

FOR ILLINOIS MEMBERS *ILLINOIS FOCUS* INSIDE

Lake Union HERALD

AUGUST 2018

THE YOUTH ISSUE

A LEAGUE OF
THEIR OWN

UNDERSTANDING YOUTH:
RON WHITEHEAD
INTERVIEW



AT SUMMER CAMP



Joshua Pedroza



Jessica Luis Felicio



Ryan Thomas



Our youth are sharing testimonies springing from their experiences as literature evangelists. Hear their inspiring stories on the GC Ministries Facebook page.



Joshua Pedroza

These graduates are mostly refugees who completed an Adventist seminary certification course on youth ministry. They went through seven months of study and received training from Andrews professors with backgrounds in various aspects of youth ministry. Follow us on Facebook @lakeunionherald.



Lake Union Hispanic youth issued statements on issues relating to fairness and humanity in immigration and gun control. Watch this and other videos, including the Andrews University Latino Association inaugural celebration, at Vimeo.com/lakeunionherald.

ON SOCIAL MEDIA





God is in the habit of calling the young to serve in key roles that have transformed the world — Samuel, a servant boy turned prophet; David, a shepherd boy turned king; Esther, a captive turned queen; the servant girl who sent Naaman to Elisha.

At the time of the Great Disappointment of 1844, Ellen Harmon was 17 and her soon-to-be husband, James White, was 23, and John Nevins Andrews was only 15.

God has not changed His plan and continues to call the young to service. It's high time we recognize this by affirming, enabling, equipping and supporting the young among us in the various ministries to which God is calling them.


 Gary Burns
 Editor

ABOUT THE COVER: During a Pioneer Memorial Church-sponsored mission trip last summer, John Kent is captured having his morning devotions in South Dakota's Badlands National Park.

COVER PHOTO: BEN MARTIN



Pathfinder Camporee 2014 Staff Photographer

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When God Fills His Church

THE POWER OF YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY IN YOUR CHURCH — PART 1

Years ago, while serving as a pastor in a city that borders this Union, I could not believe my ears when my conference president stated during a visit to his office, “I see your church is poised to become the fastest growing church in St. Louis.”



▲ Maurice Valentine

I was more incredulous than Ezekiel, who, when God posed the question, *Son of man, can these bones live?* he answered, *O Lord God, Thou knowest* (Ezekiel 37:3 KJV). If that doesn't strike you as the most confident answer Ezekiel could have given, you're not alone. It's as though Ezekiel had been to the current schools of business that teach, as long as it is within reason and doesn't compromise one's integrity in any way shape or form, then you never tell your boss, “no.” If this was not a politically correct answer on Ezekiel's part, I don't know what is.

I love to read God's interrogatives. Throughout Scripture, He uses questions to engage our brains. His questions challenge us to think about where we are, who we are and what we are doing. In this question to Ezekiel, it is evident that God is not only challenging the status quo that existed in His church of Ezekiel's day but, possibly more importantly, He was challenging Ezekiel's faith and that of his contemporaries to understand that which appears to be impossible to the unaided eye can be more than within reach with Divine aid. An example of this was when Jesus stepped in the boat and, as the Bible states, *Then they willingly received Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land where they were going* (John 6:21 NKJV).

When I visited the conference office that day, one of my churches was enjoying a modest yet sustained new growth curve. My two churches, along with several others in the city, had just finished conducting a city-wide evangelistic effort during which one new family from

the meeting joined my more remote congregation. This all happened at the same time missing members came back to church and several families transferred in from out of state. One of those families was a young adult family. The father and mother had just left university life, degrees in hand and a fledgling family in the making. Over the ensuing months, with the help of other young adults, the growing congregation remodeled the church. We worked hard that summer and beyond, and God gave the increase!

Yet, at the same time, my other church had shrunk from about 160 in attendance to less than 50. Shortly after I arrived in that district and right through the conclusion of the city-wide evangelistic meetings, several vibrant families relocated to other parts of the country, and, as my church shrunk, so did my morale and that of the members of that congregation. Month by month, the shrinkage seemed to keep going . . . and going . . . and going. Suffice it to say, for this church leader, going to that church was depressing, to say the least. Naturally, when the conference president said, in reference to the church that was shrinking, “Your church can be the fastest growing in the city,” this totally discombobulated my thinking. Maybe my conference president sensed that we had dropped so low in our attendance, there was no other place to go but up.

After leaving the president's office with this challenge, I returned and put my nose to the grindstone. We spent roughly six months remodeling that church building. But the real remodeling project underway

was my heart. I asked the church elders, "How fast do you think we can grow this church?" As they paused in contemplation, one youthful elder stated very emphatically, "We can grow this church by 10 members per month!" Several senior elders looked at each other and smiled the incredulous smile of certain disbelief, much like Ezekial. But much worse than their responses was that of yours truly. The pastor who had seen the slide downward continue for so long, couldn't believe that the dry bones had any potential either.

But wouldn't you know it, just as before, the Lord sent a treasure-trove of missing members our way. We were making plans to invite them back but, before we could finish planning our Missing Member Homecoming Day, five missing members came before the invitations were even sent. These people had been gone for 10 to 20 years, and each returned to say they felt a deep burden that it was time to get back in church.

Next, God sent a treasure-trove of young adults who all seemed to hear the collective cry of a dying church, "Go over and help that struggling church." Before long, a choir was started and the youth returned, followed by the middle-aged members, and even some of the senior saints who made their way from other churches to which they had been hopping, Sabbath after Sabbath.

Although it happened serendipitously, I discovered what young adults mean to the life of a congregation. They helped enormously with remodeling the church — not just physically, but spiritually! Many new initiatives were started and, when all was said and done, they raised the morale of the church tenfold!

Finally, once the remodeling project was complete and the members were trained to do Bible work or work in other capacities to share their faith, several back-to-back evangelistic meetings were held, along with other felt-needs events. By the Lord's doing, before long, the church had more attending than before the slide began. The church I secretly wished many times I could leave, ended up becoming the church where I said, "Would you please let me stay?" when the conference president stated it was time to leave.

Jesus' full-scale remodeling project started in our hearts, and what I learned from that experience has stayed with me until this very day.

Several lessons that I learned from that experience are as follows:

- When God asks questions, He wants us to engage our brains.
- When the ship is taking on water, bail water rather than bail out.
- In the process of restoration, one must be willing to deal with the broken-down walls and dirt, first internally, then externally.
- When you are engaged in mission, God will send the people you need to get the job done. In fact, young adults look for places that aren't perfect, just moving in the right direction.



Courtesy Bolingbrook Church

▲ Young adults at Illinois' Bolingbrook Church.

- Never underestimate what even a few young adults and their positive outlook, energy and ingenuity can mean to a new growth curve in your congregation. Just a few can very quickly turn around a dying church.
- The power of engagement must never be underestimated. That's why God asks questions.
- Always remember: nothing is impossible with God!

The Lake Union Conference, in conjunction with our constituent conferences, is beginning a young adult initiative to retain and engage this most vital demographic. Please keep us in your prayers as our conferences are in the early stages of crafting this plan.

If you are a young adult or young at heart, stay tuned for part two of this article, "When God Fills His Church — The Power of Engagement!" ■

Maurice Valentine, president, Lake Union Conference

To Act Justly

The United Nations, an international organization that has the responsibility of ensuring international cooperation among the nations of the world, has always espoused the practice of social justice.



▲ Elvin S. Gabriel

The Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations emphasized that this type of justice is a “reaffirmation of faith in fundamental rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, and in the equal rights of men and women.”¹

The Holy Bible makes social justice a mandate of faith and a fundamental expression of Christian discipleship. It is at the heart of the biblical message and tradition, and a way of life and a Divine human imperative that demands a response in the wake of suffering of the entire planet.² In Bible phraseology, the terms “righteousness” and “justice” are inextricably linked. To be righteous is to “do justice, that is, to bring harmony and well-being in all one’s relationships, both individual and communal, and especially by defending the oppressed.”³

Christ embodied the tenets of social justice during His sojourn on earth, by (1) fighting for the freedom and dignity of the woman caught in adultery (John 8: 1-11, NIV); (2) condemning the scribes and Pharisees for their stance on social, moral and religious issues (Matthew 2:13-36, NIV); and (3) driving the money-changers from the Temple who were turning it into a market (John 2: 13-17, NIV). God’s emotional engagement with the cause of justice and His punishment for its violation are fundamental to our own involvement in issues of justice.⁴

The Christian family can be a powerful force in the fight for the rights of those among us who are continually bearing the burdens of oppression, injustice and inequality. It must become *a voice for those who have no voice*. The Bible encourages us to *speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute* (Proverbs 31:8 (NIV)).

In that light, parents should have a sacred obligation to expose their children to social action through faith- and community-based civic engagement projects which are within their capabilities. They should ensure that decisions on social action involvement are family decisions. This means discussing with them in planning and evaluating the activities, and asking them to identify the roles or functions with which they are most comfortable.⁵ One of the rewards for this kind of involvement is the deep fellowship that comes from working with others for change. Children’s vision of life and their role in it is broadened.⁶

Christ has provided us, as Christians, with the most comprehensive relational model of social justice that is designed to transform and heal fragmented relationships among peoples of this earth. It is only as this model is integrated into our personal, parental, professional and spiritual roles and functions that the Divine mandate for social justice will be realized. ■

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Elvin Gabriel is professor of Educational Psychology and Counselor Education at Andrews University.

Fight Cancer with Diet and Exercise

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in the United States, just slightly behind heart disease.

Sadly, most all of us have been impacted in some way by cancer, whether it be a family member, friend, colleague, acquaintance or ourselves. It is important to note that two-thirds of one's risk of cancer is influenced by genetics; the other one-third is influenced by lifestyle, specifically diet, exercise and maintaining a healthy body weight. Although genetics may outweigh lifestyle risk, reducing your risk by a third is worth the effort.

The American Institute of Cancer Research (AICR) has reviewed a large number of studies on the effects of food on cancer and has identified a variety of foods that have been found to be protective against cancer. Top on the list of cancer-fighting foods are fruits, vegetables, whole grains and beans. Eating a diet rich in these foods is suggested to reduce your risk of cancer. The superpower in these foods are found in the phytochemicals hidden inside. Phytochemicals, which naturally occur in plant foods, have health-promoting properties. They provide plants with their color, odor and flavor, but, for us, they are helpful in other ways. Phytochemicals have been found to stimulate the immune system, block carcinogens, reduce inflammation and cancer growth, prevent DNA damage, repair DNA, slow cancer cell growth, regulate hormones, reduce oxidative damage, and trigger damaged cells to self-destruct before reproducing.

Foods found to be associated with the promotion of cancer and that the AICR recommends should be avoided or minimized are red meat and all processed meats. These foods have been found to be associated with an increased risk of colorectal and stomach cancer. Alcohol consumption can increase the risk of a variety of gastrointestinal, liver and breast cancers, and should be moderated, if consumed at all. Additionally, an excess intake of added sugars (not ones naturally occurring in

foods) has been found to increase cancer risk indirectly by adding additional calories to the diet which can lead to long-term weight gain. This weight gain may be associated with excessive body fat which has been found to be correlated to an increased risk of a variety of common cancers.

Physical activity also is an important part of the equation. Being physically active can help reduce cancer risk. In fact, the more often we move, the better it is for our health. On the flip side, the more sedentary we are, the more likely our risk of cancer. It was found that individuals who get the minimum recommended 30 minutes of exercise each day and are also physically active throughout the day, have the lowest cancer risk overall. Moving more frequently by small trips to the water fountain, copy machine or restroom throughout the day may be one way of lowering your cancer risk. For others, you may want to park farther away from the building when shopping, taking the stairs versus an elevator, or setting a reminder to get up and move for a couple minutes every hour. Although these lifestyle habits cannot completely negate our risk for cancer, they may help to be a part of the equation to reduce our risk by one third. ■

Gretchen Krivak is director of the Didactic Program in Nutrition and Dietetics at Andrews University.



▲ Gretchen Krivak



Reflecting Jesus — 1

The humble, loving Jesus. An example worthy of following, but not one that “normal” humans are tempted to emulate. That’s where transforming grace and the new birth comes in. God wants to take normal humans and make them into new creatures — into Christians who reflect His character of love.



▲ George R. Knight

That was another of Ellen White’s preaching themes at Minneapolis. On October 20, she presented a sermon that the *Minneapolis Tribune* noted moved many to tears and that she herself claimed brought forth many heartfelt testimonies from her hearers.

“You cannot,” she told her audience, “be a fruitful Christian and have knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ unless you are a practical Christian, unless you are making progress all the time in divine life. This is all important. Many seem to think that as soon as they go down into the water and receive baptism, and their names are entered upon the church book, then the work is all done.”

To the contrary, “if they do not bring into their households practical religion, they will soon lose it all.

... It is important that we keep all the time adding grace to grace, and if we will work upon the plan of addition, God will work on the plan of multiplication” as He develops His “moral image” in His followers.

“All the universe of heaven was interested in the great work” of Christ. “Every world that God has created is watching to see how the battle between the Lord of light and glory and the powers of darkness will end. Here is Satan, who has been seeking with all his power to shut out the true character of God, so that the world could not understand it, and under a garb of righteousness he works upon many who profess to be Christians, but they represent the character of Satan instead of the character of Jesus Christ. They misrepresent my Lord. They misrepresent the character of Jesus every time that they lack mercy, every time that they lack humility” (*MS 8*, 1888).

“God is love” (1John 4:8). Christ came to demonstrate that love in His life and death. And He wants us to be like Him, to let Him develop His “moral image” in us.

Take me today, Lord. Help me to not only desire Your gift but to accept it and live it in my daily life. ■

George R. Knight is a retired professor of Church History at the Adventist Theological Seminar at Andrews University. This article is from his book, *Lest We Forget*, a daily devotional, published by the Review and Herald Publishing Association, page 275.



You can Get There from Here – through Prayer

Hearing the voice of God can happen in some of the most unlikely places. Let me explain.



Hearing the voice of God can happen in some of the most unlikely places. Let me explain. While conducting an outreach session at one of the local abuse shelters one Sabbath afternoon, one of the dear ladies relayed a story that highlighted God's will for her life. Specifically, she heard a voice tell her, in the middle of the night, that she was going to be called for a job. The short version of this story – she heard His voice twice with the same message and, despite her disbelief that God cared for someone incarcerated and in spite of naysayers, she DID get the job!

On another occasion at the shelter, another woman was told by His voice to stay and just wipe the table. . . . She wondered why, but there was something in our message during that outreach session that she needed to hear. We later found out that His voice had alerted her to events that were about to happen only *HE* could have orchestrated! Praise His Holy Name!!

See how our God works! I am sure you can testify to the sweet, distinct sound of God's voice and how He has interceded in your life, quite possibly at a time when you needed to hear the exact message He had for you. *Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good* (Psalm 34:8).

In my life, I can recall many times He provided the information, alert or peace that I needed in various situations. How amazing is that! And you know it is Him, because the information is provided as only He can. But this does not happen by chance, my brothers and sisters. A relationship needs to be cultivated and nurtured on a regular basis with the Father. No special equipment or life status is needed. Only the sincere desire to seek and learn from Him and let Him lead your life. That portal, from you to Him, can only be established through prayer.

He has always been there for each of us. Not just in the difficult, “what-am-I-going-to-do” times, but in the still, quiet, “Lord-I-just-need-*You*” times.

We know that life on this earth is tricky at best. But, remember, only the hand of the Almighty can maintain and sustain His people. So, my prayer for you is to be encouraged and uplifted in the knowledge that there is nothing, not one blessed thing, you could ever need that He cannot provide! You are His and He is yours — forever!!

As this Earth's history continues to spiral down to the day of His magnificent return, may we all find strength in He who never fails, never sleeps and never stops loving each of His children. Keep looking up, my friend; the very best is yet to come! ■



▲ Paulette Taylor

Paulette Taylor is prayer ministries coordinator for Indiana Conference and can be reached at: paulette2525@comcast.net.

Community Garden Sprouts Seeds of God's love

By Patty S. Dmytriyev



Photo supplied by Patty Dmytriyev

▲ Young and not-so-young worked side by side to get the garden going.

A GROUP OF YOUNG ADULTS were huddled around a table in the dimly-lit hotel conference room at the 2016 Lake Union Conference Youth Congress when the idea was hatched. What if a community garden was developed to reach members of our Frankfort, Indiana, community and show them the loving character of Christ through the beauty of the garden? As the idea quickly germinated, we determined this also was the perfect opportunity to live out Christ's method described in the well-known quote: "Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, 'Follow Me'" (Ellen G. White, *Ministry of Healing*, p. 143).

It really wasn't difficult to see that the seven tillable acres with which God had blessed us and were rented out to a commercial farmer, could be put to greater use. By renting the land for commercial farming, we were not being good stewards, and God's land was not turning a profit for Him. I am not talking about a monetary profit; I am talking about a profit in souls, or a harvest of souls, if you

will. Since we started the project last year, the garden has borne much fruit.

We are interacting more with our community. We visited our local City Hall to let them know what we were doing and to determine if there were any issues violating city codes or regulations. Officials were excited and offered their support! We also have gone door-to-door passing out information and books, as well as praying with whomever needed it.

Our sister churches have become closer. We are no longer scattered in our efforts to evangelize our community, and the efforts have brought more unity, more communication, more focus and less bickering. We are becoming the picture of Christ we were meant to be.

Cross-generational relationships are formed. Since there is no age limit, anyone can participate. We see our younger and older generations benefiting from passing knowledge to each other. Our older members teach how to plant and work the garden, care for the soil, when to plant, what to plant, where to plant, as well as how to use and share what they plant. The younger ones teach how to use social media to advertise our community garden, while providing energy, zeal and strength. ■

Patty S. Dmytriyev is co-founder of the Community Garden Project in Frankfort, Ind.



Art Dmytriyev

▲ The seven tillable acres have borne much fruit for God's Kingdom.

Jóvenes hispanos en *Conéctate* firman declaraciones

El congreso de jóvenes conocido como *Conéctate*, patrocinado por la Unión del Lago, se llevó a cabo en la Universidad Andrews del 1 al 3 de junio.

El pastor Armando Miranda Jr., Director Asociado del Departamento de Jóvenes de la División Norteamericana, fue el orador principal. El evento comenzó el viernes con música y una predicación inspiradora por el pastor Miranda y continuó el sábado de mañana con otro mensaje hermoso. El sábado por la tarde se realizaron varios seminarios en español e inglés, y se dio también la oportunidad de participar en de uno diez proyectos de servicio comunitario.

El sábado de noche el comité ejecutivo de *Conéctate* dedicó el tiempo para compartir el deseo de afirmar la justicia social en dos áreas que son de mucha preocupación y que se discuten con frecuencia en la actualidad –inmigración y control de armas. Primero, Ingrid Slikkers, profesora de servicios sociales (Social Work) en la Universidad Andrews y trabajadora social para Bethany Christian Services relató su experiencia al trabajar con niños que han sido separados de sus padres y que siempre preguntan por ellos.

Luego, el profesor Nicholas Miller, Director de Asuntos Públicos y Libertad Religiosa de la Unión del Lago, explicó el contenido de una declaración con respecto a la necesidad de formalizar un camino hacia la residencia y ciudadanía para aquellos jóvenes que han vivido toda su vida en los Estados Unidos, conocidos comúnmente como *Dreamers* (Soñadores). En esa misma declaración se expresó también consternación por la política de “cero tolerancia” que el Departamento de Justicia ha implementado y que ha resultado en la separación de cientos de niños de sus padres creando graves dificultades y traumas para las familias. Además, dos líderes del comité *Conéctate*, Mayrel Narváez y Kerling

Montañez, presentaron otra declaración acerca del control de armas en la que expresaron su preocupación por la venta libre de armas automáticas y semiautomáticas.

Al final de las presentaciones, Eva Cruz, presidente de *Conéctate*, pidió a los participantes que si estaban de acuerdo con las declaraciones que las firmaran y agregaran las ciudades donde tienen su domicilio. Las declaraciones firmadas serían posteriormente enviadas a sus representantes en el Senado y el Congreso de este país. Más de 300 participantes expresaron su apoyo por medio de sus firmas.

Al concluir el programa muchos expresaron su aprecio al hecho de que familias y jóvenes hispanos de la Iglesia Adventista se hayan unido en dar su apoyo e influencia para buscar la justicia humana que la Palabra de Dios enseña que ha de existir en este mundo.

Nuestra oración es que Dios en su tiempo manifieste su gran poder así como lo hizo en el período de la reina Ester para que la comunidad hispana pueda llegar a una solución del problema de inmigración y para que podamos más claramente ver que sí hay un Dios que vive y que nunca abandonará a su pueblo. ■

Carmelo Mercado es el vicepresidente de la Unión del Lago.



▲ Carmelo Mercado

Courtesy, Lake Union multicultural ministries



▲ Carmelo Mercado, Ingrid Slikkers, Nicholas Miller, Kerling Montañez, Mayrel Narváez y Eva Cruz presentan declaraciones sobre inmigración y control de armas en *Conéctate*.

Historic Church Creates Space for Youth to

GET REAL

By Michael Taylor

When someone travels north from Kalamazoo to Grand Rapids on Michigan's west side, the first pair of towns they encounter are Plainwell and Otsego. The communities are almost identically-sized, but because Plainwell spans both exits on the highway, few ever encounter historic Otsego and realize it. While people may miss this quiet town, it has held a prominent place in God's work throughout the past century-and-a-half.

Adventism came to Otsego in the late 1850s, carried by messengers like James White and Joseph Bates. The believers in Otsego were a part of those who signed the original charter for the Michigan Conference in 1861; the town would later become headquarters for what was the West Michigan Conference for a dozen years in the early 1900s. It also was in Otsego that Ellen White had her first vision on health reform on June 6, 1863.

While the believers who gather there today have a lot to appreciate from their past, they are even more excited by doors God continues to open for them for future ministry. Their branch of Adventist Community Services reaches hundreds of people each year, distributing thousands of articles of clothing and household items. They regularly engage with their local neighborhoods for their "RAD Routes" prayer walks (Roads Adopted for prayer), literature distribution and Bible study programs. While each of these ministries has an impact, they might best be known in Otsego as a place where the youth can go to GET REAL.

GET REAL 4 Kids is their weekly youth group program. The vision of this ministry is contained in the name itself, as GET REAL is an acronym: **G**o **E**verywhere **T**o **R**each **E**veryone **A**round in **L**ove." This program began in 2010 when several members started to wonder how to connect with the youth of their church and their

community. One of the families, the Lanphears, made GET REAL their top ministry priority. They faithfully drive through rain and snow nearly every Tuesday night to open the fellowship hall to the area young people.

The actual program itself is not extravagant. Due to Otsego's limited budget, GET REAL consists of a simple meal, group games and a worship message. Games are chosen based on weather and how many kids attend, but some favorites are Capture the Flag in the church's front lawn and basketball using an old hoop donated by a family in the community. Worship is equally simple, often just a short story relating a Bible passage. One reason for the worship format is that only a few who attend are biblically-literate. A small number of families have children who attend an Adventist church; even fewer attend church of any denomination.

For the young people, GET REAL is their weekly church experience. The value of GET REAL demonstrated itself one week during the worship talk. There are new attendees nearly every week, but one evening a certain young man generated quite a buzz. Multiple parents opened the church door, leaned in to see this boy, and said, "When this is over, call your parents." What we found out later was that he had gone to a friend's house after school, and that friend then suggested they both go to GET REAL. He forgot to tell his mom where they were headed, and she called several of his friends looking for him. The response was always the same: "He's not here, but if you can't find your kids on a Tuesday night, they're at church." And they all meant the Otsego Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The staff of GET REAL report over 250 unique attendees in just the past five years, and a regular attendance averaging 20-25 kids. So how does a historic church with just 40 members and a small budget become the trendy place for young people? The secret is, the leaders don't

GET REAL IS A REMINDER THAT YOUTH MINISTRY DOESN'T HAVE TO BE EXPENSIVE OR FLASHY. IT JUST MUST BE DONE IN LOVE.

just want to reach the community, they want to do it “in Love.” The kids know that the adults who come each week to supervise are there because they love these kids and their families. This love shows up in the warm welcomes, the fun and games, and the overall positive atmosphere during the evening. Their GET REAL kind of love also shows itself in visits to families where a parent lost their job and the family needs food. It shows up when a single mom is diagnosed with breast cancer, and her teenage sons come running to GET REAL with tears in their eyes and a need for hope in their hearts. The GET REAL team offers resources for repairing dysfunctional marriages, handyman work for homes that needs repair, and plenty of quality time before and after the program for teens aching to connect with someone who cares.

While it may not result in the numeric church growth typically expected of an outreach ministry, the entire church family sees the quality of life improvement in the young people of the community. There is a young lady who discovered GET REAL while she was in middle school. She came from a split family, and her home situation was further complicated while she was in high school when her mom developed a brain tumor. The church family intentionally looked after her and her family in love, and she responded to God’s lovingkindness by becoming a Pathfinder and playing piano during Sabbath worship services. She is currently working on Bible study lessons while attending Andrews University. She enjoyed the Adventist environment so much from GET REAL that it was an important part in her college selection process.

GET REAL is a reminder that youth ministry doesn’t have to be expensive or flashy. It just must be done in love. ■

Michael Taylor is pastor of the Paw Paw and Otsego churches.



Supplied by Michael Taylor

▲ Each week, Otsego Church opens its doors for kids in the community to experience a caring, supportive environment.



▲ Part of the 526 baptized in Holguin



▲ Pastors Fernando Ortiz and Daniel Camarata with a candidate



▲ Group of seminary students conducting the baptisms

Photos by Bill Greenley

Cuba Trip Yields 1,326th Baptism

By Samantha Angeles

A team of MDiv students and their sponsors journeyed to Holguin, Cuba, in March for an evangelistic study tour, a trip that proved more difficult, yet more fruitful, than any before.

“I’ve been taking students to Cuba for 15 years, and in no other trip has the enemy tried so hard to stop the work from going forward,” said Fernando Ortiz, Master of Divinity (MDiv) program director and Care for Cuba study tour leader. “But in no other trip have we seen the hand of God intervene in such mighty ways.”

The difficulties began when plane tickets for the 26-member group were cancelled just three months before they were to leave for Cuba, causing them to scramble to find new tickets on the same flight. Flights were found, but the group paid more for the tickets than on any previous trip. Then, just nine days before the students were to fly to Cuba, Aubrey Toup, an MDiv student coordinating the vacation Bible school (VBS) programs for her team, broke her ankle.

“I laid on the floor and cried out, ‘Why?’” said Aubrey. “Of all the times to break my ankle, why did it happen now, when I’ve prepared so much for the trip?”

A wheelchair was purchased for her, and although she was not able to attend every meeting in Cuba, she was able to coordinate VBS for more than 150 children, triple the amount expected.

But the blessing didn’t end there. On an earlier trip, Dr. Ortiz had met an amputee who asked for a new wheelchair. “Dr. Ortiz didn’t know how he’d do that,” said Aubrey, “but then I broke my ankle, and we were able to bring a wheelchair to him! God took a broken mess and turned it into a message.”

During the trip, the students witnessed God’s power through the challenges they faced. When Karina Sheldon, MDiv student, was sent to bed with heatstroke the day she was scheduled to preach, she heard the Holy Spirit say to her, “There is one. You have to go.” She understood this to mean that there was at least one person who needed to hear her message. Her ankles were too swollen for her to stand, so she preached sitting down.

“At the end of my talk, one lady came to me and asked, ‘What do I need to do to be baptized?’” remembered Karina. “She wouldn’t have been comfortable talking in a larger setting. I learned the importance of listening to the Holy Spirit that night.”

All throughout the week, students employed creative evangelism techniques, such as the “free bus of salvation,” in which they rented a city bus and gave Cubans

free rides throughout the city. During the ride, they sang songs and shared the message of salvation with the riders and invited them to the evening evangelistic series.

Students also went door-to-door sharing the gospel, organized a health fair, took family pictures for the community, conducted VBS programs and held evangelistic series in five sites throughout the city of Holguin, where people packed the churches each night.

However, the most highly anticipated event was the Sabbath service, in which thousands of people from all five sites were to gather at a sports arena in the middle of the city for a final gathering and a mass baptism in the swimming pool.

“We requested the venue six months in advance, and it was approved,” said Fernando. “But two days before we were to have our meeting, they cancelled it!”

Despite this setback, the team was able to reserve the soccer field adjacent to the gym for the program, which still gave them access to the swimming pool for the baptisms. However, when city officials saw them setting up speakers and equipment, they cut electricity to the venue completely, rendering them unable to be heard by the 2,000 people gathered that day.

“By this time, we were so used to the enemy throwing roadblocks at us that when we faced this, the biggest challenge of the week, we gathered to pray and said, ‘Lord, we know You are going to do something great in the midst of this setback. We are just expecting it!’ and He came through, beyond what we expected,” said Fernando.

At the last minute, a neighboring family agreed to allow the team to run an extension cord from their home to the speakers on the soccer field, enabling the team to be heard not only by the 2,000 people who attended the meeting, but by all in a three-block radius.

“People came out on their balconies to see what was going on, and they stayed to hear God’s message — hundreds of people, in addition to the two thousand who attended,” marveled Fernando.

That week, 526 people responded to the gospel and were baptized, including individuals who had been in contact with local churches throughout the year and had planned to be baptized at the end of the evangelistic series.

The team also brought 100 bicycles, 22 computers, 13 tablets and 13 cell phones for the local Cuban ministers, many of whom had no transportation or access to ministry resources.

“We saw God working in such mighty ways,” declared Fernando. “Every step of the way, there were big-time spiritual battles, but every step of the way the students saw the Lord deliver them.”

Care for Cuba, a ministry of the MDiv program, has equipped hundreds of pastors and churches in Cuba with ministry resources and sent more than 150 MDiv students for ten-day evangelistic campaigns since its start in 2013. To learn more about the program and how you can help, visit CareforCuba.org. ■

Samantha Angeles is an MDiv student at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary.

Photos by Bill Greenley



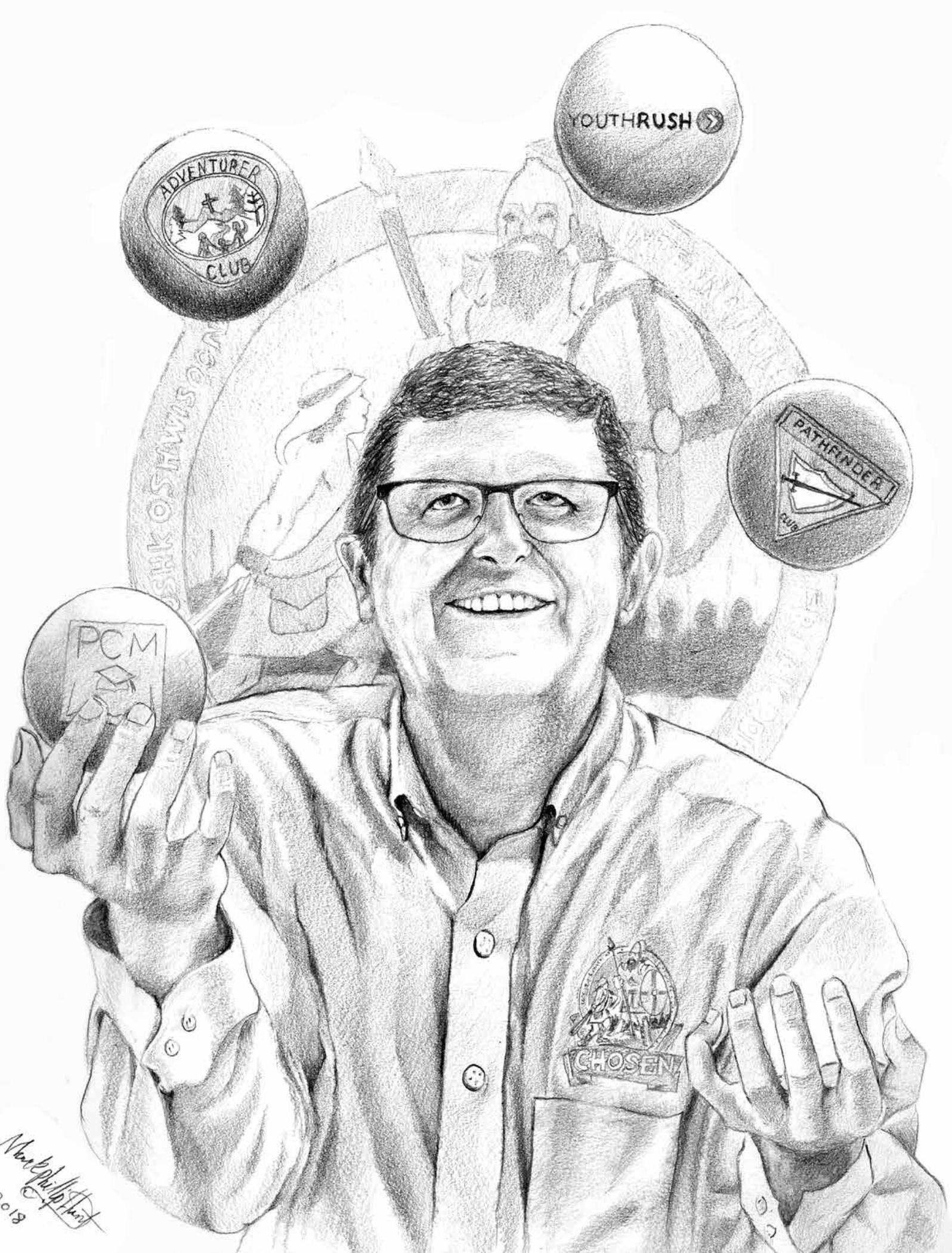
▲ Missionaries in front of PMC’s J.N. Andrews statue



▲ A portion of the group at Loma de la Cruz, Holguin



▲ Group of candidates ready to be baptized, raising their new Bibles



New Phil Hunt
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Understanding Youth

After more than three decades in youth and young adult ministry — 22 of those as the Lake Union Conference youth director, Ron Whitehead, in this interview with *Herald* managing editor, Debbie Michel, reflects on the state of affairs of youth in our territory.

Debbie: *You've been around for a number of years. Tell us what are some of the biggest differences you've noticed between youth of your generation and the current one.*

Ron: The reality of this generation, Gen-Z and millennials, is that it is so different; their worldview is so different, from my generation — the Boomers. Gen-Z and millennials still seek values from Scripture, but *how* they apply those values is very, very different.

I'll give you an example: In my generation, we were okay to sit and listen, and let others tell us what to do, when to do it, why to do it. I remember when I was coming along, "Don't go to movies" was the big one. We didn't really question that much.

Technology has taken over and the older adults are still trying to protect us from movie theatres. But, they're not really protecting us. They're protecting us from a building, not from what is going into our heads. It's not *where* we're watching things. We need to help our youth understand that it's *what* they're watching.

Another thing is that this generation is not interested in how fancy the church building is, or how the

lighting is. Even the worship style and the music are not as important to them. It's about relationships. They're seeking a relationship with people in that building: "Will the people in that building love and accept me for who I am?"

Debbie: *There are vast differences between earlier and most recent generations. So, in your estimation, what are some of the areas of youth ministry that are going well at this point in time?*

Ron: Club ministry is very strong in the Lake Union, that is our Adventurer program and our Pathfinder program. They're known around North America as one of the best. Craig Harris is our coordinator for club ministries, and does a fabulous job for us. Our Adventurer programming is expanding rapidly in our Union. We're amazed at the growth that's taking place.

Debbie: *What's driving that? Is it population growth, or something else?*

Ron: We've explored that: Why is Adventurer ministry taking off? We feel that parents understand

Pioneer Memorial Church Adventurers Club is one of the largest in North America. In the last five years, the Forever Friends Club has experienced phenomenal growth:

2014–2015: 45 members | **2015–2016:** 85 members | **2016–2017:** 102 members | **2017–2018:** 135 members

According to the director, Kemoree Duncombe, parent participation played a key role in the extraordinary growth. *“The club’s main purpose is to strengthen the parent-child relationship and further the child’s development in spiritual, physical, mental and social areas. The activities assist parents in their important responsibilities as the child’s primary teachers and evangelizers.*

“Our instructors and staff consisted of parents working together to provide fun and informative

experiences for our children. Parents made a commitment to attend meetings, activities and outings with their children. As leaders, it was important to have well-planned programs for the children while providing consistent discipline and structure. Regular parent meetings provided support for our parents who were welcome and valued at club meetings for their companionship, influence and assistance. Raising godly children truly takes a community effort.”



Photos by Joshua Leets

the importance of getting their kids in a different environment than on a screen all the time — a different experiential, social, spiritual environment. I just think this new parent generation understands and wants to participate more in the lives of their children, rather than just letting someone else raise their kids.

Another ministry area we’re doing well in is summer camp. We have some amazing camp ministry partners in our Union. The beauty of this ministry is we actually empower young adults to have a title, authority and responsibility to do ministry, not just watch somebody else do ministry. Young adults are in charge of spiritual programs, activities and safety, and are building community with youth.

We also have an effective literature evangelism ministry. The mentorship is outstanding. Again, it’s giving young adults an opportunity to get involved in the mission of the church. That excites me.

Our short-term mission trip program is very strong. We have a worldview. We’re not just “naval gazers,” I

call it. You can see that with our international trips to Cuba, Puerto Rico after the storm, Belize, Haiti, and domestically to Kentucky and various Indian reservations. We have a Mathew 28 world mission view. Did you know we were the first Union to respond to the Katrina storm disaster? And we kept sending support to this area for over a year-and-a-half. I love this Union’s “can do” attitude to *live* their faith, not just talk their faith.

Our Public Campus Ministry program is second to none. We have appointed a volunteer coordinator, Israel Ramos, who is an expert in public campus ministry. We’re setting up chapters of Adventist Christian Fellowships on campuses. We have some amazing young adults on our public campuses who are living the gospel of Christ. Do you know we have more Chinese students than any other Union in North America? We could actually make contact with them on these campuses, and invite them to know Jesus, before they go back to their home countries.

Debbie: *Are we falling short anywhere?*

Ron: This is hard to talk about, as I'd rather talk about the things where we're doing great rather than the things we're not doing well. The fact is this: We're losing over 51 percent of our young adults at the local church. We're not attracting, we're not retaining, and we're not meeting their needs. We're not connecting very well to this generation at the local church.

Just go ask any young person about their Facebook friends. How many are still active? Go back to any alumni weekend at any of our academies; find out how many are still active when they have those honor classes. Over 51 percent are not active. I mean, those are just two of examples of many that we could offer. We don't have to do more research on this; we just know it's a fact.

If a fast food restaurant was losing 51 percent of their customers (ages 16–35), they would do whatever is necessary to fix the problem of why that customer is not coming back. Why wouldn't we do whatever is necessary, as they would in the secular world, to figure out a way to connect this generation in a fresh and new way. Why wouldn't we do that, Debbie? I don't know why.

Debbie: *What are our local congregations doing to buck this downward trend? Are there any success stories?*

Ron: I think of our church plant in Chicagoland with Epic Church. Also, Bolingbrook in Illinois is having some amazing success using cross-generational approaches to connect to this generation. I think of Paw Paw — they're having tremendous success in the involvement of this generation in the mission of the church to the community, placing young people in critical leadership positions. I think of South Bend First in Indiana. That's a very beautiful cross-generational, cross-cultural place where young adults are really thriving in right now. Fort Wayne, Indiana, has had some great success. They're having two services. And we have other success stories in each of our conferences.

Debbie: *If you could talk to someone on the leadership board of a local church about this situation, what would you tell them to do?*

Ron: I would ask them to first take time for prayer, as leaders, and start talking about the problem that we all have, which is connecting to this generation and helping this generation connect to the mission of the local church and feel like they're a part of the local church, not just a spectator or a visitor. Youth are an important part of a healthy local church. Prayer is the first step.

Second, I would suggest that leadership begin talking about the loss. Until you admit that we're having loss (it's like the first step in Alcoholics Anonymous: "I'm an alcoholic, I need help"), we cannot figure out a new way forward.

It's important to admit what's not working. Actually drill into that and figure out who is coming. Who are we missing? It is important to make a list of names — who is missing, find out where they live, work and go to school, etc.

Debbie: *Church of Refuge (COR) came about to fix some of these problems, correct? Talk about how this resource may be helpful for local congregations hoping to attract and retain young people.*

Ron: Church of Refuge originally started by way of a major debate at the Center for Youth Evangelism meeting room table, where young adults looked at me, and said, "You're the Union Youth director, you're a professor for Youth ministry here at the seminary. You're (at that time) an associate Youth director of the North American Division. Why are all my friends leaving the church? You should fix it!" I looked back at them and, because I was as direct as they were, I said, "Well, why don't you fix it? This is your generation; these are your friends we're losing." It was a healthy debate of, well, who is in charge of this loss? Who is responsible for this loss? And we both agreed, we were both responsible for the loss.

But, in that context, I said, "Well, let's do something that the Adventist Church has never done before, as far as I know. Let's go ask the customer — the young adult. Let's ask them what they are looking for in a local church. Every time I fly an airline, every time I go to a certain hotel, they send me an email saying, "What did we do right? What can we do better?" Essentially, my church has never asked this

generation: What are we doing right? What can we do better? In the past, it has been: “We tell you what you should do, when you should do it, why you should do it” and do not ask questions. Do you get it? This represents a disconnect!

Twelve years ago, we asked close to 1,000 young adults, “What is it you’re looking for in a local church? If you moved to London, Sydney, Detroit, Dallas, Miami, Atlanta; what kind of church would you go look for?”

We found these nine core values — nine things they think are important. One example is the Sabbath. They really value the Sabbath; they want a church [where] they can experience the Sabbath, but not just Sabbath morning!

Church of Refuge COR Values

<https://www.cye.org/ministries/church-of-refuge>

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. Sabbath | 6. Service |
| 2. Discipleship | 7. Leadership |
| 3. Acceptance | 8. Budget |
| 4. Community | 9. Change |
| 5. Support | |

This is a generation where, if they’re active in their faith, Friday night is the loneliest night for them because all their friends are at movies, clubbing or at sporting events. But, COR congregations understand that Friday night sundown to Saturday night sundown is important to them — including the Sabbath afternoon, not just the a.m. Divine worship hour. A young adult put it to me this way to explain how he and his friends feel about the Sabbath. He said, “I can download a great sermon. I cannot download a great relationship.”

This generation is looking for community, and they’re looking for purpose. If the local church doesn’t provide them community and purpose for their life, they’re going to go find it at the local sports bar, YMCA or at their work. This generation will find community and purpose somewhere.

Young people also want to belong to a church that “lives” service. They don’t want to belong to a church that prays about the poor, preaches about the poor, sings about the poor. They want to belong to a church that does something for the poor. You see the difference?

Debbie: *I do. Talk about the February 2018 Youth Evangelism Congress.*

Ron: We have a youth evangelism congress every two years. We’ve done it three times now. This is where local churches send young adults and senior youth, 16– 35, to hear other young people explaining what they’re doing with their time and talent to build God’s Kingdom; for example, they are sharing the gospel of Jesus in public school settings, in their Adventist school settings, their neighborhoods and their workplaces. The Lake Union not only trains this generation for evangelism but resources them with cash.

Ellen White [makes this appeal]: “With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Savior might be carried to the world!” (*Youth Instructor*, March 3, 1908, para. 4).

We fire up this generation, we preach to them, we encourage them, and we train them. [But] here’s what we haven’t done as well: We don’t deploy them



Jonathan Logan

▲ Youth Evangelism Congress 2018.

(enable them, furnish them, provide needed resources, release them) to do ministry.

In the secular military world, you train youth how to be warriors. But, eventually leadership hands youth equipment and other resources that allow you to be warriors. I believe [in the Adventist Church] we've trained generations how to be Kingdom warriors, but we have never totally [empowered and equipped] them to be spiritual warriors. If this generation does not have access to governance, and they do not have access to cash, then they are spectators; they are not participants.

At the Lake Union Youth Evangelism Congress, after they receive scores of evangelism ideas, they talk about it; they pray about it around the tables with their ministerial directors (we have amazing conference ministerial directors). We said to the young adults, you are to now go back to your pastor and get their support then meet with your local church board. For every dollar that the church board votes, the Union will match dollar for dollar up to a certain amount. *(See page 10 for the story of one of the projects receiving funding.)*

Debbie: *That's wonderful! Let's talk about another big evangelistic program you're involved in. We're a year from Oshkosh. What are some of the things to expect that we haven't had before?*

Ron: Yes, we are one year from Oshkosh. It's the largest Adventist Youth ministry gathering on the planet with some 50,000 people. It comes to our Union in a small town called Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Everyone around the world knows where Oshkosh is. They can't maybe tell you where some other cities are in our Union, but they can tell you where Oshkosh is.

We're working really hard on the story of David. David was an amazing Bible character. He had one shining moment when he brought down a giant. But, the rest of his life represents this journey of up and down in his relationship with God. But, he is called a man after God's own heart. If you go to the Hebrews 11 Bible hero chapter, we actually see him in the list. There are many stories in David's life that we can't even present in Oshkosh because his life was so compromised. We're not going to present those — it's still a G-rated camporee! The theme, "Chosen," says it all: God chose David, as a young person, to be the king of Israel. But, notice that David keeps choosing God every time he messes up. The choice goes both ways.

We're working on the spiritual programming. We're expecting over 1,000 young people to be baptized. We're asking every club in North America to bring one person to be baptized. We have about 1,800 clubs coming. We're going to create the largest human cross on the planet. The current world record, I think, is about 14,000 people. We're going to set a new world record at 17,000. We expect over 68 different countries. For the first time, China is bringing Pathfinders from Mainland China. Cuba also is coming. Dubai is coming with Pathfinders for the first time.

It's very exciting for our kids to experience the World Church, and to worship with tens of thousands of youth their age. When you're gathered in the 20 acres at the main stage area and you're worshipping Jesus together, there's something very unique, very extraordinary and special about that.

Debbie: *I'm looking forward to that experience! Thanks so much for taking the time to talk with us. ■*

▼ Ron Whitehead

Youth Evangelism Congress Funds

Year	Available	Requested
2014	16,000	8,500
2016	32,500	32,500
2018	87,500	87,500

Whitehead on why in the first year not all funds were picked up: We surveyed the participants. They said two reasons: 1): No one has ever asked us for our evangelism ideas, or our vision for evangelism. We never thought of ourselves as important to our church evangelism plans. 2): If we have evangelism ideas, no one has ever offered us cash to do them. My church has never offered me cash to do anything.



Jonathan Logan

A LEAGUE OF THEIR OWN



Jean-Frédéric Michel

▲ Cory Jackson, left, with his son, Isaiah.

By Malissa Martin

It was 1996, and Cory Jackson was working at a residential facility in Grand Rapids, Michigan, along with his co-worker, Richard Magsby. Knowing how much Cory liked basketball, Richard asked if he'd be interested in playing with his church's team.

"Of course!" was Cory's quick reply. What Cory, a young adult with major "storms" in his life, experienced playing in the Christian Fellowship League that year radically changed his life forever. It was an introduction to relative strangers who loved him like they were long-lost relatives. Church members would include Cory and his family in their activities, whether it was for Sabbath lunch or cheering on the sidelines at a game.

Cory reflects on his experience. "One of the things that we would do on Sundays when we practiced, is we had devotion before we practiced, and then we had a community service we had to do to be part of the team. Then we had to show up for church and AY (youth and young adult service)," Cory says. "The fellowship of it really is what really brought me through it." As a result of these godly connections, Cory agreed to Bible studies, which eventually propelled him to surrender his life to Christ and be baptized.

Since its inception 48 years ago, the Christian Fellowship League (CFL) has successfully introduced hundreds of young people, such as Cory, to Christ and Adventist teachings. Through this non-traditional basketball ministry, sponsored by the Lake Region Conference Youth Department, many are baptized and become active church members who have gone on, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to convert family and friends, too.

The CFL, consisting of teams of men, women and/or children drawn from churches in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin, provides opportunities to engage in a customized basketball league held on Saturday nights from October through March.

Lake Region's Youth director, Jason North, says, "In our Black communities, athletics is a tremendous draw, so we use sports/basketball as a tool to introduce youth to the Adventist Church." He further states that the Saturday evening games serve as a deterrent to inner-city crime, creating a safe environment. "It keeps our young Black males off the street or from gangs or violence, encourages positive choices and, ultimately, a Christian lifestyle."

Whereas some may question using basketball as a witnessing tool, Cory is sold on the idea of using this as an outlet to build up God's

Kingdom. “People need to look beyond the competition, and not be so concerned about competition, compared to fellowship.” He continues, “CFL is bigger than just playing; it’s an avenue to help people see who Christ is.”

The league is open to everyone — Adventist teams, which can include two non-Adventists per team, in addition to non-Adventist teams — as long as they obey the rules. According to the 2015 *CFL Volleyball and Basketball Official Rules and Regulations Handbook*, the purpose of the CFL is “to promote fellowship, encourage the service of mission outreach and give positive direction through athletic play.” In order to ensure the CFL fulfills its purpose, rules are strictly enforced: players must have proof of personal insurance, attend church and AY regularly, perform community service, and be approved to play by the church board and AY Council.

To some, these rules may seem excessive, but Cory says when he played as a non-Adventist the rules didn’t bother him. “They explained it to me — what it meant and its purpose. So it didn’t bother me at all. And truth be told, they didn’t make me feel like I wasn’t Adventist. I didn’t feel like an outsider; I didn’t feel like I didn’t belong.”

Quin Madison, 29, of Ephesus Church in Saginaw, Michigan, agrees the rules aren’t hard to follow. Quin began the 2016–2017 CFL season playing for Ephesus men’s basketball team; by the end of the season, he became a baptized member of the Seventh-day Adventist church, thanks in large measure to his childhood friend, Bobby Lewis, who introduced him to hopeful messages from God’s Word. Quin said the CFL gives him a way to show people how to live right, both on and off the court. “It’s very beneficial,” he says, “because you have a lot of people watching and you have to be a good example the best way you can.”

Some 20 years after he was first introduced to the league, Cory is leaving a good example for his sons who, at one point or another, played in the CFL. “It’s rewarding to see the tradition of it, and watch them play,” he says. Cory has felt called to *follow the Lamb wherever He goes* and, until recently, was a pastor in the Lake Region Conference where he shared his love of Christ with the players.

League organizers remain determined to infuse the sporting event with spiritual programming, such as at the “Final Four” weekend activities held in March at the Burns church in Detroit. The weekend included Sabbath

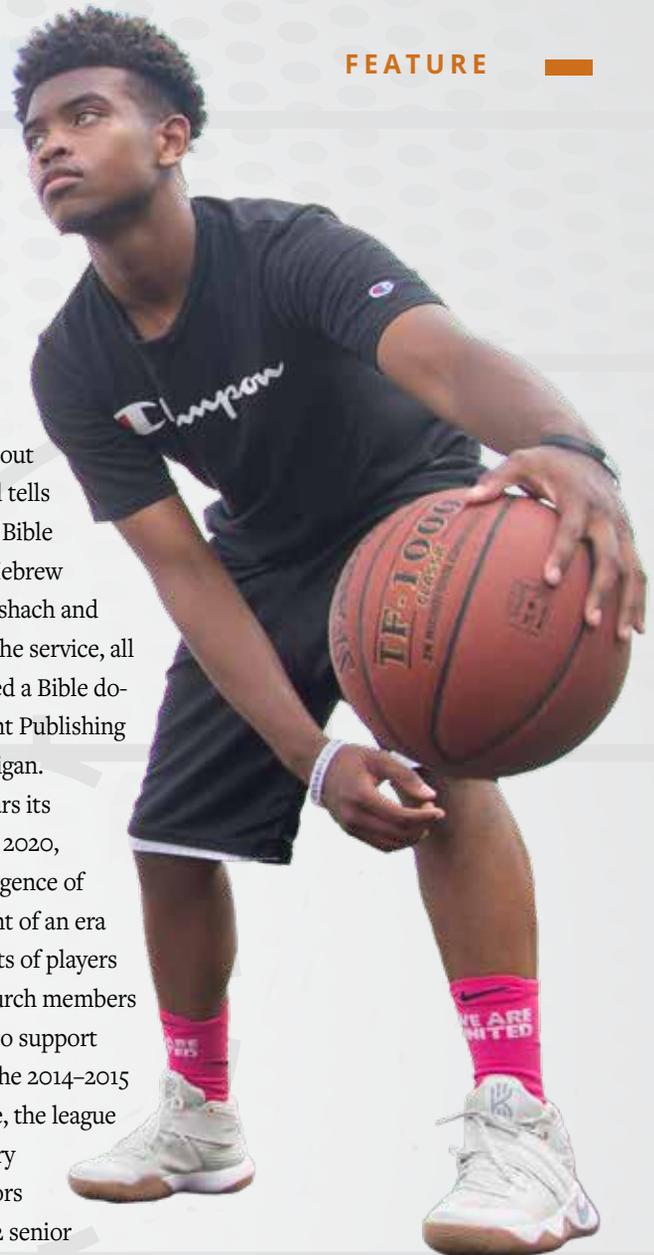
morning services with Carlton Byrd, director of Breath of Life TV ministry and senior pastor at Oakwood University Church who sermonized about following what God tells you to do using the Bible story of the three Hebrew boys, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. During the service, all CFL players received a Bible donated from Remnant Publishing in Coldwater, Michigan.

As the league nears its 50th anniversary in 2020, it’s enjoying a resurgence of interest, reminiscent of an era when there were lots of players and busloads of church members filled gymnasiums to support the teams. During the 2014–2015 season, for example, the league fielded zero small fry (ages 4–9), six juniors (ages 10–17), and 22 senior (ages 18 and above) teams. Last year, the numbers jumped significantly to 8 small fry, 14 juniors and 27 seniors. Last season, nine of those 5-to-13 player teams were not yet members of the Adventist Church.

The Lake Region Youth director says he encourages churches to actively seek younger players who draw a larger number of family-and-friends supporters since this demographic is likely to make lasting relationship with friends and coaches. “It’s our number one evangelism and retention tool,” says Jason. “It’s a perfect opportunity to witness.”

For more information on CFL and how you can get involved, visit <http://www.lrcyouth.com/cfl/>. The new season kicks off October 13. ■

Malissa Martin is a Detroit-based freelance writer.



Bolingbrook community gathers to rise against hunger



Dave Pfeleiderer

▲ Associates and community members created individual packets of food at the Rise Against Hunger event.

In Luke's gospel, Jesus meets a lawyer who, though he knows he is to love his neighbor as himself, doesn't know what constitutes "neighbor." Jesus demonstrates the concept of neighbor through the parable of the Good Samaritan, and says, *Go and do likewise*. No doubt the man left surprised to hear that, to a follower of Christ, a neighbor is *anyone* we encounter who is in need.

According to Cristina Grys, lead chaplain, Spiritual Care Services, AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center Bolingbrook's mission of extending the healing ministry of Jesus means more than providing exceptional health care to the sick and injured. It means joining with the community to serve people in need, wherever they may be, in Jesus' name.

On April 7, more than 100 associates, their family members, friends and 35

members of the Bolingbrook Church gathered at the hospital to package 20,000 meals to help eradicate hunger around the world. The event was a partnership with Rise Against Hunger, a non-profit organization which works with volunteers to bundle nutritious, inexpensive meals for student nourishment programs in developing countries.

Rise Against Hunger delivered bulk ingredients to the hospital, then groups worked in assembly line fashion to create individual packets that were boxed for shipment overseas. The packets of rice, soy, vegetables and 23 essential vitamins and minerals prepared by the group will feed 120,000 individuals.

Grys reports that this year's gathering packed almost twice as many meals as last year. Participants were encouraged to bring a food item to contribute to a local

food pantry as well. "It's a great experience for the whole family, and helps raise awareness of world hunger," said Grys. "As we gather items for a local food pantry, we're reminded of the needs in our own backyard."

José St. Phard, pastor of the Bolingbrook Church, believes partnering with the hospital in community outreach has tremendous impact for the Kingdom and says, "Together we help reveal who Jesus is as we serve *the least of these*. Rise Against Hunger is a call to arms for each of us to take a stand against hunger, one of the world's greatest enemies. It's a phenomenal event."

Last year, Grys was pleased to learn meals packed by the hospital were sent to Mozambique and distributed through the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA). "That was a nice God-orchestrated coincidence," she said.

Just as amazing, St. Phard reports that one of his congregants was in tears as she packed food at the event. "She realized that, as a child, she had received such meals while growing up in an underprivileged community," he said. "She cried, 'Look where God has brought me — I'm packing food for others. I received and now I am giving.'" ■

Julie Busch, associate vice president, Communications for AMITA Health

Attention Doctors!

Save the date for the first Lake Union Providers Well-Being Conference (physicians, dentists, optometrists), Friday, Oct. 5, and Saturday, Oct. 6, near Hinsdale, Ill. (Chicagoland).

Keynote speaker: Dr. Ted Hamilton, Adventist Health Systems chief mission integration officer and senior vice president.

Email heather.hoffman2@amitahealth.org for updates and registration information.

Homeless Project Creates Awareness

Joanna Jones is a native of Dayton, Ohio, and an Andrews University senior, studying photography with a minor in leadership. Recently, she embarked on an endeavor through which she hopes to better the lives of those too often overlooked.

Students involved in the Undergraduate Leadership Program must develop a Change Project where, as the name implies, students make a change in their community. Joanna's "Homeless Awareness Project" began as a way to fulfill requirements for her Change Project.

"Last semester I came up with three Change Project ideas I was interested in," says Jones. "When I brought my ideas to my mentors, they asked me which idea I wanted to work on. As I was talking about the homeless awareness idea, they saw my face light up and knew that this was my Change Project."

Jones says a typical project day consists of trying to find shelters willing to let her photograph people for the project. "Once I find people, I sit down with them for a minute or two and listen to their stories," she says. "When they finish, I take my camera out and take some images of them."

Through this combination of images and words, Jones is able to capture and share the essence of the people she meets — she represents their backgrounds, their personalities and a small part of their lives.

Much preparation and behind-the-scenes work takes place. After Jones gathers images and stories, she types up the stories, makes small changes on the images and crops everything to the proper size in order to ensure that every piece of her puzzle fits together.

Jones has encountered some obstacles along the way, pushing her to adapt the

project from its original outline. She says, "My initial plan was to have over 30 people encompassing a vast range of ages and races. I wanted to hand out books with different images and stories as well as business cards with the project website. After I had difficulties finding shelters willing to let me photograph people, I decided to cut down to only 20 people and a few extra stories. I dropped my idea of a book and business cards."

In spite of these roadblocks, Jones has ambitions and plans to move forward. She has developed a website, homelessawarenessproject.com, where people can access her platform from a different interface.

"My main goal for this campaign is to bring awareness to what homeless people go through," she explains. "When people see the images and read the stories, I hope they decide to help in any way they can."

Emily Carlson, director of the Undergraduate Leadership Program, says, "I love watching our leadership students embark on their Change Projects and all the ensuing growth involved with being a catalyst for change in the world around them. When Joanna presented on her Change Project at our annual capstone presentation, I found myself tearing up at the change I have seen in her. She has blossomed during her time at Andrews, and it has been a joy to watch her grow in confidence and ability. Homelessness in the Michiana area is a serious issue, and I am proud of Joanna for bringing awareness to our community." ■

Brandon Shin, IMC student writer, Andrews University



Shiekainah Decano

▲ Joanna Jones works to bring change to the world around her.



Joanna Jones

▲ "I'm 55 years old. I've been in Las Vegas as a poker dealer and nail tech. My husband was a hairdresser. I had everything at my fingertips since I was 18 until last year when I was bludgeoned by my partner for three years. I didn't know that he was using meth and heroin. Since being here, I've been participating in some of the programs to help me get back on my feet."

EDUCATION NEWS

Reaching millennial generations

MINISTRY LEADERS FROM AROUND THE WORLD GATHER TO FOCUS ON MISSION TO YOUNGER GENERATIONS

BERRIEN SPRINGS, Mich.—On April 12–14, the Global Mission Center for Secular and Postmodern Studies (CSPS), in partnership with the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University, hosted the Reaching Millennial Generations conference. More than 200 individuals from every division in the world church journeyed to Berrien Springs for the much-anticipated event.

“It’s time for us to talk about Millennials and the younger generations,” said

Kleber Gonçalves, CSPS director and Doctor of Ministry program director at the Seminary. “This is the future of our church, and there are so many opportunities in this new context that we live in. We need to start building bridges of communication with these generations.”

The conference featured James Emery White, author of *The Rise of the Nones and Meet Generation Z*. In addition, 20 plenary and breakout session presenters from around the world gathered to share their expertise, including church planters, a “digital missionary,” administrators, researchers and educators, many of whom are Millennials.

“The decision to bring younger practitioners was a major change from other conferences,” said Gonçalves. “These young people are making a difference in the world because they are passionate in what they do. People were able to see

that if we have passion in our hearts to reach these generations, God will open up opportunities.”

A. Allan Martin, teaching pastor of Younger Generation Church and lead research facilitator for the Adventist Millennial Study done by the Barna Group, delivered the first plenary presentation. He explained the sobering statistics of young adult disengagement with Adventism and why he was convicted to do research and equip churches to understand and reach young people.

“I wasn’t going to flip a coin to see whether or not my daughter would belong to the church I’ve given my life to,” he said.

At the end of his presentation, attendees partnered to pray by name for the young adults they each know who have left the church.

“Reaching these generations is a big challenge for all countries,” said Edilene Araújo, a youth and young adult worker who traveled from São Paulo, Brazil, to attend the conference. “We can’t just stop and watch the youth leaving the church. I’m returning to Brazil with new energy because of what I’ve learned and experienced here.”

Keynote speaker James Emery White presented, “The Rise of the Nones,” exploring the 25 percent of Americans and 50 percent of young adults who claim no religious affiliation.

“The vast majority of the ‘nones’ are happy without a religion,” said White. “One person said, ‘I’m not an atheist. I don’t even care anymore. I’m an apathy-ist.’”

In his second plenary presentation, White focused on Generation Z, those born between 1995–2012, who comprise the largest generation in modern U.S. history.

“Gen Z is the first in history to find whatever they need to know without the help of intermediaries,” he explained.



Sheikainah Decano

▲ At the Reaching Millennial Generations conference (left to right): Kleber D. Gonçalves, director, Doctor of Ministry program, Andrews University, and director, Global Mission Center for Secular and Postmodern Studies, Office of Adventist Mission—General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists; Andrea Luxton, president, Andrews University; Homer Trecartin, director, Global Mission Centers—Office of Adventist Mission, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

"They have instant access to any information but little access to wisdom."

White delineated the challenges of reaching Generation Z, the first "post-Christian" generation, which he calls a "lost generation."

"There is profound spiritual emptiness," he said. "But if we change where we need to change, there is hope for the church."

One area that White encouraged church leaders to master is social media.

"Gen Z are digital natives who can't remember a world without constant, immediate, convenient access to the web," White said. "If you are not putting the focus of your outreach efforts through social media, wake up!"

In his breakout session, Justin Khoe, creator of the YouTube channel "That Christian Vlogger" which has more than 50,000 mostly non-Adventist subscribers, echoed the importance of social media to reach next generations.

"Millennials spend an average of 18 hours behind a screen every day," Khoe said. "Digital is the most important mission field if you want to reach Millennials in the western world. Every single day thousands of people are questioning their core convictions, and they are looking for advice online. Where are you in that conversation? Where am I?"

In his final plenary presentation, "Rethinking Evangelism and Apologetics in Light of What We Know About Generation Z," White explained that evangelism techniques must develop and change in response to the decreasing biblical literacy of younger generations.

"People need you to very quickly move to the 'so what?' of Bible teaching," he said. "They have seen so few, if any, lives that have had their deepest needs met by Christ. They need to get a whiff of another world."

Gonçalves delivered the final presentation for the conference: "Sharing Our Faith with Millennial Generations: The



▲ James Emery White, author and pastor of the Mecklenburg Community Church in Charlotte, N.C., was the keynote speaker for the Reaching Millennial Generations conference.

Power of Storytelling." A Stanford study revealed that stories are remembered 22 times more than facts alone.

"Stories are so powerful because they connect us to our humanity by linking our lives to the past and giving us glimpses of the future," he said. "They create empathy with other people, which affords tremendous opportunities for reaching Millennial generations."

For Gonçalves, who has invested nearly two years in organizing the conference, there is one takeaway point he hopes all conference attendees have grasped. "It's possible to reach these generations," he said. "There are so many opportunities if we have the passion and the vision from God. So, I hope they think to themselves, 'I can do this. It's possible. I can connect with them.'"

The conference was recorded by the Adventist Learning Community and videos will be posted on the CSPS website, csp.globalmissioncenters.org, when they are available. For more information, visit millennialglobalmission.org and follow @theCSPS on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. ■

Samantha Angeles, Seminary student writer

THERE ARE SO MANY OPPORTUNITIES IF WE HAVE THE PASSION AND THE VISION FROM GOD.

Michigan junior high students conduct evangelistic meetings

BERRIEN SPRINGS, Mich.—For the fifth year in a row, junior high school students at Ruth Murdoch Elementary School pitched a tent on the campus of Andrews University and preached sermons directed to their peers.

The Tent, as it's known, was held for one week in April as a collaborative evangelistic effort between Pioneer Memorial Church youth pastor Ben Martin and Ruth

Murdock's 7th- and 8th-grade students and teachers. There also was a group of parents and Seminary students who assisted in planning and organizing the nightly program. Junior high students were not only responsible for preaching but also singing, greeting, gathering contact cards and operating audio-visual equipment.

It took several months of prayerful advance planning before the meetings were held. For instance, religion teacher, Christopher Davisson, said that before the sermons were written, the eight student evangelists met and spent time during the spring semester in prayer as they waited

for the Lord to give each student a message to present.

Not surprisingly, the young preachers' lives were impacted greatly. Many of them noted in final written reports that the experience brought them into a closer relationship with God and a better understanding of His character and purpose for their lives. "God is no longer the cloud with the lightning bolt in the little kids' story-books," wrote eighth-grader, Lucas Navia. "Now it's like He's real and doesn't want me to do stupid things, even though He knows I will. No matter how far I went, and how stupid the things I did, He will always welcome me back."

Another eighth-grade preacher, Angelisse Villamizar, was greatly impacted by a fellow classmate's sermon. "After Leah's (Bitterman) sermon on Saturday, I went home and knelt down by my bed. I prayed and I asked God to come into my heart and take control of my life. I told Him I couldn't live without Him anymore and that I needed Him."

The experience not only affected the young preachers' relationships with God, but also created a special bond among the group. "I can go up to any of them now and ask them to pray with me and they won't be like, 'Mmm, okay.' Instead they will gladly do it!" wrote Natalia Poloche.

As a result of the life-changing experience, one student decided to give his life totally to Christ and was baptized. Mugabi Menani said the preaching deepened his walk with God, allowing him to spend more time with God. "I asked Him to take over my life and plant His presence in me."

Another pleasant outcome of the meetings, says Davisson, is families working together to build up the Kingdom of God. "I have seen families who have been struggling, but this has helped heal their homes." ■

Debbie Michel, associate director of Communication/
Lake Union Herald managing editor.



▲ Students, surrounded by parents and mentors, gather to pray at the end of a meeting.



▲ Eighth-grader, Danielle Randall, makes an appeal. Afterwards, Randall said, "I often doubted if there really was a God, and He really cared about me or heard my prayers. But after preaching, I know without a single doubt that there is a God, that He does care and that He will provide for you, no matter what."



CONFERENCE NEWS

Celebrating Adventist Youth Heritage

THE CHURCH GREW ON THE SHOULDERS OF YOUNG PEOPLE.

MICHIGAN—When most of us consider the early pioneers of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, we likely visualize elderly men with long beards and women with expressionless faces. What we often forget is that, when the Lord first began leading them on their journey of faith, many of these pioneers were teenagers and young adults. It was young people who held the original leadership positions in the church and helped to form and shape the fledgling organization. With their zeal, energy and commitment to Jesus, young people have continued to play a prominent role in growing the church and sharing the gospel message worldwide.

To recognize and honor the vital contribution of youth and young adults, a Youth Heritage Celebration will be held in Battle Creek, Mich., Oct. 18–20. Skits and presenters for the event will focus on the theme, “Lest We Forget.” Lecturers include church leaders from the General Conference (GC) and North American Division (NAD) Youth departments, the

White Estate, Faith for Today, and GC Sabbath School departments, among others, who will be speaking at the historic Battle Creek Tabernacle. Tours of Adventist Heritage Village, Battle Creek Sanitarium and Rosehill Cemetery also will be provided.

The Adventist Youth Ministries Museum (AYMM), a discovery and learning center, is sponsoring the event. Originating in concept in 1994 by the NAD Pathfinder Committee and located in Battle Creek, AYMM displays hundreds of artifacts that tell stories of the Lord’s leading throughout Adventist Church history as seen through the eyes of young people from the mid-1800s to the present. Youth and young adults have spent decades collecting items for this project.

“The time had come to develop a discovery and learning center where visitors can learn about the ways Pathfinder clubs and Adventist Youth Societies have changed the lives of those who have gone before,” says Terry Dodge, AYMM president and CEO. “Interestingly, it was two boys in 1879, Luther Warren, 14, and Harry Fenner, 17, who started the first Adventist youth society in Hazelton,

Michigan. From that prayerful beginning, the youth movement has grown and impacted countless young people.”

AYMM board chair, Leo Ranzolin, notes the need to involve youth in all facets of church life and organization, and believes as people examine the past through the historic museum and see how God has led, they will be encouraged for the future.

“We want to come here to learn how this great movement came to fruition,” says Ranzolin. “It was these young people who responded to the call, and wherever we go, we see those who were trained when they were young leading the church in many different capacities today.”

“It is our hope,” Dodge added, “that those who attend the Youth Heritage Celebration, no matter their age, will catch the vision that the Lord has a place for each one of them in His work. We are here to follow in the footsteps of our pioneers.”

To learn more and to register for the event, go to aymmuseum.org. ■

Sandra Blackmer is an assistant editor for Adventist Review and Adventist World magazines.



▲ A group of visitors, both young and not so young, tour the Adventist Youth Ministries Museum in Battle Creek, Michigan.

Scores of Lake Region youth mobilized for service in Detroit

LAKE REGION—More than 50 young people from the Motor City became the hands and feet of Jesus through the annual Global Youth Day, a day set aside to “Be the Sermon” and learn that there is more to faith than simply going to church.

On March 17, the Detroit Burns Avenue Church served as host to the collaborative efforts of the Motor City Youth Federation and the Burns Avenue “Isaiah 58” outreach initiative. Young people and adults were split up into four ministry groups: sharing hot dogs and hugs, distributing grocery bags, visiting a hospital to give parents of newborns diapers, and praying with individuals.

With signs held aloft advertising “hot dogs and hugs,” one group went to a nearby playground to barbecue hotdogs. Many individuals stopped by the park and received hot dogs, a bag of chips, water and, of course, a hug. Some even wanted prayer, including two Detroit police officers.

Thanks to a donation from a local food bank, another group of young people prepared grocery bags of food to dole out



Jason North

▲ Two Detroit police officers, pictured here with Lake Region Youth Ministries director, Jason North, were prayed for during Global Youth Day last spring

to individuals or families. Over 30 families responded to the signs outside the church which pointed them to free groceries inside the fellowship hall of the Burns Avenue Church. Each family received prayer as they left the church.

The third project involved assembling gift bags, which included diapers and other necessities for delivery to parents with newborns at the Children’s Hospital of Michigan.

The fourth project was “Prayer at the Corner.” A group held signs reading, “Honk if you want prayer,” and almost every passerby honked as young people

and chaperones prayed for each car and passenger.

At the close, during a wrap-up session, young people excitedly shared testimonies of how God had blessed them and others through their efforts.

Global Youth Day is alive and well in the Lake Union, and the Lake Region Youth Ministries Department is extremely proud of how the young have responded each year since we began participating in 2014. We look forward to next year’s opportunity to again “Be the Sermon.” ■

Jason C. North, Lake Region Conference, Youth Ministries director.

Lake Region Conference holds quadrennial session

LAKE REGION—Delegates of the Lake Region Conference re-elected R. Clifford Jones as president and Yvonne Collins as treasurer, while voting Garth Gabriel to serve as its executive secretary.

The 28th Quadrennial Session held at Pioneer Memorial Church on the campus of Andrews University on Sunday, May 20, officially opened at 10:10 a.m. with 631 registered delegates, for the expressed purpose of electing officers, departmental directors and governing committees; voting

on amendments to the constitution and bylaws, as well as hearing reports of the conference’s work over the last four years.

After Jones presented his president’s report outlining various achievements over the last quadrennial, he was re-elected by a wide margin. He said that continuing under the banner of “Christ Alone,” he plans to focus on these five areas: Revival and Reformation, Evangelism, Adventist Education, Stewardship Education and Camp Wagner.

In the secretary’s report, Timothy Nixon highlighted several accomplishments, including 1,746 baptisms between 2014-2017, along with last year’s successful Leadership Summit organized with the

intent of motivating and equipping church leaders for greater service.

Following a robust discussion period, Detroit’s Conant Gardens Church pastor, Garth Gabriel, was elected to serve as the new executive secretary. “I have approached everything in my life as an opportunity to minister,” Gabriel later said. “So, if I can minister in this role, I will be thrilled.” He further indicated that he plans to learn his new role by prayerfully seeking heavenly wisdom and “asking lots of questions.”

Chief financial officer Yvonne Collins emphasized in her financial report the clean year-after-year audits, and steady annual tithe flow of \$10–\$11 million. However, she



▲ Lake Region Conference officers, pictured left to right: Eddie Allen, vice president of Multicultural Ministries; Garth Gabriel, executive secretary; R. Clifford Jones, president; Yvonne Collins, treasurer.

issued a cautionary note about the future, due to a ten percent decrease in giving last year. After her re-election, Collins said she is privileged to have a supportive team and thanked the delegates for placing their trust in God's ability to use her for another term. "I prayed, and I know the Holy Spirit will lead," she said.

Before his re-election as vice president of Multicultural Ministry, Eduardo Allen detailed in his report the rapid expansion of immigrant and refugee groups throughout the Lake Region. There were 642 baptisms in multicultural churches, representing 37 percent of the total number of Lake Region baptisms. In spite of the encouraging growth, Allen said, "There is a lot of unfinished work. I plan to invest more in evangelism and church growth. We have many communities where little is being done to share the Gospel. That must change."

Another topic of great concern centered on Adventist education. Despite a few bright spots, such as the Gary Mitzpah School launching a 9th-grade class last year, enrollment continues to decline and delegates wrestled to decide the best path forward. In a close vote, they elected Helen Bryant as the new superintendent to oversee the eight LRC schools. Bryant, who replaces Renee Humphreys, is an educator with 32 years of teaching and leadership experience in the Detroit public schools, as well as a record of strong advocacy for

Adventist Christian education. "I am humbled," said Bryant. Acknowledging the momentous task before her, she maintained, "I know with God's leading and being in the center of His will, we will be successful. Collaboratively, we will move forward."

Other business conducted at the session included the following:

Three new churches were received into fellowship: Abbotsford, Wis.; Round Lake Hispanic, Ill.; and Westside Ministries, Ind.

An amendment to the constitution was voted to accommodate a smoother transition of personnel. The new bylaw reads: "All officers and directors may be extended a 14-day transition period for their orientation and briefing by the former officers and directors. When deemed necessary, the transition period may be extended to 30 days."

Listed below are the executive committee members and departmental directors to serve during the 2018-2022 quadrennial term:

LRC DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS

Leon Bryant, Sr. Adult Ministry

Pamela Daly Children's Ministry

Debra Davis-Moody Adventist Community Services

Joseph & Deirdre Garnett Family Life

Doris Gothard Women's Ministry

Michael Horton Ministerial

Cory Jackson Urban/Inner City Ministry

Dolby Knott Prison Ministry

William Lee Men's Ministry

Jason North Youth & Young Adult Ministry

Christina Wells Health & Wellness Ministry

Edward Woods III Public Affairs & Religious Liberty

Deborah Young Adventist Laymen Services Ministry

Paul Young Communication

LRC Executive Committee Members

Jacqueline Bailey

Felipe Blandon

Leah Chapman

Leeroy Coleman

James Dieujuste

Luz Resendiz

Cynthia Currin

Sherine Brown-Fraser

Doris Gothard

Larry Key

Wayne Hosten

Yalonda Johnson

Errol Liverpool

Sheila LeSure

Gary Laster

Edgar Pastran

Marlon Reid

Stephanie Scott

Shelly White

Mark Whyte

About the Lake Region Conference: LRC, the first regional conference, was organized in 1945 and currently represents 31,000 members in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minneapolis/St. Paul in Minnesota. ■

Felicia Datus, Highland Avenue Church member; Paul Young, Lake Region Communication director; and Lake Union Herald staff.

Lake Region moves into new HQ

LAKE REGION — After almost 60 years in cramped offices on Chicago's State Street, the Lake Region Conference has relocated to a more spacious headquarters in Mokena, Ill.

Lake Region Conference president, R. Clifford Jones, said they're thankful for the new headquarters as it will help better serve their constituents by providing "a more connected work environment that facilitates and promotes community and teamwork."

According to Jones, the move was necessary because the old building had outgrown its usefulness and was "dark and foreboding, with many of the offices disconnected from each other and devoid of any semblance of natural lighting." He

further stated that repairing and remodeling were not viable options, in part because of the cost and declining property values in the area.

"We thank God for the building," he said, "and we're reminded that one of the metaphors of the church in Scripture is that of a building whose foundation is Jesus Christ. This building is not a source of pride. Instead, it is about purposeful mission and ministry that lifts up Jesus Christ and brings glory to God."

The new headquarters address is: 19860 South LaGrange Road, Mokena, IL 60448. Telephone numbers remain the same: 773-846-2661. Hours of operation are Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m.–6 p.m.

A history of the Lake Region's HQ is available at:

<https://vimeo.com/276457035> ■

Debbie Michel, Lake Union Conference, associate director of Communication.



▲ Filmmaker Michelle Hamel and International Pathfinder Camporee organizer, Ron Whitehead, at the International Christian Film Festival in Orlando in May.

Camporee documentary gains film festival recognition

A documentary chronicling the production of a five-night dramatic sequel performed during the Forever Faithful Camporee in Oshkosh, Wis., received recognition from Christian film festivals.

"The Making of Daniel" picked up three awards: Award of Excellence from Inspired Faith Festival; third place documentary winner from Christian Family Festival; and a nomination for Most Creative Documentary by the International Christian Film Festival (ICFF), where only 20 out of 800 submissions were selected.

"It's an honor," said Michelle Hamel, a first-time filmmaker who shot 100 hours of backstage video at the International Pathfinder Camporee four years ago and spent several months editing it into a compelling story. "It's exciting to be recognized and exciting that many people who may not be Adventists are able to see the film."

Surprisingly, the documentary now being shown before large Christian crowds began as a promotional shoot. "I went over to get some footage, and thought it would be really cool to follow the cast and crew as they rehearsed, did costuming, and turn it into a full documentary," said Hamel.

Oshkosh organizer and Lake Union Youth director, Ron Whitehead, concurred and thought it would be great to show people what made the play so special. "That is, all the young adults, actors, directors, and all the hard work ahead of time that goes into it," he said.

"The Making of Daniel" runs 1 hour 34 minutes and is available on YouTube, Amazon Prime, and Vimeo. It is dedicated to Brian Robak, who played Nebuchadnezzar during the play but died in a hiking accident two summers ago.

For more info on the documentary, please visit: makingofdaniel.com ■

Konner Dent is a Journalism student at Andrews University.

Hispanic youth find encouragement at bilingual youth congress

BERRIEN SPRINGS, Mich.—More than 300 Hispanic young people from around the Union gathered on the campus of Andrews University for fellowship and Christian growth, performing practical acts of service at the Conéctate ("to come together") bilingual youth congress. Sponsored by the Lake Union's Multicultural Ministries, the event was held the weekend of June 1–3 and focused on the theme, "Strength in Numbers."

One highlight of the weekend was when the youth issued statements urging their government representatives to apply fairness and compassion in issues relating to immigration and gun control.

In discussing the significance of the youth congress, Ron Whitehead, Lake Union Youth director, said, "Our Hispanic senior youth and young adults are important to the mission of the Adventist church. They have the energy, creativity and commitment that our church needs to tell the world about Jesus. The Lake Union has one of the strongest Hispanic young adult leadership groups in North America, and this Congress proves the importance of their leadership."

Armando Miranda Jr., associate Youth director for the North American Division and guest speaker for the event, reminded participants of the influence they have on their friends, especially when they're on social media. Bidding them to follow Christ alone, he expounded on the Holy Spirit's ability to powerfully use them to advance the Kingdom of God.

On Sabbath, the attendees, aged 13–30, divided into various groups for seminars held throughout the day. Presenters included Andrews University professor, David Sedlacek, and Andrews University vice president for Diversity and Inclusion, Michael Nixon.



Courtesy Conéctate staff

▲ North American Division Associate Youth director, Armando Miranda, Jr. (foreground), takes a selfie with Conéctate participants.

The youth had an opportunity to serve nearby communities in various ways, including visiting residents at a local nursing home, helping at the Salvation Army, sharing water bottles on the beach and praying with residents who requested prayer. Other participants sorted donations at the Goodwill store in Benton Harbor, spray-painted inspiring wall art, and packed backpacks for refugees. As a result of the outreach efforts, 100 refugee families received bags with necessities.

Elizabeth Carreno, a participant from Wisconsin, said she most enjoyed participating in the outreach: "Being in places like this where you connect with God and people who love God is amazing. God is our Creator and Father and having a relationship with Him is most important."

Sunday's activities began with the 5K Color Run, sponsored by ASAP Ministries (Advocates for Southeast Asians and the Persecuted) of Berrien Springs. The event was organized to raise funds toward Christian education for refugee children in Myanmar.

Devin Vides, a first-time attendee, travelled to the congress with a group of friends and said that events like the youth congress are faith-builders. Vides also said he was happy to participate in the 5K because, "Health affects your mind, and your relationship with God helps determine how you treat yourself."

The congress ended with a consecration service at the Pioneer Memorial Church where participants dedicated their lives to Christ. President of the Lake Region Conference, Clifford Jones, said that youth events like Conéctate were vital: "Across this division, youth are vanishing from our churches. We need congresses like this one that bring young people together to equip, train, and connect them to Christ and His Word, and to each other."

This was the fifth Conéctate youth congress, and it has grown tremendously since its inception in 2010. The next Conéctate will be held in June 2020. ■

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



ILLINOIS

July 29-Aug. 5 • Family Camp, Camp Akita

Aug. 31-Sept. 2 • Hispanic Camp Meeting, Camp Akita

INDIANA CONFERENCE

July 30-Aug. 1 • Pastors' Retreat, Timber Ridge Camp

Aug. 10-12 • iShare Conference, Cicero, Ind.

Aug. 31-Sept. 3 • Hispanic Camp Meeting, Timber Ridge Camp

LAKE REGION

Aug. 2-5 • Pathfinder Camporee, Camp Wagner

Aug. 30-Sept. 3 • Hispanic Camp Meeting, Camp Wagner

MICHIGAN

Aug. 17-19 • Adventurer Leadership Training, Camp Au Sable

Aug. 17-19 • Men of Faith Campout, Camp Au Sable - Northwoods

Aug. 24-26 • Pathfinder Leadership Training, Camp Au Sable

Aug. 30-Sept. 2 • Upper Peninsula Camp Meeting, Camp Sagola

WISCONSIN

July 30-Aug. 5 • Family Camp II, Camp Wakonda

Aug. 8-12 • Hispanic Camp Meeting, Camp Wakonda

Aug. 24-26 • Public Campus Ministry Retreat, Camp Wakonda

NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

Aug. 1-5 • ASI Convention, Orlando, Fla.

Aug. 5-8 • NAD Teachers' Convention, Chicago



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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>.

ILLINOIS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the **33rd regular constituency session of the Illinois Conference of Seventh-day Adventists** will be held at **Hinsdale Seventh-day Adventist Church, Hinsdale, Ill.**, with the first meeting called at **10:00 a.m., Sunday, Oct. 28, 2018**. This session is for the purpose of receiving reports of the quadrennium which ended December 31, 2017; to elect officers, departmental directors and an executive committee for the ensuing term; and to transact such other business as may properly come before the constituency, including possible changes in the Constitution and Bylaws. Delegates are those duly elected by the churches of the conference and delegates-at-large as provided in the constitution. Each church is entitled to one delegate for the organization and one additional delegate for each 50 members or fraction thereof, based on actual church membership as of September 30 of the year preceding the meeting.

The Organizing Committee for this meeting will meet at the Hinsdale Church, on **Sunday, Aug. 26, 2018, at 10:00 a.m.**

Ron Aguilera, President
John Grys, Secretary

MICHIGAN

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the **33rd session of the Michigan Conference of Seventh-day Adventists** will be held at the **Cedar Lake Church in Cedar Lake, Mich., Sept. 30, 2018**, with the first meeting called at 9:00 a.m. Reports of the previous five years will be rendered, proposed constitutional changes may be considered, the election of conference officers, departmental directors and members of the executive committee will take place, and any other business will be transacted which may properly come before the session. Delegates are those duly elected by the various churches of the conference and delegates-at-large as provided in the

constitution. Each church in the Michigan Conference is entitled to one delegate for its organization, and one additional delegate for each 100 members or major fraction thereof, determined by the membership as of Dec. 31, 2017. As provided by the bylaws, the organizing committee (composed of one delegate from each church, plus one additional delegate for each 500 members or major fraction thereof, as of Dec. 31, 2017) will meet on Sept. 29. The meeting will begin with vespers at 7:30 p.m., at the Cedar Lake Church.

PAW PAW CHURCH IS CELEBRATING ITS 40TH ANNIVERSARY in their current church building. To mark this special occasion, they're hosting a special "Homecoming & Revival" weekend on **August 3-4**, with guest speaker, former seminary pastor, Lonnie Melashenko. Also featured, memories from other current and former members, uplifting music, and a fellowship luncheon. For more details about the event, check out our new website: www.pawpaw.church.

WISCONSIN

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the **38th regular quadrennial session of the Wisconsin Conference of Seventh-day Adventists** and the Wisconsin Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists will convene at **Wisconsin Academy in Columbus, Wis., on Sunday, Oct. 7, 2018**. The organizing committee will meet at 8:00 a.m. with the first meeting of the session convening at 10:00 a.m. Duly accredited delegates and delegates-at-large will be authorized to elect officers, directors of departments/services, and members of the executive committee, constitution and bylaws committee, and nominating committee for the new quadrennial term, along with corporation trustees for the ensuing quadrennial term. Delegates also will transact such other business as may properly come before them. Each church shall be entitled to one delegate for the church organization and one additional

delegate for each 25 members or major fraction thereof.

NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

THE OFFICE OF ADVENTIST MISSION AT THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS ANNOUNCES THE 2018 FILM CONTEST

titled "My Story, My Mission." Students around the world are invited to creatively express, in one minute or less, what mission means in their lives. The winners will be announced in October at the Society of Adventist Communicators Conference. Deadline is August 31. For more details, contact Kayla Ewert at 301-680-6696 or by email EwertK@gc.adventist.org.

STANDIFER GAP SDA SCHOOL, CHATTANOOGA, TENN., IS CELEBRATING ITS 70TH ANNIVERSARY (1948-2018)

Sept. 28-29. All former students and former staff are invited to attend our celebration. Festivities will begin on Friday through Saturday evening. Contact: 423-892-6013 or, for further details, visit: sgsdaschool.org.

WOMEN PASTORS & CHAPLAINS RETREAT on Sept. 2-5, at the Hyatt in Indian Wells, Calif. Theme for this year is: "Renew."

PLAINVIEW ADVENTIST ACADEMY, SHEYENNE RIVER ACADEMY AND DAKOTA ADVENTIST ACADEMY ALUMNI WEEKEND, Oct. 5-6, at Dakota Adventist Academy, 15905 Sheyenne Circle, Bismarck, ND. Come and renew your friendships. Honor Classes: '44, '49, '54, '59, '64, '69, '79, '89, '94, '99, '04, '09, '14. For more information call 701-751-6177 ext. 212, or visit our website at www.dakotaadventistacademy.org.



OFFERINGS

Aug. 4 Local Church Budget

Aug. 11 World Budget

Aug. 18 Local Church Budget

Aug. 25 Local Conference Advance

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



MESSER, Bernard and Alverda – The Messers celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on March 19 at their home with family and friends in Waterford, Mich. They have been members of the Waterford Riverside (Mich.) church for 54 years.

Bernard Messer and Alverda Ericks were married in 1953 in Waterford, Mich., by Pastor Hutchinson. Bernard worked as a bricklayer in Metro Detroit. Alverda worked at ACO Inc. for 27 years from where she retired as department manager.

Their family includes Cheryl and Ricky Waldrup of Oxford, Mich.; Connie and Sherman Thompson of Waterford, Mich.; Emery and Karen Messer of Waterford, Mich.; Mick and Victoria Messer of Waterford, Mich.; Karla and Kevin Owens of Fenton, Mich.; Christopher and Jen Messer of Waterford, Mich.; 23 grandchildren; and 36 great-grandchildren.

OBITUARIES

COLLINS, Bruce J., age 83; born Nov. 13, 1934, in Onaway, Mich; died Mar. 22, 2018, in St. Louis, Mich. He was a member of Cedar Lake (Mich.) Church.

Survivors include his wife, Ila (Nelson) Collins; son, Terry D.; brother, Stanley Collins; sisters, Betty Pierson, Esther Ryan, Phyllis Collins and Beverly

Schultz; five grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

Memorial services were conducted by Mark Howard and Daniel Jean-Francois.

DRAKE, Carolyn A. (Cockrell), age 92; born July 12, 1925, in Columbus, Miss.; died May 7, 2018, in Crown Point, Ind. She was a member of the Mizpah Church, Gary, Ind.

Survivors include sons, Anthony Cherry, Richard Cherry and Michael Drake; daughter, Tyra Waddell; brothers, Samuel Cockrell, Joseph Cockrell and Travis Crockell; sisters, Dorothy Walker and Yvonne Keen; 18 grandchildren; and 22 great-grandchildren.

Memorial services were conducted by Leeroy Coleman.

HAUS, Ruthann E. (Lindfors), age 83; born Oct. 20, 1933, in Brooklyn, N.Y.; died Sept. 6, 2017, in Gaylord, Mich. She was a member of the Cedar Lake (Mich.) Church.

Survivors include son, David; daughters, Lori Bulcock and Michele Karahan; brother, John Lindfors; five grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Memorial services were conducted by Mark Howard and Daniel Jean-Francois. Interment was in Cedar Lake Cemetery, Cedar Lake.

JONES, William H., age 91; born June 15, 1926, in Eagle Creek Township, Lake

County, Ind.; died April 29, 2018, in Lima, Ohio. He was a member of the Lima Church.

Survivors include his wife, Esther (Goldberg) Jones; son, John W. Jones; daughters, Dianna J. and Charron; two grandchildren; one step-grandchild; two step-great-grandchild, three step-great-great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Don Byard. Internment was in South Wayne Cemetery, Dowagiac, Mich.

LABIANCA, Kirsten (Olsen), age 93; born June 16, 1924, in Kristiansand, Norway; died May 28, 2018, in Niles, Mich. She was a member of the Pioneer Memorial Church, Berrien Springs, Mich.

Survivors include her sons, Oystein and Tormod; daughter, Anne-Mari; seven grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

A private inurnment will take place in August in the Rosehill Cemetery in Berrien Springs.

RUCKER, Samuel C., age 74; born April 4, 1944, in Dahlonga, Ga.; died April 17, 2018, in Merriville, Ind. He was a member of the Mizpah SDA Church, Gary, Ind.

Survivors include sons, Samuel, Anthony S. and Anthony G.; daughters, Ada Pridgen, Latanza Colon and Heather Smith; mother, Mary (Riley) Rucker; brother, Nicholas M. Rucker; sister, Rebecca E. Stephenson; 19 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Pastor Leeroy Coleman. Interment was in Evergreen Memorial Park, Hobart, Ind.

Sabbath Sunset Calendar

	Aug 3	Aug 10	Aug 17	Aug 24	Aug 31	Sep 7
Berrien Springs, Mich.	9:03	8:54	8:44	8:33	8:22	8:10
Chicago, Ill.	8:08	7:59	7:49	7:39	7:27	7:15
Detroit, Mich.	8:51	8:42	8:32	8:21	8:10	7:58
Indianapolis, Ind.	8:57	8:49	8:39	8:30	8:19	8:08
La Crosse, Wis.	8:27	8:18	8:07	7:56	7:44	7:32
Lansing, Mich.	8:57	8:48	8:38	8:28	8:16	8:04
Madison, Wis.	8:18	8:09	7:58	7:47	7:36	7:24
Springfield, Ill.	8:11	8:03	7:53	7:43	7:33	7:22

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>.

FOR SALE

HEALTH MINISTRY COORDINATORS AND

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PATHFINDER/ADVENTURER CLUB

NAME CREST: Order your Pathfinder and Adventurer club name crest at <http://www.pathfinderclubnames.com>. For more information, call 269-208-5853 or email us at pathfinderclubnames@gmail.com.

MISCELLANEOUS

THE CLERGY MOVE CENTER™ AT STEVENS

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AUTHORS: Call TEACH Services at 800-367-1844 for your free manuscript evaluation. Let us help you make your book a reality. We publish all book formats, including eBooks, and provide worldwide distribution. Find our new titles at <http://www.TEACHServices.com> or ask your local ABC. Look for used SDA books at <http://www.LNFbooks.com>.

MOVE WITH AN AWARD-WINNING AGENCY.

Apex Moving & Storage partners with the General Conference to provide quality moves for you. Call us for all your relocation needs. Contact Marcy Danté at 800-766-1902, or visit our website: <http://www.apexmoving.com/adventist>.

REAL ESTATE/HOUSING

SUMMIT RIDGE RETIREMENT VILLAGE:

An Adventist community in a rural setting that offers affordable homes or apartments and caring neighbors, with fellowship you'll enjoy. Onsite church, planned activities and transportation, as needed. Wolfe Living Center offering independent living and nursing home. For more information, visit <http://www.summitridgevillage.org> or call Bill Norman at 405-208-1289.

TRAVEL

ISRAEL TOUR WITH PASTOR JIM GILLEY, 3ABN'S PASTOR C.A.MURRAY AND FRIENDS.

Two trips this fall: November 11–19 (\$3,095); November 18–27 (\$3,395). Includes all tips, taxes, air, and breakfast and dinner buffets daily. From New York, Chicago or Los Angeles (other departure cities available). Call Jennifer at 602-788-8864.

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EMPLOYMENT

UNION COLLEGE SEEKS FULL-TIME PROFESSOR OF COMMUNICATION

with strong experience in emerging media and public relations beginning July 2019. Doctorate is preferred. Please submit curriculum vitae to Dr. Mark Robison, Humanities Division chair, at mark.robison@ucollege.edu.

UNION COLLEGE INVITES APPLICANTS FOR AN ACCOUNTING FACULTY POSITION.

Qualified applicants will have a MBA or Masters in Accounting, a certification and should be a committed member of the SDA Church. Doctorate preferred. Find more information at www.ucollege.edu/faculty-openings or contact Barry Forbes at barry.forbes@ucollege.edu.

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY SEEKS STAFF COUNSELOR AND PREVENTION

COORDINATOR In consultation with the Director, provide leadership in mental health prevention initiatives for the student population, with the vision of assisting students in achieving more effective personal, social, educational and vocational development and adjustment. As member of the Counseling & Testing Center clinical team, provide individual, couple and group counseling; available for after-office hours, clinical consultations and student crisis interventions; maintain an assigned caseload, and provide consultations on issues related to mental health. Report to the Director of Counseling & Testing Center. https://www.andrews.edu/admres/jobs/show/staff_salary#job_3

OB-GYN, PEDIATRICIAN, NURSE PRACTITIONER, AND PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT NEEDED

for Adventist-owned/operated rural health clinic on the campus of Weimar Institute at Weimar, Calif. Competitive pay. Call Dr. Randall Steffens at: 615-604-0142 or email: ceo@stallanthealth.com.

CAMP AU SABLE IS SEEKING CAMP INTERNS.

This is a program for six young people who would like to take a year off and learn various aspects of camp management. A monthly stipend is available for help with expenses. For more info, visit: www.campausable.org/camp-interns.html

Camp Wakonda Changed My Life

By Kenneth Leiva



Anthony Isensee

▲ Kenneth Leiva

WHEN I WAS A KID, I was never able to experience Camp Wakonda as a camper. I always heard stories from friends about how amazing it was, how they got to make new friends, or see friends they haven't seen in a while, and how they were able to grow closer to Christ.

I was always jealous and envious of my friends. I mean, what kid wouldn't be jealous after hearing all the fun things their friends were able to do? After many years, God gave me the opportunity to work at camp and, ever since, my life has never been the same.

I have been a camp staff member for three summers; summer 2018 will mark my fourth. Throughout these past summers, God has truly blessed and equipped me: from being

a cafeteria worker to a counselor, and now boys' director. God has taught me various lessons about trusting in Him, about how, even though there are times where I feel useless, He is able to use me for His work.

When I was a counselor, I felt God working through me for the first time in a real way. When I was notified that I was hired as a counselor, I thought to myself, *"There is no way I can do this. I don't feel like I'm cut out for this. I feel like I'm not in tune with God enough . . . what if I fail? What if . . .?"* and my insecurities continued all the way up to the moment I received my first junior camper. At that moment, I was still thinking I couldn't do the job God wanted me to do. I felt very inadequate, but I had to go through with it, since I was past the point of no return.

Throughout the weeks, from junior camp on through tween and teen camps, I was able to connect with my campers — still fearing I wasn't cut out for this job. I heard many of their stories, about how they wanted to grow closer to Christ because of the play they saw during the week, or because of the people they met, or simply because they felt God was tapping them on the shoulder, telling them He wanted to be with them.

During this time as I was listening to these young people, I realized this is where God wanted me to be. I realized I was the person the Lord was using to help these young men take that step to becoming closer to Jesus. Even though these young men are from all different backgrounds, God helped me convey His Good News to these campers.

So, from cafeteria, to counselor, to now being boys' director for Camp Wakonda, I am no longer insecure because I know God has awesome plans for me, just as He promised in Jeremiah 29:11! ■

Kenneth Leiva is an Andrews University Sociology junior.

Measure of Faith

By Malissa Martin



Jean-Irès Michel

▲ Denielle Wilson

WHEN DENIELLE WILSON, 22, was a senior at Chicago's Northwestern University last year, she recognized the need to re-start the university's Adventist Christian Fellowship (ACF) chapter. The Georgia native says she thinks it's imperative that all secular universities have a similar Adventist Christian club, and for those that don't, "I think they should just start it."

The Northwestern ACF chapter had been dormant for about a year before Wilson made it official again in January 2017, stating that her main reason for starting the club "was so that students who came later would have something to come to."

Starting a school club during one's senior year of college can be stressful. Fortunately, Wilson had four friends who also saw her vision and helped her keep the club organized, including Lydia Muwunga, Natalie Justo (current club president), June Ordera and Anna Boateng.

The first item on the agenda after starting the chapter was finding members. Wilson would meet students at the local church and through word-of-mouth. She even had friends who were not Adventists connect her with other Adventists. Getting students to become members and regularly attend meetings required a delicate balance of time management. "If anything," Wilson says, "we meet on Sabbath and see each other at church, but we try to schedule it so students don't feel like they're sacrificing an important part of their lives to come to a meeting."

Staying connected is important to members because many are away from home. Wilson believes that having a church family helps. There are currently five or six members (all students) who consistently attend the meetings. Since her graduation, Wilson supports the group along with other young adult Adventists, but cannot officially join since they aren't students. The club is open to young professionals in Evanston or students attending nearby universities.

The ACF chapter at Northwestern has several goals it would like to meet in 2018. The first goal is to work on leadership for next year, since most of the current members, including the president, are graduating.

Wilson still lives in the Evanston area and is a classical musician and a cellist in the Civic Orchestra of Chicago. She maintains a studio of cello students in Evanston and Skokie. ■

Malissa Martin is a Detroit-based freelance writer.

THE LAKE UNION HERALD STAFF

P.O. Box 287, Berrien Springs, MI 49103-0287 | (269) 473-8242
 Publisher Maurice Valentine, president@lakeunion.org
 Editor Gary Burns, editor@lakeunion.org
 Managing Editor Debbie Michel, herald@lakeunion.org
 Circulation/Back Pages Editor circulation@lakeunion.org
 Media Specialist Felicia Tonga, felicia.tonga@lakeunion.org
 Art Direction/Design Robert Mason, masondesign@me.com
 Design Articulate@Andrews, articulate@andrews.edu
 Proofreader Susan K. Slikkers

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Adventist Health System Anthony Vera Cruz, Anthony.VeraCruz@ahss.org
 Andrews University Rebecca May, RMay@andrews.edu
 Illinois Shona Cross, scross@ilcsda.org
 Indiana
 Lake Region Paul Young, pauly@lrcsda.com
 Michigan Andy Im, aim@misda.org
 Wisconsin Juanita Edge, jedge@wi.adventist.org

CORRESPONDENTS

Adventist Health System Anthony Vera Cruz, Anthony.VeraCruz@ahss.org
 Andrews University Gillian Sanner, sanner@andrews.edu
 Illinois Shona Cross, scross@ilcsda.org
 Indiana Colleen Kelly, colleenkelly1244@gmail.com
 Lake Region Paul Young, pauly@lrcsda.com
 Michigan Julie Clark, jclark@misda.org
 Wisconsin Deidre Roat, droat@wi.adventist.org

LAKE UNION CONFERENCE DEPARTMENTS

P.O. Box 287, Berrien Springs, MI 49103-0287 | (269) 473-8200
 President Maurice Valentine
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LOCAL CONFERENCES AND INSTITUTIONS

Adventist Health System: Terry Shaw, president/CEO, 900 Hope Way, Altamonte Springs, FL 32714; 407-357-1000.
Andrews University: Andrea Luxton, president, Berrien Springs, MI 49104-0670; 269-471-7771.
Illinois: Ron Aguilera, president; John Grys, secretary; Michael Daum, treasurer; 619 Plainfield Rd., Willowbrook, IL 60527-8438; 630-856-2850.
Indiana: Vic Van Schaik, president; Mark Eaton, secretary/treasurer; street address: 15205 Westfield Blvd., Carmel, IN 46032; mailing address: P.O. Box 5000, Westfield, IN 46074; 317-844-6201.
Lake Region: R. Clifford Jones, president; Garth Gabriel, secretary; Yvonne Collins, treasurer; 19860 South LaGrange Rd., Mokena, IL 60448; 773-846-2661.
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Contributors: Writer guidelines are available online at <http://herald.lakeunion.org>.

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