar

	Jan 5	Jan 12	Jan 19	Jan 26	Feb 2	Feb 9
Berrien Springs, Mich.	5:28	5:35	5:43	5:52	6:00	6:10
Chicago, Ill.	4:33	4:40	4:48	4:57	5:06	5:15
Detroit, Mich.	5:13	5:21	5:29	5:38	5:47	5:56
Indianapolis, Ind.	5:34	5:40	5:48	5:56	6:04	6:13
La Crosse, Wis.	4:41	4:49	4:57	5:06	5:16	5:25
Lansing, Mich.	5:18	5:25	5:34	5:42	5:52	6:01
Madison, Wis.	4:36	4:44	4:52	5:01	5:10	5:20
Springfield, Ill.	4:47	4:54	5:02	5:10	5:18	5:27

Within the Lake Union, the officiating pastor or church communication leader is responsible for submission of information to this column. Forms are available in print format, or they can be filled out and submitted directly online. Milepost forms are available at <http://www.herald.lakeunion.org>. Conference addresses and phone numbers are listed in the masthead on the inside back cover.

ANNIVERSARIES

RICHARD AND CHERRY HABENICHT celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Sept. 20, 2017, with a family vacation at Rice Lake, Wis. They have been members of the Wisconsin Academy Church for 32 years.

Richard Habenicht and Cherry Lidner were married Sept. 20, 1967, in Berrien Springs, Mich., by Victor Lidner. The Habenichts pastored and taught in North Dakota, Illinois and Wisconsin, retiring after 43 years of church work, the last 26 in the Wisconsin Conference. Richard then spent five years helping Adventist World Aviation with development and Cherry continued a part-time counseling practice.

The Habenicht family includes Lisa Isensee, Hans and Ray Habenicht; and eight grandchildren.

OBITUARIES

ANDERSON, BETTE (MALLERNEE), age 98; born Nov. 20, 1918, in Battle Creek, Mich.; died July 4, 2017, in Battle Creek. She was an active member of the Battle Creek Tabernacle for all of her 98 years, and was its oldest living member.

Survivors include her two grandchildren.

Graveside services were conducted by her nieces and nephews, and inurnment was in Fort Custer Cemetery, Augusta, Mich.

KROEHLER, GENEVA M. (DE PAS), age 86; born Nov. 9, 1930, in Boyceville, Wis.; died Oct. 7, 2017, in Escanaba, Mich. She was a member of the Wilson (Mich.) Church.

Survivors include her son, Jerry; daughters, Judy, Leesa and Tammie Kroehler; brother, Cecil De Pas; three grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Tom Hubbard, and interment was in Wilson Cemetery.

NETTEBURG, RONNALEE (OLSON), age 71; born May 20, 1946, in Takoma Park, Md.; died

Aug. 19, 2017, in Silver Spring, Md. She was a member of the Pioneer Memorial Church, Berrien Springs, Mich. She was a teacher of Nursing at Andrews University.

Survivors include her husband, Kermit; son, Olen; daughters, Charity Pitton and Kristin Priest; brother, David Olson; sister, Rebecca Gardner; and seven grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Will Johns, and inurnment was in Collegedale (Tenn.) Cemetery.

REED, MICHAEL E., age 60; born Oct. 27, 1956, in St. Louis, Mo.; died Aug. 23, 2017, in St. Louis. He was a member of the Greater Alton (Ill.) Church.

Survivors include his sons, Theodor M. and Matthew E.; stepson, Shawn Grossman; brother, Charles; two grandchildren; and two step-grandchildren.

Memorial services were conducted by Dale Barnhurst, and inurnment was in Jefferson Barracks Cemetery, St. Louis.

REEVES, VIRGINIA (GLIDDEN), age 94; born Oct. 24, 1922, in Flint, Mich.; died Sept. 2, 2017, in Owosso, Mich. She was a member of the First Flint Church.

Survivors include her three children; and brother, Arnold Glidden.

Funeral services were conducted by Christien M. Hodet, and interment was in Bendle Cemetery, Flushing, Mich.

RINGWELSKI, JEROME V., age 90; born Feb. 4, 1927, in Little Falls, Minn.; died Oct. 14, 2017, in Wausau, Wis. He was a member of The Shepherd's House, Wausau.

Survivors include his wife, Josephine (Benaszkeski); sons, Dan and Mark; daughters, Valerie Smith and Janice Koerting; seven grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Tom Michalski, and inurnment was in Restlawn Memorial Park, Wausau.

ROCKWELL, LOLA M. (WEST), age 101; born Jan 27, 1916, in Dansville, Mich.; died July

13, 2017, in Berrien Springs, Mich. She was a member of the Village Church, Berrien Springs, Mich.

Survivors include her sons, Carl, Richard, Gerald and Mark; daughters, Loveva I. Slayton and Julie L. Wilkes; 16 grandchildren; 31 great-grandchildren; and 14 great-great-grandchildren.

Memorial services were conducted by Brian Strayer, and inurnment was in Roseland Gardens Cemetery, Jackson, Mich.

STORHOW, FREDRICK, age 68; born July 2, 1949, in Joliet, Ill.; died Nov. 2, 2017, in Green Bay, Wis. He was a member of the Green Bay Church.

Memorial services were conducted by Bill Ochs, with private inurnment, Green Bay.

WIGLEY, VIRGINIA R. (BELCHER)

RICHARDSON, age 86; born May 13, 1931, in French Lick, Ind.; died Oct. 6, 2017, in South Bend, Ind. She was a member of the South Bend First Church.

Survivors include her son, Paul Richardson; daughters, Sharon Harding, Cindi Mae Gloster and Lydia Wigley; brother, Jack Belcher; sisters, Grace Bishop and Joyce Pitts; and 10 grandchildren.

A funeral service was held, and interment was in Highland Cemetery, South Bend.

WILDE, GARY L., age 73; born April 19, 1944, in Appleton, Wis.; died Oct. 22, 2017, in De Pere, Wis. He was a member of the Green Bay (Wis.) Church.

Survivors include his wife, Gloria (Carlson); son, Richard; daughter, Carmen Magray; and three grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Rick Binford, with private inurnment, De Pere.

WOMACK, NELDA (ROULEAU), age 95; born Nov. 4, 1921, in Merrill, Wis.; died June 1, 2016, in Milwaukee, Wis. She was a charter member of the Milwaukee Central Church.

Survivors include her son, Jerry; daughters, Sue (Sterling) Nelson and Mary Jacob; five grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Memorial services were conducted by William Ochs, and interment was in Wood National Cemetery, Milwaukee.

All classified ads must be sent to your local conference for approval. No phoned ads will be accepted. Allow at least eight weeks for publication. Fifty words maximum. No limit of insertions. Rates: \$36 per insertion for Lake Union church members; \$46 per insertion for all others. A form is available at <http://www.herald.lakeunion.org> for printing out and filling in your ad. Ads must be prepaid. Make money order or check payable to the Lake Union Conference. There will be no refunds for cancellations. The *Lake Union Herald* cannot be responsible for advertisements appearing in its columns, and reserves the right to edit ads in accordance with editorial policies. The *Lake Union Herald* does not accept responsibility for typographical errors. Submission eligibility guidelines are listed at <http://www.herald.lakeunion.org>.

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TRAVEL/VACATION

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ADVENTIST TOURS. Israel: June 3-12, 2018; German Reformation/WWII: July 1-11, 2018; British Reformation: July 11-21, 2018; Bethlehem to Rome (including Revelation's seven churches): June 2-19, 2019; Ellen White in Europe: June 20-30, 2019; Africa Safari & Service: July 18-26, 2019. \$1990+/person. Contact tabghatours@gmail.com or Facebook.com/TabghaTours for full information.

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MISCELLANEOUS

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY OFFERS MASTER'S DEGREES in business, computer science, counseling, education, global community development, nursing, religion and social work. Flexibility is provided through some online and many on-campus programs. Financial aid may be available. For more information, call 423-236-2585 or visit <https://www.southern.edu/graduatestudies>.

FREE VOCAL MUSIC CONCERTS WITH PERSONAL LIFE EXPERIENCES. A former voice instructor from Andrews University with his family will give free Sat. evening vocal music concerts with testimonies. Two music CDs and a DVD music video are available after the concert. For more information, contact Vladimir Slavujevic at 269-473-2826, or email him at vladoslavujevic@yahoo.com.

THE CLASS OF EMCA 1958, Emmanuel Missionary College Academy, would like to locate these missing classmates: Beverly Jones, Howard White, Martha Gee, Merl Talmage and Chris Brooks. Please contact Henry Kuhlman at hk@southern.edu or 423-236-4401.

EMPLOYMENT

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY seeks a University Faculty — Architecture. The Assistant/Associate Professor of Architecture holds a faculty appointment and has academic, service and scholarship responsibilities consistent with the mission and philosophy of the School of Architecture & Interior Design. This individual demonstrates competence in design studio education, teaching and curriculum development at the graduate and

undergraduate levels. For more information, visit https://www.andrews.edu/admres/jobs/show/faculty#job_2.

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY seeks an Assistant Professor of Pastoral Care and Psychology. The Assistant Professor of Pastoral Care and Psychology will teach a full load of courses in pastoral care, counseling, advise and provide mentorship to Seminary students, provide spiritual and therapeutic counseling services to seminarians, direct the psychological screening of applicants to Seminary, provide advocacy and leadership in the area of pastoral care and counseling to the Seminary community, participate in Seminary and University life, and carry regular faculty responsibilities related to teaching, service, research and administration. For more information, visit https://www.andrews.edu/admres/jobs/show/faculty#job_3.

WALLA WALLA UNIVERSITY IS HIRING! To see the list of available positions, go to <http://jobs.wallawalla.edu>.

PUC is seeking a candidate for Facilities Associate Director in our Facilities Maintenance Department. Preference is experience in planning, budgeting, maintenance of College facilities, in addition to strong leadership/interpersonal skills/team leader. Responsibilities in roads, building safety, HVAC, water distribution/treatment, general building maintenance, compliance for hazardous materials, etc. For more information or to apply, please call 707-965-6231, or visit <http://puc.edu/faculty-staff/current-job-postings>.

PUC is seeking full-time positions in our Facilities Management Department. Looking for positions of Tradesman Supervisor-Painter, and Tradesman 1-Carpenter. Preference is for training and applied experience in trade areas of general painting, and carpentry. For Painter, experience in color/finish/application/etc. For Carpenter, experience in cabinet-making/floor coverings/installation/etc. For both, able to be team player, handle multiple projects. For more information or to apply, please call 707-965-6231, or visit <http://puc.edu/faculty-staff/current-job-postings>.

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Assistants are looking for a full-time AP/CP Pathologist to join our group. Fellowship training is a must, Surgical Pathology is preferred. Interest in or experience with Molecular Pathology and Blood Bank is a plus. Desired start date of January 2018 through July 2018. Please send CV or inquiries to ECP@595nova.com.

SOUTHWESTERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY is looking for a full-time English professor with a Ph.D. Candidates with a degree in any literature or writing specialty will be considered. Send a CV to Judy Myers Laue, chair, Department of English, Southwestern Adventist University, 100 W. Hillcrest St., Keene TX 76059, or lauej@swau.edu.

SOUTHWESTERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY is seeking an online adjunct professor/s to teach part-time courses in newly organized Senior Living Management Certificate program through the Department of Business. Submit cover letter and current CV/résumé to denise.

rivera@swau.edu. Candidates must have industry-specific (Independent Living, Assisted Living, Memory Care) knowledge and/or experience and a minimum of a master's degree in a related field. Preference given with prior teaching experience.

SOUTHWESTERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks a full-time Systematic Theology faculty member for 2018-2019. Ph.D. preferred; master's degree considered. Successful candidates will have teaching and pastoral experience. Send CV and cover letter to Amy Rosenthal at arosenthal@swau.edu.

OB-GYN AND PEDIATRICIAN NEEDED for Adventist owned/operated Rural Health Clinic on the campus of Weimar Institute at Weimar, Calif. Competitive pay. For more information, call Randall Steffens at 615-604-0142.

SOUTHWESTERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT invites applications for a

full-time faculty position. Preferred candidates will hold a doctorate in Educational Psychology or Secondary Education and have university teaching experience. Master's degree considered. Must have or be able to obtain a Texas teaching credential. Send CV and cover letter to Donna Berkner at dberkner@swau.edu.

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Teens Preach Unlock Revelation

By Andy Im

WE NEED MORE MEN AND WOMEN LIKE SERGIO — committed individuals who are willing to invest in and sacrifice for our young. This is a vital and necessary imperative for the future success of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Sergio took 12 TLTs (Teens in Leadership Training) and had them prepare, study and preach the Unlock Revelation series. They each took turns sharing one or two messages as a joint endeavor of the Holland and Grand Rapids Northwest Spanish churches.

In the beginning, the teens weren't all that "into it." "No one was really excited," says Sergio. Truth be told, they were simply nervous and anxious as one might imagine. A phrase Sergio heard loud and often was, "I don't know how to talk in front of people!"

But, when you step out in faith and challenge our young, God is going to deliver. He really is — and so will our teens.

Once they opened their mouths and started preaching, the adults were flabbergasted. "They couldn't believe [the teens] were preaching the messages better than the adults!" recounts Sergio.

Through it all, eight individuals made decisions to be baptized! Bear in mind, it was the TLTs that preached the messages and offered the appeals — in Spanish, the second language for most, if not all the TLTs.

Also, the teens often had to preach during the school week when they had to study for homework and exams.

One of the students, Chris, ended up preaching on the eve of a huge exam. Much of his time was spent preparing for the message instead of studying for the test. His dad counseled him to put God first and leave the results with God. Chris did just that. While studying as much as he could, he ended up receiving an "A" on the exam!



Andy Im

▲ Twelve Pathfinder teens stepped out of their comfort zones and preached a sermon series, resulting in eight baptisms.

Just a thought . . . Perhaps next time your church holds an Unlock Revelation series, you might consider getting the youth involved. They don't necessarily have to preach the series, but let's not underestimate the power of youth ministry. I'm talking about the kind where the youth are the ones actively ministering to people, not necessarily being ministered to. In the end, both objectives are accomplished.

"We're all able to share the Word of God and nothing should stop us from doing it," says an enlightened Noemi.

Wouldn't you agree? ■

Andy Im is the Michigan Conference Communication director.

Once they opened their mouths and started preaching, the adults were flabbergasted.

To Listen is to Love

By Jessica Yoong



Pieter Damsteeg

▲ Jessica Yoong

I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO ATTEND the NAD Year-end meetings, as the Student Association president from Andrews University, along with the Student Association presidents from our sister universities. I anticipated that the next several days of meetings would be a valuable learning experience; however, I underestimated the amount of participation that we young adults would have in the meetings. I found it meaningful that NAD President Dan Jackson specifically requested that three young adults offer the initial prayer for the assembled body because it established a welcoming spirit of acceptance for the week. Our voices were valued far beyond our expectations in an environment where we could have easily been made to feel intimidated.

At the conclusion of these meetings, I and my fellow student leaders were inspired to learn of all the work that was going on within the church to further the gospel. It's not that the work wasn't being done before; it was just that none of us really knew much about it. As we actively participated in the motions and discussions, there was an energy that ignited within us as we began to passionately engage and contribute to the dialogue. I believe young adults leave

the church because they are not involved and there is a gap in intentionally connecting with the collegiate and post-college age group that lies between high school and young married couples with children. One reason that young adults believe the church is irrelevant is because we do not often hear of the work that our church is doing in regards to current issues, such as social justice and community care. It was inspiring to see the passion and dedication that many of our church leaders have towards such causes.

Participating in the NAD Year-end meetings has ignited my belief that effective communication of vision between all tiers of the church is essential. As young adults who are searching for community and purpose, we want to be a part of a movement that is greater than ourselves. We need to be connected to resources and be informed. If more young adults could see the passion in their church leaders that we did, and experience the act of participating in dialogue and conversations where their voice is valued, I believe fewer young adults would leave the church.

As young adults, it's important that we meet our church leaders halfway. Rather than leaving the church due to disagreements, it's important that we stay and work together to make it better. Our energy, ideas and skills are needed. There is so much suffering and injustice in this world, such a need for Jesus, that we cannot afford to be passive.

I encourage our church leaders and my fellow young adults to continue to listen and learn from each other. I hope young adults everywhere are given the opportunity to participate in their church in a meaningful way. The message that our church espouses is a message of love, and what better way to be a light to our world than to foster a spirit of love by intentionally listening to each other? ■

Jessica Yoong is the Student Association president at Andrews University. A business administration major, she is passionate about communication, an active lifestyle, healthcare and leadership development.



ON THE EDGE

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 Indexed in the Seventh-day Adventist Periodical Index

▲ "Divide and Conquer" by illustrator Jace McKinney

Radical Christianity

By Debbie Michel

JACE MCKINNEY IS ON A MISSION to use his artistic talents to share the message of hope in Christ. His work tells political and cultural stories that intersect with spiritual issues.

"When you look at this picture (above), we see people who are passionate about an issue, in terms of what direction America is going," says the 34-year-old visual storyteller. "But when you look at the sky, there's a beam of light, signifying hope for Christ's return."

Jace, a graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design and current dual degree Seminary and Communication student at Andrews University, has created an animated motion graphic series called, "Acts of the Messiah," which depicts the impact of Christianity in Persian nations. For more, visit: <http://www.Facebook.com/ActsofTheMessiah>. ■

Debbie Michel is associate director of Communication at the Lake Union Conference.

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