

Southwestern Union

Record

July | August 2018

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His Will for My Life
Discovering God's Plan and Purpose

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Editor's Note

In this issue, we explore a question we have all asked, What is God's will for my life? As we nurture and grow our personal relationships with the Lord, we gain insight and understanding into His will. But even those who know God intimately can struggle with putting their own plans and desires above His.

The more we rely on and trust God, the more capable we are of letting go of that which prevents us from following His will. As we read, study and discover about God's plans and purpose for our lives, ask yourself what struggles have you faced? Are you facing a challenge now? What peace and joy have you found in following His will? As time has passed, have you found that God was taking care of you all along?



Jessica L. Lozano

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Our Mission:

The Mission of the Southwestern Union is to Equip and Inspire the Southwestern Union Territory with the Distinctive Adventist Message of Hope and Wholeness.

His Will for My Life

Discovering God's Plan and Purpose



Larry Moore | President

Wouldn't it be great to always know for sure what God's will is for our lives? Let me say that God does have a plan for each one of us. Since we are not always sure what this plan is, we must be careful not to run ahead of our Lord and Savior. After all, He knows what is best for us. Many times in my life I have prayed to know God's will and have not received the clearest of answers.

However, that does not mean He doesn't care. Isaiah 55:8-9 reminds us, "'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,' declares the Lord. 'As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.'"

As I have looked back, I can easily see His providential leading in my life. In 2011, I went through a very interesting phase in my life where I had four jobs in five months. I'd accept a position and then receive a call to serve God elsewhere. It was humorous to a lot of people and I'm still trying to figure it all out, but I can see God's leading and His will along the way. In times like these we just have to be patient and wait on the Lord and He will make it all clear.

I have some questions to ask Jesus and my guardian angel when I get to heaven. I believe that although God reveals many things to us on this earth, some things will have to be explained when we get there. In the meantime, I choose to trust Jesus to work out what's best for me.

The Lord has a purpose for each of us. "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future," (Jeremiah 29:11). God's stated purpose in this text is His promise to us. We must trust and accept His word. As we study and seek Him in our prayers, we will understand that God's plans are unique and different for every person. Consider that our salvation is not a "cookie-cutter" version where everyone's experience is the same. The Lord takes special interest in each of us and you have your own unique package of experiences that molds and shapes your character. Our life's journey must focus on finding God's purpose for you on the earth, with the God-driven goal of making your eternal home with the God of the Universe.

In pursuit of a career in the medical field, I studied biology and chemistry in college. I received a bachelor's degree in the Natural Sciences and became a registered medical technologist. It was a rewarding career that I thought would be my life's work, but God had other plans. I began to have a deep unrest and as I prayed and studied, the Lord revealed to me that full-time ministry was to be my life's work. Becoming a minister was never a part of my plan or ambition. Jeremiah 29:11 is a reminder that if we yield to God's Spirit, He will accomplish His will for our lives and we will experience a joy and peace that we never imagined.



Buford Griffith, Jr.
Executive Secretary

Sometimes I wish the Bible would tell me more. In Genesis 5:24, the Bible says that "Enoch walked faithfully with God, then he was no more, because God took him away." Wow. That really makes me want to know more! Enoch lived 365 years. What was he like, I wonder. I'm sure there were struggles in his life along with blessings. But, how must his life have been as one who walked so faithfully with God that the Lord Himself took him to heaven to reside with Him there?

Everybody has struggles in their lives. There is no doubt that some people have more struggles than others; it's not equal and it's not fair. The Bible does tell us a lot more about Paul than Enoch. Paul was very open about his struggles (even though he does not reveal them specifically) and his plea to the Lord, asking God to take it away. We read that Paul also went through beatings and shipwrecks. He suffered both physical and mental turmoil, yet he remained faithful to God until the very end.

I don't know what struggles you are going through today, but let Paul's words be a comfort to you. He encourages us in Philippians 4:11-13, saying "for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength."



John Page | Treasurer

The Bottom Line

Act Justly, Love Mercy and Walk Humbly with God

“If only God would speak and tell me what I should do.” Many people have asked in frustration for divine guidance. Surely you have also often thought or wished for the same guidance on many occasions. Making decisions is one of life’s biggest challenges. How can a Christian know what is the right or best thing for them to do? Sometimes the results of decisions, large or small, can be far reaching. Therefore, decision making is extremely important. Perhaps this frustration is even more common in this busy 21st century than ever before. Life has become more complex, with more options than ever before.

Some decisions are small and apparently insignificant like, What shall I eat for lunch? How shall I spend my time tonight? How can I solve relationship problems in my workplace? There are other decisions which are huge, such as, Whom shall I marry, or What shall I do

for my life’s work? With these big questions, we are committing ourselves for the rest of our lives, so we need to be sure!

There are conventional methods of seeking advice or counsel from God. These include asking advice from a pastor or experienced Christian, but these persons are not always around when we need them for making everyday decisions. Some Christians prefer to ask God for a special sign. Others search the Scripture to find a verse that might give direction.

However, we may well ask, Is there some way that we can find more specific instruction from God? After all, since God is omniscient (Isaiah 46:9,10), He sees the end results and knows which will be the best for me in each decision. He longs to guide us, but He has given us freedom of choice and in Scripture given us principles that can be applied in a general way to any problem or decision.

The prophet Micah was a contemporary of Isaiah. Around 700 B.C., Micah faced much frustration amid widespread apostasy. The southern tribe of Judah was ruled by the descendants of David. Although they made a show of serving God, they were very inconsistent. On the other hand, the northern kingdom of Israel had become more and more rebellious during Micah’s ministry. In 722 B.C., Israel was carried off into exile. The prophet Micah must have been horrified by these events and in this little book, which bears his name, he blended stern warnings with heartrending tenderness, sympathy and love.

In chapter six Micah rebukes God’s people in the form of a lawsuit. He reminds them of the wonderful acts of their faithful God. For example in verses four and five, he lists the way God had brought them out of slavery in Egypt and then continued to bless and deliver





them from various enemy attacks. He then in effect says: Do you really want to know how to please God?

In verses six and seven, Micah lists a number of extreme things, which the contemporary custom of the times might have recommended: making huge sacrifices of high monetary value, or even sacrificing first-born children to God on an altar. But Micah rules out these unnecessary and unacceptable actions and spells out what God really wants. This is where God gets our attention! Although times have changed, we are asking the same questions. We want and need to know what God wants of us today. How can we make the best choices so that we can be approved by God, and happy and fulfilled in our own lives? Micah dictates the answer.

Micah 6:8 reads, “He has shown you O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

In other words, this verse tells us that God’s will for us is summed up in three short stipulations that can guide our decision making.

First, we should act justly. This indicates that whatever actions we decide to pursue should be fair and honorable. They should benefit our neighbors or family and have a positive outcome.

Next, we are to love mercy. This suggests that we should have good motives. If our actions will hurt anyone or be detrimental in any way, we should not follow them. In our decision making, we must be careful to be kind and sympathetic. We should build up those around us and consider what helps or encourages others. We should not be selfish and seek our own advantage at the expense or loss to our neighbors. If our motive is love and thoughtfulness for others and is not dominated by personal gain, then that is the test of appropriate motives on our part.

The third test is to ask ourselves if our decision will build up our personal relationship with God. The personal

aspect is important because it speaks of what we do because we love God and claim Him as our God. It also calls for personal humility, such as “walk humbly with your God.” This implies that we claim no credit for ourselves, but experience the satisfaction of being in harmony with God. Moses experienced this identity and was known as a man of humility. Humility is not self devaluation, but getting ourselves in right perspective with God and others. Moses wrote of Enoch that he “walked faithfully with God three hundred years” (Genesis 5:21), but he, like Moses, lived to bless and enrich the lives of those around him.

As we consider these three stipulations or principles for pleasing God as listed by Micah, it seems that they are listed in climactic order, that there is a progression. Acting justly is to be accompanied by living with good, unselfish motives (loving mercy) and these characteristics are to be followed and enabled by walking humbly with God.

Will this verse and these principles work for us? Can we apply them to our situations and come up with not just good choices, but the best? Is this a practical and realistic guide for daily decision making? Can I really think of others? Can I give my neighbor the benefit of the doubt? Am I the one who is wrong sometimes?

Taken in its context the Bible indicates that these principles or guidelines will work. Every day we can pray for God’s companionship in evaluating the right thing to do, and the kind and Christlike thing to do. Will this be the “bottom line” for really testing what is God’s will for us in the innumerable situations of life? Yes, God does speak to us today. Because He desires the best for us, He wants us to really listen and follow what He says. R

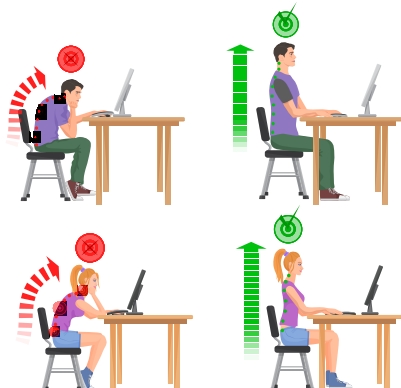
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Wellness in the Workplace

Back Pain Relief, Helpful Posture Practices and Good Blood Circulation at Your Desk

By Meagan Proctor, PT, DPT, CKTP, CIDN, Texas Health Huguley Physical Therapist

Having a job that leaves you stuck at your desk can be challenging for multiple reasons. Often we do not take regular breaks to walk around during the day. The mental exhaustion that occurs at work also can leave many without energy to exercise or be active after they clock out. We at Texas Health Huguley in Fort Worth want to share a few simple and useful tips that can help you avoid cervical and lumbar pain and get some added exercise during the workday.



POSTURE

Proper sitting posture is important to maintain, especially to avoid chronic symptoms in your cervical spine as well as carpal tunnel syndrome. If you are stuck at your desk and having complaints of neck, shoulder or lumbar pain, look at your posture at the computer and your chair support.

You want to make sure that you are looking straight at your computer or slightly lower; try not to have your computer monitor above eye level. Wrists should be in a neutral position to avoid carpal tunnel symptoms. As the day progresses, if you catch yourself leaning forward to see the screen, try to increase font size to avoid getting a forward head posture, which will strain your cervical spine.

Desk chairs can be challenging because you are restricted to what your office provides, but a simple solution is a rolled-up towel or a small circular pillow. Either item can be placed at your lower back against the back of your chair for increased lumbar support, which will prevent slumped posture. Your desk chair should have armrests that you can rest your forearms on to prevent you from hiking your shoulders toward your ears by the end of the day. Your feet should be rested on the ground with hip and knee angles at 90 degrees.

CIRCULATION

When you get in the middle of a project it is sometimes hard to pull yourself away from it so you don't lose focus, but at the same time sitting at your computer or desk can cause more problems than you might realize. Set a timer for every 30-45 minutes for a cue on taking a break. When the timer goes off, take five minutes to stand up and either take a small walk around the office or stand up and do a few shoulder rolls or marche in place to get your blood pumping. This will help you to focus more on your task, along with giving you a small break.

Some offices will offer stand-up desks which allow you to alternate positions throughout the day. This is a wonderful way to break the cycle of sitting all day as well as help with posture and spinal health. Be mindful of your standing posture at your desk and avoid shifting your weight to the right or left side. Stand with equal pressure through both legs. When shifting your weight to one side you are placing increased pressure through that lower extremity as well as through your spine.



Incorporating these few small adjustments at your desk and adding some of these activities throughout your day can prevent increased cervical, lumbar and shoulder pain as well as break the cycle of sitting all day. If you have questions or current symptoms and need advice, talk to your doctor. Receiving physical therapy, where a therapist develops a regimen that you can incorporate at your desk, can help you address your concerns, alleviate pain and make your body stronger and healthier. **R**

Lessons From the Locker Room

God teaches us through our surroundings. I recently asked basketball players from Tulsa Adventist Academy a few questions. “Where does the team go before a game?” I asked. The Eagles unanimously said, “To the locker room!” Again, I inquired, “Where do they go at half time?” They responded like a choir, “TO THE LOCKER ROOM!” I’m sorry you can’t hear the deafening increase in volume in their response. Did I dare ask where they go at the end of the game when the whistle blows? Yes, of course! THE LOCKER ROOM!

The players said that before the game starts they go to the locker room and the coach gives instructions, gets them focused and rallies them together. At half time whether they’re losing or winning, they still head back to the locker room with heads held high or hanging down. They again receive a pep talk, instructions and adjustments that are needed. They return to the locker room at the end of the game when the final whistle blows.

What spiritual lessons can we learn from this? Well, let’s look at Daniel, who was a “player” on the king’s court in Persia. The first thing he did was go and spend time with his “head coach” (God) in the “locker room.” He went about his duties for the day, and at “half time” or midday he returned to the “locker room” and spent more time with his “head coach.”

The Holy Spirit would impress Daniel of adjustments to make, tell him of things to come and provide encouragement through the “play book” (the Bible). At the end of the day, Daniel made his way back to the “locker room” and listened to his “coach” again. His “coach” also prepared him emotionally, spiritually and physically for the next “game.”

The Bible tells us, “Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before,” (Daniel 6:10). Daniel’s upstairs room was his “locker room.”

To know God’s will, His purpose, His leading, His Heart, one must spend time in His presence. Oftentimes, prayer becomes a simple monologue, just us talking. But to know God’s will we must be still, and enter into a dialogue with Him.

In his book, *Whisper: How to Hear the Voice of God*, Mark Batterson says it this way: “Here’s the seven-word prayer that can change your life: Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.” This pivotal prayer is inspired by Eli’s advice to young Samuel in 1 Samuel 3:9. God’s greatest desire is to be close to us. In 1 Kings 19:12 we are reminded that He spoke to Elijah in a gentle whisper.



Batterson continues, “When someone speaks in a whisper, you have to get very close to hear. In fact, you have to put your ear near the person’s mouth. We lean toward a whisper, and that’s what God wants. The goal of hearing the heavenly Father’s voice isn’t just hearing His voice; it’s intimacy with Him.”

How can we train to win? What routine, practices or exercises can we incorporate into our lives to build up spiritual muscle and expertise?

Ellen G. White summarizes the winning spiritual exercises in her book, *The Ministry of Healing*.

“All who are under the training of God need the quiet hour for communion with their own hearts, with nature, and with God... They need to have a personal experience in obtaining a knowledge of the will of God. We must individually hear Him speaking to the heart. When every other voice is hushed, and in quietness we wait before Him, the silence of the soul makes more distinct the voice of God. He bids us, ‘Be still,

and know that I am God,’ Psalm 46:10.”

The perfect example is Jesus! White goes on to say, “Christ in His life on earth made no plans for Himself. He accepted God’s plans for Him, and day by day the Father unfolded His plans. So should we depend upon God, that our lives may be the simple outworking of His will. As we commit our ways to Him, He will direct our steps.”

In her book *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 3*, White asserts that if you are longing to know God’s will, you will not be disappointed. She says, “The Lord reveals His will to those who are earnest and anxious to be guided.” So what are you waiting for? Go to the Locker Room! [®]

Christ in His life on earth made no plans for Himself. He accepted God’s plans for Him, and day by day the Father unfolded His plans. So should we depend upon God, that our lives may be the simple outworking of His will. As we commit our ways to Him, He will direct our steps.

Ellen G. White

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Uniting Across the Pacific

Building Relationships and Serving Schools and Churches in Pohnpei

By Mike Furr, Southwestern Union Director of Secondary Education



Ever since the North American Division (NAD) was given the Guam-Micronesia Mission (GMM) the NAD Education Department has been discussing ways that we in the United States can help our sister schools and churches located in GMM. The idea that each Union in the NAD could be paired with one school in GMM was approved, and the Southwestern Union has been paired up with the island of Pohnpei, one of the Federated States of Micronesia.

Pohnpei is an island with a population of roughly 37,000 on its 129 square miles. It has three churches and one school, Pohnpei Seventh-day Adventist School. The school has an enrollment of 335 students and is staffed by 28 employees, 15 of which are student missionaries. The student missionaries are all classroom teachers and every year

the school needs to find new student missionaries to replace the ones that are leaving and going back to college. The three churches share one pastor.

This past February, I travelled to Pohnpei with representatives of the Southwestern Union, including Carol Campbell and Bo Just, to do a needs assessment so that we in the Union can help our sister school and churches in Pohnpei. We visited the school and the staff, as well as the pastor. They shared with us a list of things that they need to help their programs run more efficiently.


Superintendent of Schools for GMM Leonard Quaile, says that one of the biggest ways to help is just to ensure members are aware that missions still exist and that we should support mission work across the world.

Nearly all the supplies and equip-

ment on the island must be shipped to that part of the world, making many items very costly. However, not everything they need or could use are things. If any church or school wants to go on a short-term mission trip, the Pohnpei school needs services such as putting a roof on one of the churches, painting at the school, workshops or clinics on health, evangelistic series, children's ministries and more.

Soon, we will share a list of supplies, equipment and furniture that is needed. Currently there is only one projector at the school and the desks that students use have been repaired and painted more than once. Some of the student missionaries need different types of furniture in their school-owned apartments. They also need books that the students can read for class and enrichment.

The Southwestern Union envisions meeting the needs of the school by filling a shipping container with various items and goods. We would also like to involve students at our schools, Pathfinder clubs, youth groups, men's and women's ministries and any member who would like to help. Once items are collected, they need to be transported to the Southwestern Union Office and stored in the shipping container. We need to avoid sending anything that is in poor condition or wouldn't serve a purpose.

This is an ongoing project and we will share additional information soon. We believe that both givers and receivers are blessed when they help other people. Prepare to be blessed and start planning on how you can help your mission field in Pohnpei. 

The Bigger Picture

When My Will and God's Will Are Not in Sync

By Paulo Tenorio, Texas Conference Youth and Young Adult Director

Asking God what His will is for you is such an important question. If we are honest, we often push for our will to be done, thinking that we know what is best for us. When we find ourselves contemplating a new job opportunity, relationship or major expense, like a new car or house, we may find it comes down to our will versus God's will. When they match up to the same answer, it's awesome! However, when they contradict each other, we may find ourselves in a battle of wills.

As Christians, though, we *know* that God's will is always better, simply because He knows us better than we know ourselves. He knows what lies ahead and what is best for us. Jeremiah 29:11 reminds us of this fact: “‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’”

In my life, I have applied four practices to help me discover and understand God's will for me. First is prayer. In prayer I have shared my dreams and plans with the Lord and sought His guidance. Then, I've spent time reading the Bible, researching and studying how God led other people through their lives. Another practice of mine is fasting. When I fast, it helps me hear His will clearly. And the last practice is talking to spiritual leaders in my life. I rely on these practices to help me find and understand the answers to questions that maybe aren't always clear.

Many of us have asked for God's will to prevail when pursuing someone we like. I remember being very attracted to girl when I was in college. I really liked her and she seemed to be exactly what God would want for me. She loved the Lord, she was smart, beautiful and involved in school.



We started getting to know each other and going on dates. During this time, I sought the Lord and my prayers went something like this: “Lord if she is not the one you have for me, please close the doors. Even if it hurts, don't let it flourish. I need for your will to be done.”

We kept spending time together but about two months later something changed. One week, she suddenly became very distant. I wondered what had happened and would soon get a clear answer.

As I was leaving class one day, I began walking toward the dorm when I saw her from very far away. As I got closer, I realized that she was talking to her ex-boyfriend.

I went inside the dorm and had a strange pain in my chest. The pain wasn't physical though, it was emotional. So, I decided to stop and pray.

The entry in my prayer journal that day says the following: “God, we live in a world full of disappointments. What we desire does not work. When we ask God for His guidance, we ask for His

truth, but we can't handle the truth. We want to do our will. All I know so far is that God is a God of love who knows what's best for me, who knows how I can become the happy human being He desires me to be. Disappointments are there, but also God is there with His arms open telling me, “It's ok son, it's ok you can't see the whole picture but you will later. Trust me, just trust Me.”

God pulled me through that time and helped me get over that incident. Interestingly enough, five months later I met another girl named Ana. I married Ana, and looking back on our seven years of marriage and our baby girl, I can't imagine being married to anybody else. God told me in prayer to trust Him with His will. Even though there were things I didn't understand at the moment, they would become clear with time and I would understand later. I realize now that back then I couldn't see the whole picture, but God could. I surrendered my will to His and He guided me on the path to my loving family. **R**

Determined

Trusting in God Against All Odds



Sonia Canó grew up listening to missionary stories in church. She dreamt of serving God in the mission field, but it all seemed too impossible. With three young children, a brand new car, a good job and a full house, she and her husband, Amilcar, thought it would be years, if ever, before that dream could be realized. Yet, God had plans for Sonia. She only had to trust in His will.

“We were ready to go into the mission field, but time passed and nothing happened,” said Sonia. “We got ready and sold things as if we had a specific date to leave and a place to go, but we didn’t.” Months passed and projects kept falling through. It seemed that perhaps the Canós would not be missionaries after all. Sonia cried out to God, “Fine, if you don’t want me then I won’t go!”

It came as a total shock when Maranatha invited Sonia and her young family to be full-time missionaries. Even more shockingly, they quickly said, “Yes!”

Despite the wait, small miracles began to take place, confirming God’s call to the family. Their brand new car sold to a man looking for that exact make and model. Paperwork easily processed for them to leave the country. It all began to fall into place. Sonia and Amilcar sold everything. Finally, after nine months, they booked a one-way ticket to Paraguay.

Maranatha invited them to spend four years in the mission field, helping with projects in three different countries. The first project was to build 13 churches and a school in rural Paraguay. Sonia was a stay-at-home mom and she volunteered with Children’s Ministries.

“We arrived in Paraguay and it was beautiful and perfect,” said Sonia. “You know people in those countries just love the Lord and want to work for the Lord.”

Then without warning, Maranatha called to tell Sonia and her family to come back to the United States. The call to return home totally surprised Sonia.

She cried heavy tears that night. They gave up everything to serve the Lord as missionaries, and after only 13 months, they were now told to come home. She didn’t want to accept it and wrestled with God. “I remember talking to the Lord and thinking, ‘I’m not good enough for this. I failed,’” said Sonia. “I understand that you cannot use me anymore.”

A long week passed. Then an entire month passed. The Canós didn’t pack to leave and they didn’t hear a word from Maranatha. Then, the Vice President arrived in Paraguay without warning. Sonia expected the Vice President to hand them plane tickets home. Instead, she invited them to continue serving as missionaries, now in the Dominican Republic.

“That was a big, big thing for me,” said Sonia. “It was like the Lord saying, ‘I can still use you to work for me. Trust in me. I am still working on you.’”

Sonia and the family remained in the

mission field for not four, but six years. They served in Paraguay, Dominican Republic, Peru and India. Throughout that time, God worked many miracles. He protected and guided the family in the most dangerous of situations.

While serving in Peru, Sonia attended a woman's prayer meeting every Wednesday afternoon in Lima. It took place before sunset because the streets of Lima were not safe after dark. Robbery, kidnapping and murder were a daily occurrence. Watchmen paroled the streets, but carried no weapons and had no authority to arrest criminals. Essentially, crime ran rampant.

Amilcar arrived to pick Sonia up after prayer meeting. In a moment, two armed men approached their truck. They put a gun to Amilcar's head. "Get out," the criminals demanded. Calmly, he stepped out of the vehicle. As a criminologist and an army veteran, Amilcar was no stranger to intense situations. Meanwhile, Sonia felt paralyzed with fear. A friend also sat in the backseat of the truck, completely silent. Shaking, Sonia also tried to get out of the truck. The criminal stopped her. "Close the door! You're coming with me!"

"As a mother, I was more afraid for my children," said Sonia. "You don't think of yourself. I prayed, 'Lord don't let anything happen to my husband or children.' I was so worried about what would happen to my kids without parents here in a country that is not their country."

"Keep your head down," the driver demanded. They sped toward the highway. In a few minutes, the driver's phone rang. "Well? Is he dead? Kill him, we don't want more troubles," said the man. Sonia prayed even harder for her husband. Lima kidnapers had a reputation for killing victims if they didn't provide money. The driver looked at Sonia. "We're not talking about your husband, don't worry," he said. "In a few minutes we're going to drop you off at a gas station."

"Yes, sir!" Sonia replied.

An hour passed and Sonia completely lost her sense of direction. They were far from home and it was dark outside. Then, the driver told Sonia and her friend to get out of the vehicle, walk

straight, and not to make a sound. If they didn't comply, they would be killed.

"Yes, sir!" Sonia said, again.

He gave Sonia 10 soles (about three dollars) for a cab ride, dropped the two women off at an intersection, and drove away. After a few minutes, relief began to set in. Somehow, they survived! Not only that, but the robber even gave them money for a cab fare.

Amazed, Sonia called the church. She discovered that the women from prayer meeting knelt in prayer the moment they learned of Sonia's kidnapping. They prayed until she safely returned home.

"That's the power of prayer," said Sonia. "Those ladies interceded for me and now I can live to tell the story. I know God protected us many times and we don't even realize it."

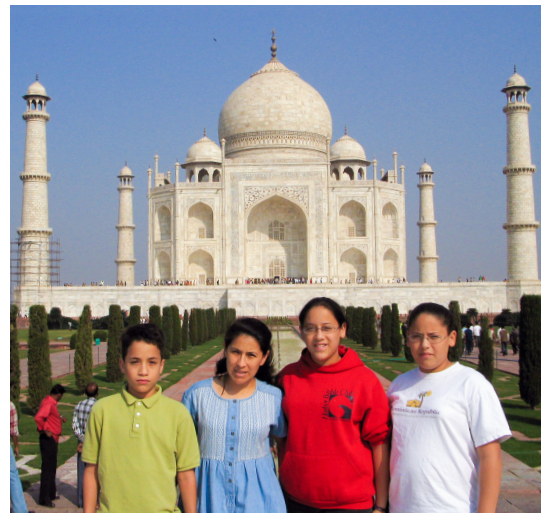
After six years in the mission field, it was still difficult to come home. They had no money, no place to live, no car and no job. They had no choice but to trust God to completely. Sonia constantly worried, but also prayed for God's will to be done.

Within days of returning to the United States, a wealthy friend handed Sonia the keys to his car and a check for \$10,000. "This is your welcome home gift," the friend said. Later, Sonia heard about a house that had been for sale, but the owners had taken the sign down. In faith, Sonia knocked on their door.

"You can buy my house under one condition," the neighbor said. "You have to take it with all the furniture and supplies." The home even included towels, bed sheets, pots, pans and all the items needed to run a home. Sonia realized that no matter the extremity of the situation, God provides. His will for her life was more powerful than any obstacle or danger.

"God is good," said Sonia. "It amazes me that the only thing He wants from us is that we trust in Him, every day." **R**

Sonia Canó is the Children's Ministries Director for the Southwestern Union. She lives in Cleburne, Texas, with her husband, Amilcar. They have three children Sarah, Rebecca and Nestor. Makala James is a writer and journalism graduate from Southwestern Adventist University. She lives in Granbury, Texas, with her husband, Denny.



Unknown Paths

God's Amazing Adventures

I was ten years old the first time I spent a week away from home. My mom bought me a sleeping bag and I headed off to my first International Pathfinder Camporee. I was nervous and excited! I didn't know what a Pathfinder was or what we were going to be doing on a commercial speedway for a week, but it seemed like it would be a fun adventure!

This was my first event with the Seventh-day Adventist Church. To be honest, I didn't even really didn't know what a Seventh-day Adventist was! I knew that some family members were Adventist and they had invited me to attend this huge campout with them. They were kind and loved Jesus. I had started to learn about God and wanted to know more.

So, I piled into a van with my cousins and some other kids and headed to Colorado. During the road trip I made some new friends, learned some songs and played car games. When we arrived, I was amazed by the sea of people in front of me. I had never seen so many people! All of these kids were here to learn about God and spend time with other Christian kids? Amazing!

Every day we made our "beds" and made sure our tents were orderly. We had breakfast and devotional time with our group before heading off to do all kinds of activities, from interacting with nature to crafting, mechanics and learning about camping skills. There was so much to do and see! Not only were there a ton of different activities, but a ton of different people, too! It was awesome to see all the cultures, countries and languages around us.

In the evening, this sea of people from around the world would gather together to sing praises and

learn about God's love, Bible stories and Jesus's sacrifice. The program was great and you could tell a lot of work had gone into it. I wondered how such a big event could come together, how much dedication and passion these Christians had and what this all meant for my life.

The week ended and I headed home, a little different than when I had left. A few years later my family started attending a Seventh-day Adventist Church in Fort Worth, Texas. To my joy and surprise I learned that the International Pathfinder

Camporee happens every five years, and I was able to go again and bring my two brothers. It was one of the coolest experiences of our lives!

The last time I went to the International Pathfinder Camporee, I was a counselor and was in charge of my own group of kids.

Ten-year-old me would have never imagined I would have been back at this enormous event as a leader.

In Jeremiah 29:11 the Bible tells us, "'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm

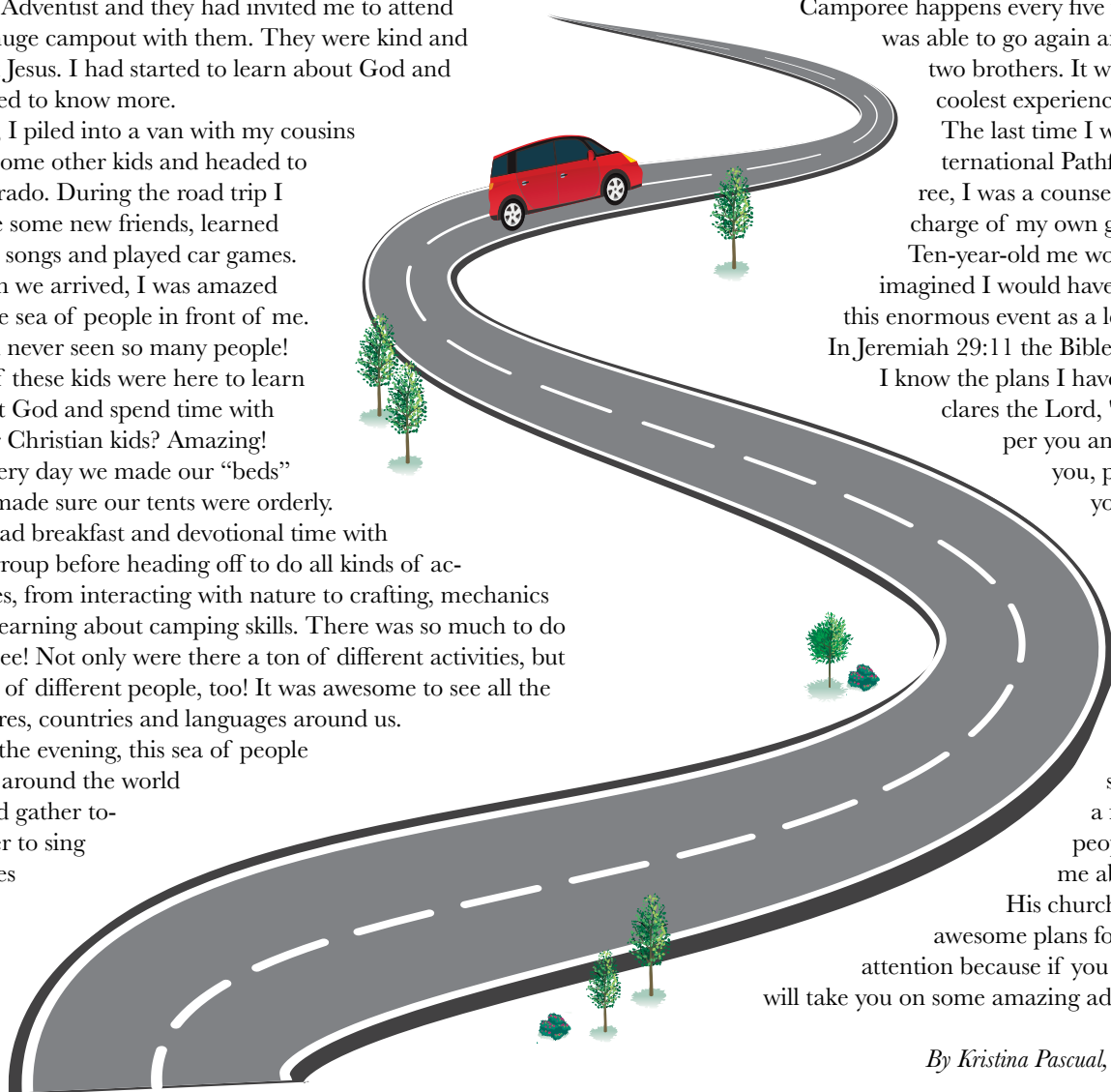
you, plans to give you hope and a future.'" I had

no idea what God had in store for me that summer many years ago. But,

He used one special trip and a few special people to teach me about Him and

His church. God has awesome plans for your life. Pay

attention because if you let Him, He will take you on some amazing adventures!



By Kristina Pascual, Managing Editor

Did You Know?

The next International Pathfinder Camporee is August 12-17, 2019 in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

The first North American Division Pathfinder Camporee was in July 1985 in Camp Hale, Colorado.

The first International Pathfinder Camporee was August 1995 near Denver, Colorado.

Summer Camp Contest Winners:

Arkansas-Louisiana: Tiffany M.

Oklahoma: Bethany M.

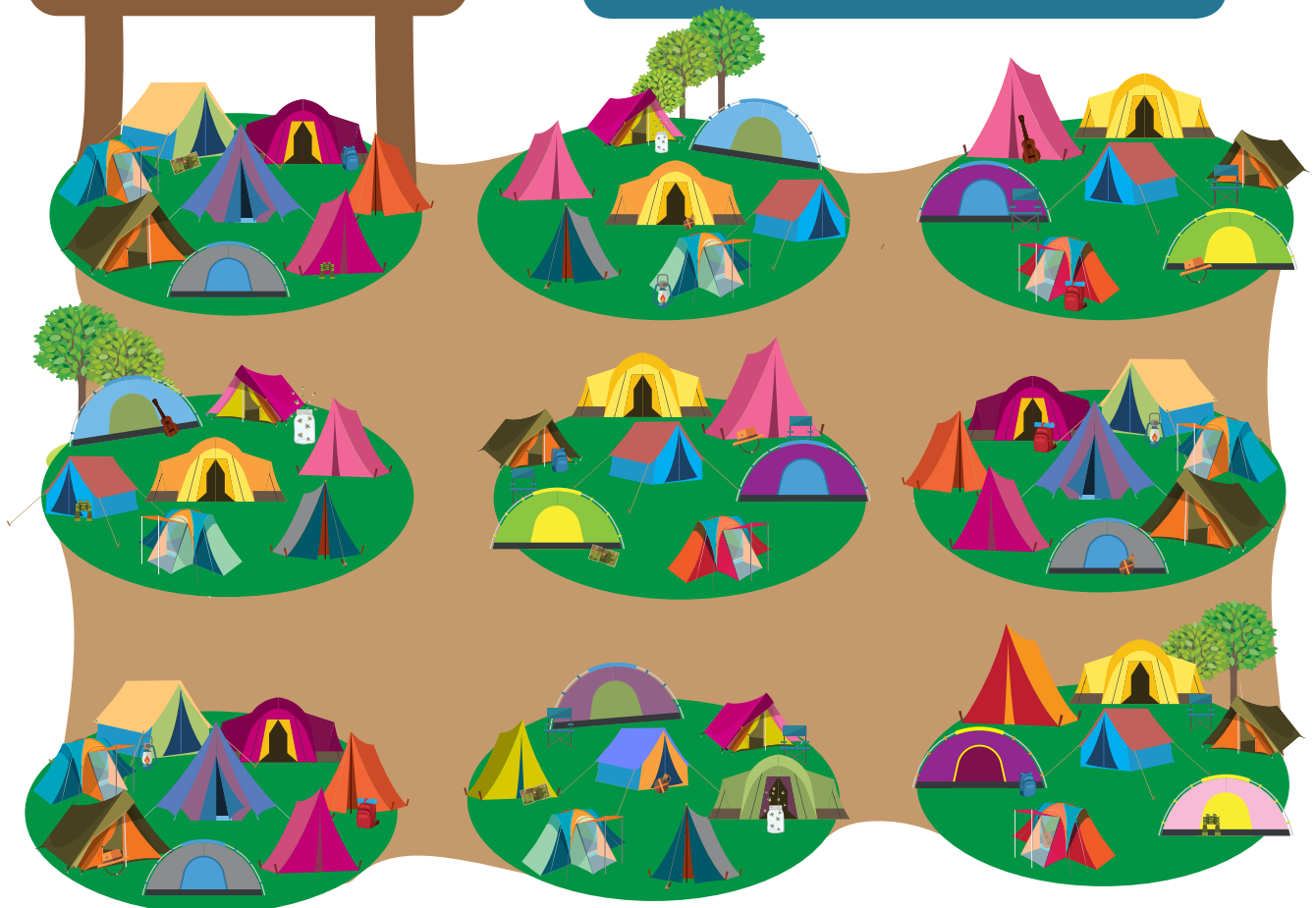
Texas: Brandon S., Caleb L.

Texico: Gabriel B., Sonia N.

WELCOME
TO CAMPOREE

SEARCH AND FIND

- | | | |
|-------------|---------------|---------------------|
| 3 Guitars | 3 Hats | 3 Jars of Fireflies |
| 6 Backpacks | 7 Camp Chairs | 3 Maps |
| 3 Lanterns | 3 Canteens | 3 Binoculars |



July Events:

1-8

Arkansas-Louisiana Conference: Tween Camp, Camp Yorktown Bay, Mt. Pine, Ark. SDowns@arklac.org

1-8

Texas Conference: Teen Camp, Lake Whitney Ranch, Clifton, Tex., TXYouth.org

1-8

Oklahoma Conference: Teen Camp, Wewoka Woods Adventist Center, Wewoka, Okla., OKAdventist.org

8-15

Arkansas-Louisiana Conference: Teen Camp, Camp Yorktown Bay, Mt. Pine, Ark. SDowns@arklac.org

8-15

Texas Conference: Young Adult Summer Camp, Lake Whitney Ranch, Clifton, Tex., TXYouth.org

13-21

Oklahoma Conference: English Camp Meeting, Wewoka Woods Adventist Center, Wewoka, Okla. OKAdventist.org

13

SWAU: Alumni Watermelon Event, Oklahoma English Camp Meeting, Wewoka Woods Adventist Center, Wewoka, Okla.

15-22

Arkansas-Louisiana Conference: Blind Camp, Camp Yorktown Bay, Mt. Pine, Ark. SDowns@arklac.org

16-20

Texas Conference: Valley Summer Day Camp for ages 7-12, Weslaco, Tex. TXYouth.org

18-21

Texas Conference: Ark/La/Tex Camp Meeting Jefferson Seventh-day Adventist Church, TexasAdventist.org

21-22

Texas Conference: Empower Club Ministries Training, The Brazos Center, Bryan, Tex., TXYouth.org

22-27

Oklahoma Conference: Blind Camp, Wewoka Woods Adventist Center, Wewoka, Okla. OKAdventist.org

23-27

Texas Conference: Valley Summer Day Camp for ages 13-17, Weslaco, Tex. TXYouth.org

30-Aug 14

SWAU: Summer Bridge Program, Southwestern Adventist University Campus, SWAU.edu



August Events:

14-18

SWAU: Freshmen Orientation, Southwestern Adventist University Campus, SWAU.edu

15-18

Arkansas-Louisiana Conference: Youth-Young Adults Compassion Weekend, Shreveport, La. JVillegas@arklac.org

19

SWAU: Registration Southwestern Adventist University Campus, SWAU.edu

24-26

Arkansas-Louisiana Conference: Spanish Family Camp, Camp Yorktown Bay, Mt. Pine, Ark. DCastellanos@arklac.org

24-25

Texico Conference: Asian/Filipino Convocation Lubbock, Tex. ARazon@Texico.org

24-25

Texas Conference: Glad Reaper, San Antonio Highland Hills Seventh-day Adventist Church San Antonio, Tex. TXYouth.org

31-Sept. 3

Arkansas-Louisiana Conference: Arkansas Youth Federation, Camp Yorktown Bay, Mt. Pine, Ark. JVillegas@arklac.org

For more events and information, visit SouthwesternAdventist.org

New Vice President

Elton DeMoraes Joins the Southwestern Union

BURLESON, TEX. — On May 15, 2018, the Southwestern Union Executive Committee voted Elton DeMoraes, then-executive secretary for the Texas Conference, as vice president for ministries of the Southwestern Union.

“We are excited to welcome Elton as vice president for the Southwestern Union. His professionalism and personable demeanor, along with his dedication to evangelism and focus on church growth will be a wonderful addition to our ministry. His experience and spiritual leadership will serve the Union, confer-

ences and members well,” said Larry Moore, Southwestern Union president.

Born in São Paulo, Brazil, DeMoraes completed a bachelor’s degree in theology at Centro Universitário Adventista de São Paulo in 1997. His first pastoral appointment in the United States was in Texas. Fluent in Portuguese, Spanish and English, DeMoraes has pastored multilingual congregations in Houston and East Texas. In 2010 he joined the Texas Conference as director for church planting and stewardship. In May of 2011 he became the conference’s evangelism, church

planting and ministerial director, and in December of 2015, he also became the conference’s executive secretary.

DeMoraes received his Master of Divinity degree in 2005 from Andrews Theological Seminary, and his Doctor of Ministry degree, also from Andrews, in 2015. He and his wife, Alessandra, have one daughter, Isabella, and reside in Burleson.

By Jessica Lozano, Editor



Labrador Accepts Call

New President for Upper Columbia Conference

BURLESON, TEX. — Minervino (Minner) Labrador Jr., D.Min., vice president and director of church ministries, men’s ministries, ministerial and stewardship, has accepted a call to serve as president of the Upper Columbia Conference in Spokane, Wash.

Labrador has served the Southwestern Union since 2011, and has played a pivotal role in strategic planning and mission development. Minner’s wife, Evelyn, also served the Southwestern Union as the administrative assistant to the president.

Southwestern Union President Larry

R. Moore said, “While we are excited to see the work the Lord has in store for Minner and Evelyn at the Upper Columbia Conference, we will surely miss them in the Southwestern Union territory. Minner’s spiritual leadership and passion for service will continue to meet the needs of God’s people.”

Labrador said, “Evelyn and I have been truly blessed to have been part of the Southwestern Union family. I’m grateful for the union ministries, friendships and fellowship that we have been a part of.”

By Jessica Lozano, Editor



Planning for Excellence

SWUC Continuous School Improvement Plan



BURLESON, TEX. – The Southwestern Union is committed to excellence in Adventist education. Excellent schools demonstrate a commitment to ongoing self-assessment, evidence-informed practice, and continuous school improvement planning. Continuous school improvement planning, in particular, is a process that honors the purpose of Adventist education: the belief that Adventist education is the essential vehicle for the expression of faith-based values and beliefs at all levels.

Excellent schools are not produced by chance or as the result of a single change event. Excellence is about building a culture that encourages continual, planned improvement. With renewed purpose, effective plans for improvement and innovative, research-based practices, a quality educational product will emerge that is focused on the relevancy of teaching and learning for the 21st century.

Continuous school improvement plan-

ning occurs in response to data analysis and the identified needs of the school program, with the goal of creating a shared vision which is implemented in the Continuous School Improvement Plan. The development of the Plan provides the school an opportunity to transform its vision of excellence into strategic action steps that introduce change and create a higher level of internal accountability. The Plan answers the question, “How are we going to get to where we want to be?” in the continuous school improvement cycle. Most importantly, the Adventist philosophy of education is the lens through which program change is managed and evaluated.

A Plan is comprised of multiple goals that align with one or more of the Standards for Accreditation of Seventh-day Adventist Schools and system-wide learning outcomes. The Southwestern Union’s 2018-2019 Continuous School Improvement Plan includes the following goals:

Goal 1: Continuous School Improvement Planning. Collaborate with conferences/schools in the use of data for continuous school improvement.

Goal 2: Academic Excellence. Improve academic excellence for learners by bringing coherence to curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices through a standards-based approach.

Goal 3: Communication. Strengthen communication with current and prospective stakeholders through the creation of a Union education website to provide resources and ensure a positive perception of the educational program for learners.

The Office of Education is providing professional development and resources for the schools across our Union to develop Continuous School Improvement plans as they continue their journey to excellence.

————— *By Carol Campbell*
Vice President for Education

Your Best
PATHWAY *to* HEALTH
Ft. Worth Mega Clinic

September 19-21, 2018

2,000 Volunteers Needed

Dentists, Dental Hygienists & Assistants, Ophthalmologists, Optometrists, Nurses
Surgeons, Doctors of All Specialties, Hair Stylists and Non-medical Volunteers



**Information & Volunteer Registration at
PathwaytoHealthVolunteer.org**



Scan for video

Your Best Pathway to Health is a humanitarian service of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in partnership for the Ft. Worth mega clinic with the Southwestern Union Conference, the Texas Conference, and the Southwest Region Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Skilled Nurses

Graduates Now Receive ACLS Certification



KEENE, TEX. – For the first time, nursing students of Southwestern Adventist University will graduate with an Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) national certification of critical care nursing skills. These are the skills needed in all areas of the hospital when a patient's heart stops or when they stop breathing. In other words, they're prepared to be the best new nurses in the most critical of situations.

“This certification is beyond what basic nursing education would normally teach,” says Dr. Joyce Melius, RNBS, CCRN-K, adjunct faculty. “Hopefully, it will help students gain confidence and help them get great jobs.”

Melius is the major ACLS teacher at Texas Health Huguley Hospital, in Fort Worth. At Southwestern, she is in charge of ACLS preparation and testing for graduating students. ACLS encompasses CPR plus many cardiac practices and other medications to help sustain life.

Knowledge needed for ACLS is often gained while working in the field. Most nurses don't get ACLS certification until they've been a practicing nurse for at least six months.

At Southwestern, students gain knowledge as an add-on to their Medical/Surgical IV class. In this class,

they deal with more complex medical or surgical situations, such as cardiac, respiratory, neuro, and now ACLS preparation and testing.

Part of the preparation includes performing simulations of codes. During a “code blue,” when a patient stops breathing or has no pulse, nurses read the patient's vital information then respond by telling a team what steps to take. Essentially, they must work quickly to save the patient's life.

“Often, we have a TV idea of codes and how they go,” says Michelle Higa, nursing graduate, class of 2018. “It's nothing like that. It's a nerve-wracking thing. With an ACLS certification, at least you know what to do. I think that by having practiced, it helps us not freak out when someone is actually coding in front of us. You feel a little more prepared, a little less nervous.”

To receive the certification, a nurse must pass two national level tests, written and practical. At the end of the semester, Southwestern students were tested for the certification. The class and testing culminated in a two-day session at Texas Health Huguley Hospital, where the 45 graduating students made use of clinical manikins and lab equipment.

“I feel more prepared,” says Kyleigh Duke, nursing graduate, class of 2018. “Having an ACLS certification makes you feel more prepared because you've already seen and studied for a code situation, and you've learned it.”

In many critical care units of hospitals, this is a required certification that must be renewed every two years. This means that graduates of Southwestern with an ACLS certification are more likely to be hired for critical care and emergency department jobs. In addition, students interested in pursuing a career in critical care are more likely to be hired as new nurses in that field than students without ACLS.

“Our students have an excellent knowledge and skill base,” says Kerrie Kimbrow, DNP, Chair of the Nursing Department. “And now adding this certification gives them an added bonus. It helps build their confidence in what they can do, and it gives them valuable expertise to market themselves.”

— By Makala Coleman James, SWAU '15
Photo by Caressa Rogers

Nursing Department Chair Dr. Kerrie Kimbrow chats with nursing students.

SWAU at Nationals

Enactus Team Places Third

KEENE, TEX. – Students on the Enactus team recently travelled to the Enactus National Competition and job fair in Kansas City. The SWAU Enactus team placed third nationally in their league in the opening round. This places the team in the top 28% of all competing teams, with over 170 teams in the United States. They also received the Jack Shewmaker Spirit Award, which comes with a \$2,000 prize for the team to use in future projects.

The competitions are challenging, team-oriented events that create a sense of accountability and motivation for

teams to continually improve the quality of their community projects. The judges who assess the clubs are business professionals and executives from partnering corporations such as Walmart, CVS, Microsoft, and Home Depot.

To compete at the Enactus National Competition, the SWAU Enactus team won their regional competition in Dallas earlier this year. This is the fifth year in a row the Southwestern Adventist University Enactus team has won the regional competition and progressed to the national level.

Over the last four years the team has earned \$8,600 in partnership grant funds plus over \$11,750 in Enactus competition awards. Last year the team also won the Unilever Bright Future Partnership and Sam's Club Step Up for Small Business Partnership grants. Learn more at swau.edu/enactus.

By Darcy Force, SWAU '04
Director of Marketing & PR

The SWAU Enactus team with their award after the first round of the Enactus Nationals Competition.



Student Filmmakers

Selections Featured at Film Festivals

KEENE, TEX. – The animated short film project, “Truth,” was selected for the Fort Worth FotoFest Film Festival this May. Faculty and students joined professor Kyle Portbury (pictured left) at the festival held at the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History.

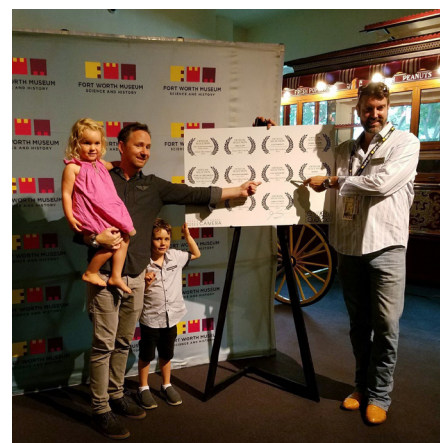
“It was an honor to have ‘Truth’ officially selected and students enjoyed the film on the 8-story high Omni IMAX screen,” says Portbury. “‘Truth’ tells the story of Sojourner Truth’s extemporaneous speech, ‘Ain’t I a Woman.’”

The film, funded by a Sicher Endowed

Faculty Grant and GoodtoGo Media, is screening at other festivals ahead of its official release. It was shown at the SON-screen Film Festival in Washington, DC along with student short films “Senior Year” and “Still Senior Year.”

The Communication Department established the Institute of Christian Film this past year. The program encourages writers to submit scripts for development. For more information about the Institute of Christian Film, visit swau.edu/film.

By Darcy Force, SWAU '04
Director of Marketing & PR



Enjoy the Journey

Oh What Joy We Share



My dad and I were very close. I would say we were best buddies. When I was young we would wrestle and chase each other. It was not uncommon to pull pranks on one another. We had fun! As time progressed, we worked around our place together. There were always family chores and outside responsibilities and dad would always try make those times fun and special.

Sometimes, when it was hot during the summer, he would say, “Hop in the truck and let’s go to town and get something cold to drink.” And so it would be a soda and a little bag of peanuts, a great treat! And all the while we would talk and visit, and if the time was right, we might listen to a good baseball game on the radio. Speaking of sports, we enjoyed playing catch, regardless of baseball or football. It was always time well spent.

I remember how Dad would regularly open the Word of God and we would share back and forth the meaning of Scripture. Jesus became very special to me, and I thank the Lord that my dad helped introduce me to Jesus.

As I kept maturing into a young adult, dad was there when I met my beautiful bride. He was there when my boys were born. Oh, what joy we shared! As a minister, he was a great mentor to me when I started in ministry. He was encouraging and positive. He had great perspective. What a treasure! We talked about ministry almost every day by phone.

Then I remember receiving a phone call from dad one day, telling me he had cancer. What a shock! I could hardly believe it. He was the strong man in the family; he was the example. Dad have cancer? I wrestled with that news. Yes, I prayed earnestly for him. I participated in an anointing service for him. I believed God would heal him. And for a time he was better, but the disease began running its course. In time, I knew he wasn’t going to make it, save a miracle from God. What a struggle! I remember wondering what it would be like without dad. Frankly, the thought of no dad was tough. It hurt a lot.

I remember that last time I saw him alive. We were talking shop. We spoke of ministry and evangelism. Jesus was coming soon and people needed Jesus, now! And out of that last conversation, I remember dad telling me to go home and shepherd my flock; there was nothing more I could really do for him, and that was okay. I pulled out of the driveway to drive back to my flock; it was one of the hardest journeys I have ever endured. But on that drive home, God kept speaking to me. He continued to remind me that I was not alone. God was still walking with me. There was nothing to fear; He was always there.

Out of that conversation with God, I developed the resolve to keep moving forward. A couple of days later a friend asked me how my prayer life was and what was I praying for with my dad. I replied, “Lord, if you have more for daddy to do, please heal him, but if not, please let him rest.” My friend shook his head in agreement.

It was only a couple of weeks later that my dad was gone, asleep in Jesus. He is resting and awaiting the resurrection. Out of that experience, I grew in grace. We never walk alone! Praise God! Sometimes growth is painful. Sometimes spiritual maturity is difficult. But when our Master walks with us day by day, it becomes a joy to keep our hand in His!

By Richard C. Dye, Sr., President



Active Church in Rogers

Evangelism, Fundraising, Inreach and Outreach

ROGERS, ARK. – The Rogers Seventh-day Adventist Church has been blessed to be busy reaching out to its community! The church recently held a three-day giant yard sale with proceeds going toward the church building fund. The Lord blessed with nearly \$3,000. The fundraiser could not have been accomplished without our faithful volunteers who worked diligently prior to the sale with setup and pricing, then three days of the sale, and clean-up. Nearly everyone who came in the door left with some kind of tract as we shared a warm smile and messages of truth.

Two new mothers were honored when the women of the church rallied with baby showers to make sure they would have what they needed when their little ones made their appearances.

Dr. Horst Mueller shared valuable Bible truths on The Law of Life. Dr. Mueller is an Ear-Nose-Throat specialist from Germany who has a passion for sharing the Gospel and the health message in very unique ways with interesting presentations and relevant stories. His wife, Lydia, shared her amazing violin skills with us during the meetings, even playing a few songs with our pastor, Ovidiu Radulescu, to the delight of the 40 or so attendees.

At the end of October, the church met for Trivia Night, with fellowship, food, and intellectual challenges as teams of 6-8 rounded each table to figure out the answers to the many trivia questions asked by our emcee. Between rounds there was a delicious chili dinner with all the fixings, and everyone enjoyed the

variety of food served. Many non-Adventists came to fellowship with us and play the game and partake in the very profitable auction and raffle. The event raised money for the building fund and yielded nearly \$3,000! Great prizes were given and everyone is looking forward to the second annual Trivia Night next year.

In November, members dressed up and enjoyed a evening of delicious food and fellowship for the Women's Ministry Weekend and Fall Gala. Rex Frost delivered a special sermon on Sabbath about women in the Bible, specifically the story of Naomi and Ruth. His wife, Donna, delivered a meaningful presentation on Psalm 23. The women truly enjoyed the time together and befriended all who came.

By Nancy Riedesel



First Baptisms

Jonesboro Hispanic Group

JONESBORO, ARK. – The Jonesboro Seventh-day Adventist Church has a small Hispanic group meeting with them. Last September the church held a series of meetings with their Spanish-speaking group.

During the last weekend of the series, a couple began attending. Oscar and Rosalia Martinez continued attending regularly and it was a joy and privilege to see the Lord draw them back into the fold.

They had been Adventist many years ago but had drifted away from the Lord. They made a full and renewed commitment to Him. God has truly been working in their lives and they had recently expressed a desire for baptism. That day was a very high Sabbath for the Jonesboro church. Oscar and Rosalia are the first baptisms in our Hispanic group and I have a feeling that they will be great leaders in our little congregation.

By Abraham Velazquez



Adventurers in Action

Springtown Stars Host Church Social



SPRINGTOWN, ARK. – The Springtown Stars Adventurer Club recently hosted a church-wide social to raise funds for their club.

The theme for the social event was “Springtown High: My Senior Year.” Guests were transported back in time (or not so far back) to their senior year in high school.

As a part of the event, attendees were encouraged to dress in the fashion of their high school senior year. They

enjoyed entertainment from those high school days.

Everyone enjoyed a “mystery” cafeteria-style meal served by the Adventurers who were dressed up like traditional cafeteria workers. The Adventurer leaders and parents planned the entire evening for the church. The Springtown Stars and their leaders have played an active role in the Springtown Seventh-day Adventist Church.

By Bryan Yeagley

Ouachita Hills

Healthy Living Through Lessons and Activities

AMITY, ARK. – Ouachita Healthy Living, a new home-based lifestyle education center, recently completed its first seven-day, live-in session.

Activities included a trip to the grocery store and tips for making healthy purchases. The purchased items were then used in the cooking classes and in the preparation of tasty whole foods meals each day.

Various hydrotherapy treatments, poultices, and kitchen remedies were

taught and practiced. Friendly chatter accompanied the daily exercise routines. There was a gardening class and classes to learn the “how’s” and “why’s” of each health modality.

The view from Ouachita Healthy Living includes pond, pastures, and rolling wooded hills. This 50-acre spot is just a mile from the main campus of Ouachita Hills Academy and College and is part of Ouachita Hills Ministries.

By Dr. Kathryn Irizarry



Creative Fundraisers

Pathfinders Minister and Raise Money for Mission Trip

BENTONVILLE, ARK. – On February 18, Beaver Brother's Productions, a ministry of the Bentonville Beavers Pathfinder Club, brought the biblical story of the prodigal son and the good Samaritan to life on the stage. Entitled "The Hitchhiker's Guide to Jerusalem," the drama was an original retelling of four biblical parables intertwined into one: the prodigal son; the good Samaritan; the parable of the workers; and the marriage feast.

The cast members (pictured below) included staff and members of the Pathfinder Club. They practiced for nearly two months, three times weekly, in preparation for this event.

Club member Otis Rainer played the starring role of the prodigal son and staff member Jordan Walkup played the good Samaritan. Other Pathfinders played supporting roles such as the innkeeper (Salvador Aguilar), the brother (Owen Lauzon), the priest and Levite (Philip Walkup and Joshua Walkup), the bride (Morgan Dunn), friends of the prodigal son (Nate Upton, Gene Rainer and Micah Pritchett), and servants

(Allison Dunn, Emma Farinholt, Marcus May and Daysi Aguilar).

Staff members pitched in to make the production a success. Beth Huff, director of the play, designed and created all the period costumes for the production, managed the sound booth and created all the sound effects. The club director, Audra Kohltfarber, and staff member Jan Huff, helped Pathfinders learn their lines, cues and placements and taught correct inflection and pronunciation.

Diana Upton and D'arcy Dunn, backstage managers, made sure all the scenes were cleared and new props were placed and ready. Michael Dunn ran the lighting controller to create scene breaks and lighting effects and TJ Hopper ran the overhead house lights. Steven May, who played the land owner's foreman, and Shawn Kohltfarber, who played the prodigal son's father, also helped to build the set.

Nearly 100 guests from the community and neighboring churches attended. The Jerusalem-inspired dinner of Mediterranean foods was served during intermission. Chefs Roger Huff, Renee

and Jeff Otts, and Sarah and JR Otts worked for nearly two days to prepare the meal. It was served in a Jerusalem market setting. Guests, who had been provided with small sacks of "Denarius," visited food stalls to "purchase" their meal with the coins.

The Bentonville Pathfinders traditionally hold this annual dinner theater event in February. This was the 17th annual valentine dinner theater fundraiser that the Pathfinder club has done. The proceeds from this year's event totaled nearly \$1,500.00. All the funds raised helped the Pathfinder club's mission trip to the Navajo Nation of Kinlichee, Ariz. in June.

The performance can be viewed online by going to YouTube.com and searching "Pathfinder Strong Channel" and then clicking on the "Valentine Banquet Productions" playlist. Special thanks to Tanya Hopper for recording the performance.

— By Audra Kohltfarber



Evangelism Training

Equipping Lay Leaders in Gentry

GENTRY, ARK. — The Arkansas-Louisiana Conference recently hosted the first of three Lay Evangelism Trainings this spring. The first training was held at the Gentry Seventh-day Adventist Church in Northwest Arkansas on February 16-17.

Richard C. Dye, Sr., taught 20 to 30 adults from nearby districts with the assistance of his wife, LaVonne. At the time, Dye was the director of ministry and the evangelism coordinator. He now serves as conference president. I came from the Yellville Seventh-day Adventist Church, about 130 miles away, and was eager to learn.

Dye explained that “telling people about Jesus” is his main love. During the seminars he encouraged the lay leaders to be warm, gracious, and friendly as we focus on loving persons rather than teaching facts.

He shared that we should try to “connect, not correct” folks. Our goals should be centered on accepting people as they are, because in fact, we are only just “one beggar telling another beggar where the bread is.” Perception is everything and Jesus is the ultimate example

of a “yes face” to all sinners. As long as our focus is on lifting Him up, He will draw all people to Himself.

We were taught the nuts and bolts of holding a successful evangelism series. This included items like preparation, ushering, greeting, record keeping, music and teaching the series each evening in one hour to avoid wearing out the saints, and helping or seating the guests.

He shared strategies to be better prepared to host meetings. These include having intentional prayer circles, conducting Bible studies, and working with small groups. He gave counsel on approaching the community as well. While visiting others with the purpose of making friends, we can apply the FORT tool. This means that in conversation we ask questions about Family, Occupation, Religion, and give our Testimony to them. The purpose is to create meaningful connections and have deeper conversations with future guests.

Dye demonstrated gracious calls and shared information regarding preparation for baptism, follow up strategies,

small groups, and fellowship socials. He advocated for a special Sabbath School class for newcomers that is led by pastors or elders. Follow-up might include a Bible marking class and a spiritual gifts training and testing to help new members find their ministry niche in the church.

I left the meeting inspired and empowered, armed with a passion to do local lay evangelism. I look forward to loving people into our fellowship wisely and kindly, and helping them find their church home and ministry.

I also have a passion to get this same training into my district, which is comprised of the Mountain Home and Yellville Seventh-day Adventist Churches. It was truly a valuable and motivating training session.

————— *By Susan Taylor*



Into Every Detail

Finding God's Will in the Major and Minor



How can some Bible figures, of whom God speaks highly, do such foolish things at times? The behavior of three specific kings makes me wonder what they were thinking. Hezekiah, Jehoshaphat and Josiah were all considered the best of God's leaders. They were described as kings who did what was right in the sight of God, keeping His commandments and being faithful. Yet, each of them made terrible decisions which impacted their reign and the people of God.

God worked a miracle to heal Hezekiah. When ambassadors from Babylon came to visit, instead of telling them about the God who healed him and stopped the sun from moving, he showed them all of his wealth. Scripture says he was lifted up in pride. Jehoshaphat, who, after many victories and much success in his reign, decided to join forces with wicked king Ahab in a battle that caused him to be rebuked by God's prophet. Josiah, who God used to bring revival and do many great things, decided to fight against the king of Egypt. In doing so, Josiah lost his life. All three good kings did foolish things, and the question is, why? I'm sure the kings had daily prayer and devotion time and gave their day to the Lord. So how could they make such mistakes?

I think the reason was that they were made up of the same flesh and blood that we are. They wanted to do the right thing in following God, yet they didn't realize that God is into the details of our lives. He doesn't just want us to lay our plans at His feet in the morning and then make decisions on our own throughout the day. He wants us to go to Him with every detail of our lives throughout each day. He wants us to ask the question that Saul ask God when he was blinded and knocked off his horse on the way to Damascus: "Lord, what would you have me do?" David also had it right when he asked God if he should go up against a city. He didn't move until God said "Yes, go up."

My greatest struggle with knowing and doing God's will is not in the big decisions, like whom to marry, what career to follow, or where to live. I prayed earnestly about those decisions and waited upon the Lord to answer and lead. My problems often come on the decisions I face each day as situations arise. I don't always stop and ask the question, Lord what would you have me do? I imagine if those kings would have done that, the stories would have turned out differently, for truly God is into all the details of our lives and wants us to relinquish control so He can lead us into His perfect will. But I must also add that I'm very thankful and grateful for God's amazing grace toward us all as we often follow the steps of Hezekiah, Jehoshaphat, and Josiah and do our own thing. Yes, God is patient and forgiving and for that I praise Him. But I am trying to remember each day to give Him every detail and every decision. I hope you are, as well.

By James Shires, President



Bridging the Gap

Young Adults Meet With Conference Administration

OKLAHOMA CITY – On May 12, the administration of the Oklahoma Conference of Seventh-day Adventists met with more than 30 young adults representing almost 20 churches throughout the state. Churches had been asked to elect and sponsor one or two young adults to attend a Young Adult Vision Meeting.

The youth director and administration desired to have an honest and hopeful conversation with their young adult community to help cast a vision and set direction. The conference has been learning, like many others in the North

American Division, that the voice of the young adults needs to be heard and gaps need to be bridged in order to be able to better serve them.

The first of the three-part meeting focused on getting to know each other. Young adults and administration alike had the opportunity to share about themselves and have a short season of prayer. The next part was the core element in our meeting: listening to young adults. We asked them what is working, what was missing, and what is confusing. The last part of our program consisted

in giving out gift cards, taking pictures, and enjoying dinner together.

Our young people gave great feedback and we made connections. This is only a first step in launching an ongoing and effective young adult ministry. The administration will be sharing the feedback with the local pastors and church leaders while praying about where we go from here and how we can continue to bridge our many gaps.

— *By Daniel Ortega*
Youth and Young Adult Director
Photos by Annette Park



Weatherford Baptisms

Church Almost Doubles in Size

WEATHERFORD, OKLA. – In February 2018 the Weatherford Seventh-day Adventist Church along with Wyatt Allen, an Amazing Facts Evangelist, held a four-week long Bible Prophecy Seminar. Leading up to the seminar, several members of the church stepped out of their comfort zone and took on great roles! From passing out handbills at the local Wal-Mart in freezing temperatures to dedicating themselves for various responsibilities during the seminar, these members worked hard to expand the Kingdom of God. The Holy Spirit led

six souls to commit their lives to Christ through baptism as well as another handful of seminar guests accepting Jesus Christ as their personal savior for the first time in their lives! A future date has been set for another baptism for those who have chosen to continue their study of Bible prophecy. As the seminar came to an end, the Weatherford church almost doubled its congregation size! The Lord is using a small church to do such a large work!

— *By Daniel and Caitlin Fornes*
Photos by Jenni Allen



Cooking Up Outreach

Improving People's Lives, One Meal at a Time

DAVIS, OKLA. – One of the most powerful ways to reach people is through their stomach. If you cook it, they will come. At least that seems to be the case, if you're Margaret Brown.

About eight years ago, Brown began instructing cooking classes at the Arbuckle View Seventh-day Adventist Church in Davis, Okla. Her "Healthy You Cooking Class" quickly became popular among the congregation and the community.

The classes are held on the second Tuesday of each month, between September and April, with the exception of December. With 20 to 40 students (mostly non-Adventist) in attendance each class, Brown instructs how to cook about six vegan recipes. Her goal is to make sure that each person finds at least one recipe they like that they will make regularly.

Each class begins with prayer, followed by a brief introduction to healthy living when anyone new attends. Then Brown demonstrates how to prepare the ingredients and put each recipe together. Adding to the value of the class, a nutrition specialist, Diana Fleming, Ph.D., shares nutritional insights on related topics each month. After the cooking demonstrations, attendees enjoy a free buffet of the foods demonstrated.

Many of the people in the Davis and Sulphur communities and within

the congregation, have had an interest in health, so Brown's healthy cooking class was happily welcomed. People are drawn to this fun, social, and educational event. The food, fellowship, meal ideas, and nutritional content provide a lot of value to attendees that keep people coming back.

Brown puts a lot of thought into the recipes she chooses to demonstrate. With her background as a nurse practitioner, she selects and creates recipes that families find not only nutritional and healthy from a healthcare provider perspective, but also practical and delicious.

If your church is considering a similar class series, Brown recommends being consistent and creating expectations people can count on. Further sharing her insight and experience, she says, "I find there are more and more folks who do have some knowledge about what is healthful, so ensure that the recipes are healthful. Traditionally in Adventism, we just worried about being vegetarian, while refined vegetarian meat substitutes, cheese and grease were fine. Now it is important to share recipes that are largely low fat, low salt, high fiber, whole food, plant-based, and using less wheat and soy as more are allergic to it."

Brown and her team of volunteers work hard to deliver a valuable and positive experience each class. The ladies from church arrive before the class to

help with any last minute prep, keep things organized during the class, and help clean up after.

After the class, attendees can pick up recipe handouts and free healthful living books that are from the Ardmore Institute of Health.

Brown's passion, dedication and leadership, along with the help of the faithful ladies from church, have made this wonderful and life-changing program a success. These classes are a blessing to all those involved and to the community, bringing people closer together and helping them to live happier, healthier lives.

By Lisa Anthony

Photo by Daniel Ortega



Building Relationships

23 Kids Show Up for Summer Fun!

SHATTUCK, OKLA. – In rural Oklahoma, it is not uncommon for kids to be out of school on Fridays during the second semester of the school year. Along with our youth group at the Shattuck Seventh-day Adventist Church, we noticed a trend that the kids were bored while their parents were at work. We saw an opportunity to serve parents who want their kids to have social interactions outside of school. So, we started what we call Fitness Friday.

On the fourth Friday of every month since January, we've gotten together a group of kids and done things like Winter Obstacle Course, Ultimate Frisbee, Maxball, and our latest and greatest—Slip 'N Slide Kickball!

On April 27, Dominick Alipoon, pastor of the Shattuck church, helped me roll out four 50-foot sheets of plastic and fill four 8-foot kiddie pools full of water and waited for the masses to arrive. We had 23 young people show up for an

hour of fun in the sun!

No, we didn't end the day with an invitation to church, but we did start to learn their names. We started to develop friendships and one young girl who has been coming to Fitness Friday since the beginning has begun coming to church and asked to be baptized this summer! If what matters to others matters to you, they will start to care about what matters to you, too.

——— *Article and photos by Ashley Alipoon*



Tulsa Adventist Academy

REACHes All Grades, All Year

TULSA – Tulsa Adventist Academy (TAA) enjoyed a year of spiritual goals as faculty and staff helped students “REACH” their eternal goal: preparing for heaven and earth. Our theme, REACH, came from Romans 15:7 and permeated the activities and mindset of the school.

The faculty were dedicated in a family-school service, followed by a powerful week of prayer in October. Five parent-speakers shared personal messages of encouragement. Each morning, student praise teams led the school in song, then high school students partnered with elementary students to pray together before the speaker was introduced.

TAA celebrated Veterans Day on November 8 and 10 with a special breakfast and flag retirement ceremony, respectively. The high school Pathfinders and grades 5-8 attended the Tulsa Veterans Day parade in downtown Tulsa, and Dr. Stephen Zigo led our Flag Retirement Ceremony on the TAA grounds.

The first semester was capped by a mission trip fundraiser, TAA's Christmas program, that offered a three-course meal, homemade desserts by 11th-12th graders, and impeccable table service by 9th and 10th graders. January, February, and March were a swirl of activities with the Korean Student Exchange program,

SWAU's HoopFest and A Night at the Meyerson, senior class trip, the Oklahoma Conference Music Festival, and almost every high school student REACHed Hurricane Maria victims through work at Universidad Adventista de las Antillas.

Grades Pre-K through 8th grade enjoyed many team-building activities at the Tulsa Zoo, middle-school mayhem, elementary explosion, and eighth grade mission trip helping Hurricane Harvey victims in Humble, Tex. A new theme has been chosen for the 2018-2019 school year based on Isaiah 41:10. It will be revealed when school starts in August!

——— *By Caroline A. Fisher*

God's Timing is Always Perfect

Hugo Witnesses Changed Lives

HUGO, OKLA. – The Hugo Seventh-day Adventist Church conducted public evangelism meetings with evangelist Emanuel Baek that have resulted in five baptisms so far. Nancy Morrison had invited her husband, Bobby, to the church for a number of years. When this evangelistic series began though, she went by herself without inviting him. The next day he asked if he could go and they attended every night. He was baptized at the end of the series and is pictured with Nancy and Stephen Dennis, pastor.

Greg Duncan was also blessed by the series. He too had some past exposure to the church in Hugo and was also baptized at the end of the meetings. He has said that his attitude prior to Christmas was not open to the meetings, and he would not have responded as he did in January and February. The meetings had been rescheduled to those specific dates. The Lord definitely works these things out in His own "time."

By Stephen Dennis



Celebration by the Lake

Churches Worship in God's Sanctuary

WAGONER, OKLA. – The annual celebration by the lake is a time of joy and fellowship when the Wagoner and Muskogee Seventh-day Adventist Churches come together to spend time with God to see the Master's stroke paint a beautiful picture with sights and sounds outside our normal routine. The church members enjoy their time in nature to recharge their batteries to serve God in their respective cities.

Being sister churches has allowed the churches to come together in the development of community programs that

involve both congregations. The Muskogee church participates at the Gospel Rescue Mission where they feed the less fortunate, and have an opportunity to witness for Christ. The Wagoner church also participates also in a community outreach program. Both churches are collectively involved in prison and jail house ministries.

The Muskogee church is launching into an expanded educational ministry. This year with their new school building and land development, the Muskogee metro area is being provided a quality educa-

tional opportunity for its children within this growing community. The benefits from this will be seen for years to come.

Evangelism comes in all forms, and both churches are reaching out to their respective communities with personal and correspondence Bible study programs through mail outs and public seminars. Helping each other, whether it is individually or collectively, is what Christ would have us do in unity and purpose, and basically that is how we share the love of Christ.

By Jack Harris



Hurry Up and Wait

Trusting in His Perfect Timing



I hate to be late. When I commit to being somewhere, I want to be on time. One day, driving in heavy traffic on my way to my destination I hit heavy traffic. Even though I thought that I had left early enough, in the DFW Metroplex, sometimes you never can truly know what time you are going to reach your location. I noticed that I was cutting it a little close, but traffic was moving. All of a sudden, the cars slowed down to a stop. They started to move intermittently, but it was apparent that I was going to be late for the meeting that I had scheduled. As I sat in the driver's seat squeezing the steering wheel my chest began to pound and I started to stress out, thinking, "I hate being late."

Even more than being late myself, I really dislike when someone else is late. I don't like waiting. When someone does not show up on time I find myself slipping into my "waiting for time to pass" practice, which doesn't work because it simply seems to slow down time. James T. O'Brien said, "Regardless of how much patience we have, we would prefer never to use any of it."

Waiting is the least efficient use of time. Waiting is unproductive and ineffective. But is that true? Could it be that in the midst of waiting is when we find God performing great things for our good and for His glory? Could it be that our efficiency, productivity and effectiveness is based on how well we wait? In Luke 21:19 (KJV), Jesus said, "In your patience possess ye your souls." In other words, how we wait could affect where we spend eternity.

The person whom we often find it most difficult to wait on is the Lord. We want Him to come into our situations when we, with our limited sight and knowledge, deem that it is the right time. But God knows what is best for us. He knows what we need to learn, how long we need to be in that class, and the type of teaching tool that our circumstances require. It is not important that He comes when we want, but rather that He comes when He wants.

The question of waiting on God is not how long, but rather do we trust Him? The issue is not the wait, but trust. Let's ask ourselves: Do I trust the Lord Jesus? Do I trust Him enough to wait on Him? Do I believe what He has promised? The Bible says, "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: Wait, I say on the Lord." (Isaiah 40:31; Psalm 27:14). May God bless us as we show Him through our waiting how much we trust Him. Remember that Jesus said, "In your patience possess ye your souls."

By Stephen Brooks, Executive Secretary



Celebrating 88 Years Adventist Education in Dallas

DALLAS – On April 15, 2018, Southwest Adventist Junior Academy (SWAJA) gathered at the Hilton Garden Inn in Duncanville, Tex. to celebrate its First Annual Community Youth Scholarship Gala, a tribute to the 88 years of continuous service in Seventh-day Adventist education. Over 250 supporters came out for an incredible evening that included honorees and awardees from the school’s historical beginning in 1929.

It was a very special afternoon, and Kenneth Medlock, Master of Ceremonies, orchestrated time and events to introduce a meritorious program.

The gala signaled its beginning with opening prayer by Dallas City Temple Seventh-day Adventist Church senior pastor, Jaime Kowlessar and SWAJA school board chairperson, Roderick Reed. Tyrone Boyd, pastor of Agape Fellowship Seventh-day Adventist Church offered prayer for dinner to begin; and Kimberly Mays, SWAJA principal, made remarks.

After over seven decades of memory-lapses, planners reignited the fires from the past by reminding attendees of the outstanding contributions from fearless leaders. These undaunted ones excelled in Christ-centered leadership, unselfish sacrifice, total commitment, child-like faith, and unfaltering trust in the power of God. Each leader was introduced as an honoree and represented by a family member.

Each family member received a token of thanks in memory of his or her loved one. The honorees were: the late Naomi Turner, who organized the first school in 1929 (nephew, Dr. George Keaton Jr.); the late Elizabeth Chandler Moore (son, Oliver Moore II); the late Ruth Paschal (son, Michael Paschal); and the late Lallage Jay Egleston (granddaughter, Gloria Jean Price). Three awardees were recognized: Earlene Lister-Freeman and Fred Pullins, who represented the first graduates of the Southwest Region Academy in 1962; and Barbara P. Steele, who was recognized for her commitment and devotion to Christian education.

Other program participants were: harpist, Bailey Mason; Grammy Award-winning gospel artist, Madukwu Chinwah; narrator, Jonathan McNorton; Tameka Beason, owner of a vintage boutique; video presentations by Southwest Conference President Calvin Watkins and Barry Black, United States Senate chaplain; and words of support and encouragement from Robert Ashley, news director and host of Dallas Radio Station KHVN (Heaven 97).

Special fundraising moments included a presentation, by Robert Lister and Earlene Lister-Freeman, of a \$600 donation from the family of the late Nathaniel Alsobrook.

This occasion was one of the most important fundraising events to date,

helping SWAJA to support and provide financial stability for tuition and important educational learning tools.

Laughter, beauty, friendship, fellowship, and love spiced this occasion. Special thanks to organizers: Nancy Jones and Shauretta Robertson; conference and union supporters; Southwestern Adventist University; Dallas City Temple pastors and church family; SWAJA alumni, administration and staff, parents, students, well-wishers and all who helped to make this afternoon an outstanding success!

Southwest Region Conference Education Superintendent Buford Griffith, III brought the evening to a close with gracious remarks of appreciation for a job well done. His closing prayer left a lingering benediction of hope. “We have this hope that burns within our hearts, hope in the coming of the Lord. We have this faith that Christ alone imparts, faith in the promise of His Word. We believe the time is here, when the nations far and near, shall awake and shout and sing Hallelujah! Christ is King! We have this hope that burns within our hearts, hope in the coming of the Lord,” (Wayne Hooper, 1962).

By Catherine Jackson

The first graduates of SWAJA with the School Board Chair Roderick Reed, and Principal Kymberly Mayes-Polite. Photo by Charles Mayes.



Marion's Testimony

Stewardship Is Real! Try It! Prove Him!

DALLAS— God has given us the recipe for returning unto Him. God is the owner of everything, even the air we breathe! Knowing this, we return 10 percent as required by the Bible. We have 90 percent left to use as we see fit. But, the *offering* is the test that shows our love and appreciation to our Creator.

On April 15, I sponsored a table at the Southwest Adventist Junior Academy Gala to raise funds for Student Scholarships. It was a success and many were in attendance. During the Gala, individuals were asked to make dona-

tions starting with \$1,000. Several hands went up, including mine at \$1,000. On April 16, I opened my computer but decided to read emails later. However, I was urged by the Holy Spirit to read the emails and began scrolling.

I noticed an email from one of my creditors and thought they were informing me of my balance. But the email stated, "You are forgiven for the rest of the payments. Please do not send any more checks. Consider the note fully paid off." The balance owed was \$10,000!

I gave \$1,000 and God gave me \$10,000. Trust God in everything and watch His promises become real to you. This is just one of many incidents in my journey of life.

He returns through health, opportunities, finance, and more. Your testimony is waiting, make it real. Try It! Prove Him! Be a steward today; it is worth it.

By Marion Ricks



Tea with my Teacher

Bethel Adventist School Hosts Tea Party

TEXARKANA, TEX.— In February, the Bethel Adventist School hosted a tea party themed "Tea with My Teacher." This was planned for all the young ladies in the school. They came dressed in fancy dresses and shoes that day. The students played games, won prizes, and each young lady decorated a hat in her own unique way. We used cups and saucers, demitasse, and over-sized cups as we sipped a variety of teas and had a great time together.

By Glasmine Ellis, Principal



To God Be the Glory

Family Life Ministry Raises Funds for a Church Van

ALEXANDRIA, LA. – In September 2016 a Married Couples Ministry was established at the Smyrna Seventh-day Adventist Church in Alexandria, La. We started a ministry project setting a goal to work on getting a church sign and a church van. We knew that in order to accomplish the work we must: stay focused, pray for strength, encourage each other, and keep working.

In November 2016, the first phase of

our goal was completed with a beautiful yard sign. On Sabbath, December 30, 2017, Christopher Manuel, pastor of the Smyrna church, conducted a Sign Dedication Service. The couples ministry continued to work to reach the goal to purchase a van. In January 2018, phase two was completed and the van was blessed and dedicated by Manuel.

We praise God for what He has done and what He will do in the future

through the Smyrna Family Life Married Couples Ministry Department.

The van will be used to provide transportation for members of the congregation to and from services; outreach and community support from Smyrna church ministries; special events transportation like Vacation Bible School, revivals, concerts, musicals, a friends and family day, gym recreation and community activities.

By Betty Hudson

Outdoor School

Getting Back to Bible Principles

ATHENS, TEX. – Outdoor School is a special program held for 5th-8th grades at Lone Star Camp in Athens, Tex. Every year for one week students come together for fun and unique classes. Two years ago, we only had 46 students. This year, we had over 70 students attend! Some of the classes offered were canoeing, horsemanship, swimming, tie-dye, orienteering, edible plants scavenger hunt, archery, campfire building, and campfire cookery. All classes give the students an opportunity to earn a Pathfinder honor badge.

We had the Spelling Bee champions and the runners-up from each school compete for the Southwest Conference

Spelling Bee Championship. Pictured below with his teachers, Ethan McBeath, seventh grader from Applegate Adventist Junior Academy, in Round Rock, Tex., claimed the championship by correctly spelling the word, “SCONCE” (pronounced skān(t)s). Runner-up was Milyn Brown, eighth grader from Excel Adventist Academy in Missouri City, Tex., and third place was Vasti Campusano, seventh grader from Bethel Adventist School in Texarkana, Tex.

Michelle Mota, associate pastor of the Fondren Seventh-day Adventist Church in Missouri City, Tex. was the worship speaker for the week. Then after each devotion, New Orleans Adventist

Academy Principal Renee Whiting and Vice-Principal Micah Smith led the students in a fun-filled, interactive lesson on some of the stories in the book of Daniel. Students learned what captivity was like and drew their experience on a poster board. They also learned about the different nations that made up the statue in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream and then made a replica of the statue out of marshmallows.

We look forward to next year’s Outdoor School, and are anticipating over 100 students.

By Buford Griffith, III
Education Superintendent
Photo by Kym Polite-Mayes





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Gaining Strength

One Source Provides Power to Succeed



We live in a world that seems to zap the very spiritual energy and strength out of those who desire to be disciples of Christ and soldiers of the cross. Where do we find strength and energy to move forward? To be a light in the midst of darkness? One place is this well-known passage from Ephesians 6:10-11: “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes.” Even as an avalanche of evil surrounds us, the word of God is clear and concise. Our strength, energy and vitality come from the Lord and Him alone.

In her book *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5*, author Ellen G. White speaks to this challenge: “When the religion of Christ is most held in contempt, when His law is most despised, then should our zeal be the warmest and our courage and firmness the most unflinching. To stand in defense of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few—this will be our test. At this time we must gather warmth from the coldness of others, courage from their cowardice and loyalty from their treason.” The apathy of others should heighten our resolve to be right with God and diligent about our Christian calling and duty. More and more, we hear the unfortunate stories of former church members whose light has gone out. They have been sorely discouraged and derailed and have left their faith and calling behind in order to fully engage in the pleasures of this world.

Scripture reminds us about the enduring faithfulness of Moses. Moses gained strength and spiritual stamina through faith. The word faith comes from the Greek word, *pistis*. It denotes trust and confidence. When you trust God, come what may. When you have confidence in God, despite your challenging surroundings, you are empowered to surge forward by grace. You obtain courage from the cowardice of others. You become battle-tested.

God is seeking minutemen and women of the hour in these last days of earth’s history. He is counting on us. Can we be counted on?

By Carlos Craig, President



Adventist Education

Working Together to Provide a Peaceful Future

ALVARADO, TEX. – “It takes a village” is a common expression to describe when people come together for a common goal. It perfectly describes Adventist education. When families, churches and schools work together to provide an incredible education for young people, it is more than just reading, writing and arithmetic they are learning.

“There are good people everywhere and schools with great educational opportunities,” says John Hopps, Texas Conference Education Superintendent. “Adventist education provides the combination of both along with a family fellowship like none other.”

It has been fun to see that connection for my own family as my son in college attends class with a former elementary classmates from 3,000 miles away.

People notice the difference as well. Recently, Burton Adventist Academy received an email through their community feedback forum. A gentleman watched as Burton students, in their athletic uniforms, cleaned up a mess made by someone else before they left the food establishment. What an impression they made by their simple act of kindness.

Helping others is not usually in core instruction, but is part of the Bible-based curriculum experienced at an Adventist school. Stephan Gray, North Dallas Adventist Academy Director of Student Services and International Student Program, traveled this past spring with students to Santa Elena, Belize, for a mission trip. “While we came to construct a building, God had us come so that He could construct renewed

relationships with Him,” Gray reflected. It is those relationships that set Adventist education apart from other schools: a comradery to excel in our individual areas while paving a way for a peaceful future. A peace that only comes from a true relationship with Jesus Christ. A relationship that Barna studies show impacts the rest of our lives.

In today’s society, how can we not give the best education possible to our young people? One that values life as much, if not more so, than educational status. No one said it would be easy. Most things in life usually are not. But, if we work as a village to surround our young people, we will have done our part to secure their peaceful future for eternity.

By *Tamara Michalenko Terry*
Associate Communication Director



ForeverONE

Couples Affirm Marriages During Retreat

CORPUS CHRISTI – It is easy to get busy with life. With work, children and church responsibilities, relationship time can take a back seat to everything else. Couples miss spending time with each other, but there never seems to be a good time to talk about it. The reality is that a thriving marriage needs time to nurture and protect that relationship.

Marriage retreats offer dedicated time for couples. The ForeverONE marriage retreat offers a Bible-based practical approach while giving tips to improve communication.

At the end of April, couples enjoyed a vow renewal ceremony and new start reception during the ForeverONE marriage retreat held in Corpus Christi. Held every other year, we encourage you to make plans to join us for the next retreat in 2020. Visit BeForeverOne.org for ways to keep your marriage thriving. The web site has resources, articles, a counselors' directory, pictures of events, retreat news, and upcoming events.

— By *Ruber Leal, Family Ministries and Associate Ministerial Director*

Photo by Laura Yanez



Storm Blessing

Community Service Leads to Baptism

HOUSTON – When Hurricane Harvey hit the Houston area last summer, members of the Houston Spanish Little York Seventh-day Adventist Church surveyed their community to see who could use help.

One community resident in need was Francisco “Fran” Serrano (bottom right). With house damage from two previous storms already, Fran had been living in his home for a year and half without running water and had created a makeshift shower in his backyard. In the weeks that followed, Little York church members removed damaged

walls, replaced insulation and added drywall. “They even moved some walls to give me more space,” Fran shared, excited about the changes. Most importantly, they gave him running water.

Fran was so impressed with the willingness of service from the members without asking anything in return that he started asking the members what they believed while they were working. Touched by the message, Fran decided to join the Little York church family.

Marshall Gonzales, Texas Conference Adventist Community Services

Director, was invited to speak for Fran’s baptism service on December 9, 2017. Fran’s family came to witness this special occasion.

“We are trying to be the hands and feet of Jesus,” shared Saul Flores, Little York Spanish church pastor. Church members continue to service hundreds of people still recovering from the storm. After all, that is what Adventist Community Service is all about.

— By *Julie Gonzales, Adventist Community Services Assistant Director*

Photos by Tamara Terry



Outreach and Mission

Denton First Church Collaborates to Provide Health Fair

DENTON— More than 100 individuals attended a health fair at the Denton First Seventh-day Adventist Church this past September. Community volunteers offered health screenings, a blood drive, wellness evaluations, flu shots, Better Living tips and more.

“Before the health fair, I had not heard of the Seventh-day Adventist Church nor had I seen it as a strong community presence in Denton County,” one Texas Health Resources nurse stated. She was providing flu shots for anyone attending the health fair. “I am very pleased to see how the church brought together not only health and wellness, but also community groups to help families, homeless communities and serve as advocates for children and women in the community. This is amazing.”

While the community is fast becoming aware of how Denton First church is collaborating, participating and organizing projects alongside local community groups who advocate for individuals and families that need help, the urgency for service and mission comes within the church membership. “Once the needs of our neighbors are addressed, they can more readily receive the Gospel of Jesus Christ,” Derek Lazarus, Denton First church pastor shared. Service to others has fueled the church community into community mission, a goal Lazarus has been actively working on. For anyone attending the health fair, this statement was witnessed by the awareness of individuals who walked through the door, visited the booths and left with information about the church, along with plenty

of material for physical and spiritual well-being.

“I had seen the sign outside announcing the health fair for weeks,” recalls Tony, Denton county resident. “I don’t know this church, so didn’t think much of it, but two weeks ago I lost my job. We just stopped in to see what it was about and now my family has received vaccinations. It’s amazing how God places this spirit of care in the hearts of others.”

“As Christians, this is what we are called to do. To help our neighbors, our brothers and sisters,” Lazarus adds. “It is an enormous privilege to engage with community groups that have the same vision of helping others. This is how we begin planting the seeds of hope, service and ministry in our community.”

By Dixie L. Rodriguez



Seeing a Need

Church Volunteers Assist Free Medical Clinic

MCKINNEY – McKinney Seventh-day Adventist Church members volunteered to help with an AMEN (Adventist Medical Evangelism Network) clinic hosted by the Dallas First Seventh-day Adventist Church this past September. Physicians, dentists and church members joined together to offer non-emergency medical and dental checkups to the public, including Hurricane Harvey evacuees.

Lauren Matewe, McKinney church health ministries leader along with other members helped with the NEWSTART station. They shared the importance

of nutrition, exercise, water, sunlight, temperance, air, rest and trust to reverse diabetes, among other health challenges.

"I was so thrilled to see members from different churches working together, making friends and networking for the cause of Christ," Matewe stated. "We all felt good being the hands and feet of our precious Savior and Lord. It reminded me of Ephesians 4:2-4: 'Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called.' This experience helped the McKinney church family be empowered and on fire for the right arm of the gospel."

Other volunteers registered participants, explained natural remedies, or provided massages. Everyone worked to provide a special day for those who attended the clinic.

By Betzy Hurst



Transforming a Tragedy

Adventurer Teacher Loses Everything to Fire

ALVARADO, TEX. – It was a busy time for Linda Schweitzer and her daughter, Kayli Yeates, as they prepared for the 2017 Keene/Fort Worth Area Camporee. A teacher for the Alvarado Seventh-day Adventist Church Adventurer Club, Schweitzer discovered a fire in her home kitchen that would ultimately destroy the entire mobile home. Once the fire was out, Schweitzer was urged to go to the camporee.

Ashley Rasmussen, club director, contacted Adventurer Area Coordinator Lisandra Lleras and let her know what

happened. Lleras shared with camporee attendees who prayed together with Schweitzer. During the entire weekend, Schweitzer says she had complete strangers offering her hugs, prayers, furniture, clothes and money. It was a wonderful experience, she remembers. Exactly what she needed. The blessings weren't over. This past July, the club presented Schweitzer with the earnings from their garage sale fundraiser. God allowed a tragedy to become a blessing in disguise.

By Bonnie Mattheus
Photo by Terrie Bayless



God's Will for Me

Learning to Walk by Faith



Last year was an emotionally bumpy ride for me. On my recently updated rollercoaster of life (now 50 percent faster with higher hills and loopier loops!), I found myself in several situations that have made me confront my understanding of living by faith. I thought I knew what it was, but like many concepts in life, you really don't understand something until you've experienced it.

This may not come as a surprise to you, but it is one thing to read about God's will and another thing to actually live according to His will. It's an all too common struggle: I can read about God's amazing power and love and say that I believe in Him, but do my actions reflect my speech? I can study His counsel for my life, but when it comes to actually applying them, do I really trust Him?

This is where living by faith comes in. There's no question that faith is important. Hebrews 11:6 reminds us: "Without faith it is impossible to please Him." That's pretty blunt. I can do many wonderful things but if I do not have faith I am not pleasing God. An earlier passage in Hebrews actually takes this idea up a notch. "But my righteous one will live by faith. And I take no pleasure in the one who shrinks back," (Hebrews 10:38). God's people will not only believe—not only have faith—they will *live* by this faith (see also Habakkuk 2:4).

Faith, at its core, is dependency. This is what living by faith looked like in Paul's life: "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me," (Galatians 2:20). Living by faith was giving up control of his life; Jesus was making the decisions instead. In order to live by faith, he had to become *completely* dependent on Jesus. It's not just about being familiar with His will but being obedient to His will.

Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:7 that "we walk by faith, not by sight." Walking by faith requires obedience to God's will, even when you cannot see. We can trust Him and obey because we know that although we cannot see, God can. So, when God says start walking, we start walking. When God says stop, we stop. When God wants us to follow where He's leading, we don't question His wisdom; we obey. It does not guarantee us an easy life, it only guarantees that in the end we will be where God wants us to be. This is where the struggle is the strongest: following God's will is giving up the final say in our life; it is changing our dependence from us to God.

I have learned that this is what it is to live by faith: holding on to Jesus and letting Him do the walking. So, I no longer want to live life trusting in my understanding and choices, but fully trusting in Jesus' leading. I must become fully dependent on Jesus—depending on Him for correction and for direction. I'm not suggesting this is an easy thing to do. Giving up my will for God's will is against my nature, but I'm finding that when I trust God in the little things, it is easier to trust Him with the bigger things.



By Bill Kasper, Ministerial Director

Native American Ministry

Leveraging the Past to Serve the Future

CROWNPOINT, N.M. – Amidst the windswept mesas and stunning rock formations of the Navajo Nation a very special group of people gathered for a Spirit-filled weekend and a celebration of God’s work for the Diné people. For the first time in the history of La Vida Mission a special weekend that combined an alumni homecoming, camp meeting and a health expo was hosted by the Mission. The Texico Conference joined with the La Vida Mission staff to help celebrate the ministry of the school and to mark the beginning of a new community outreach to the people who live near the new Crownpoint Seventh-day Adventist Company. Lee-Roy Chacon, Texico Conference president; Phil Robertson, Texico Conference executive secretary and treasurer; and Dr. Robert Gardner, health ministries director, joined with Yepsica Moreno, the Crownpoint pastor, to partner with La Vida Mission to expand the ministry impact of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to this very important people.

The work of the Church among the people of the Navajo Nation spans more than a century and is the legacy of many missionary-hearted members throughout the years. Several long-standing ministries are dedicated solely to sharing the gospel of Jesus with the Diné people through education and health-related outreach. One of these

ministries is La Vida Mission which has long been serving the southeastern portion of this 27,000-square mile mission field that actually spans four conferences and three unions in the North American Division.

Since 1961, La Vida Mission Academy has been known as “a Safe Haven for Navajo Children” as the various teachers, medical, and administrative staff have tirelessly served this unique mission field. And on this special weekend, former students shared inspiring testimonies of how they lived with dorm parents when they were as young as four years of age on through their graduation from the eighth grade. Stories were told of how their parents brought them to the Mission to get an education and to have regular meals and a safe place to live. Some of the students have gone on to Sandia View Academy and even to Southwestern Adventist University after their education at La Vida.

The Texico Conference has sponsored various efforts to plant and support church groups among the Diné for more than 100 years yet the development of local leadership has been only marginally successful. However, for the past three years or so we have been focusing on the city of Crownpoint, where a small group that was initially supported by the La Vida Mission staff had been meeting for several years. We have been blessed by

the ministry of Pastor Yepsica Moreno and the addition of a larger worship facility, and currently the Crownpoint company is growing in membership and ministry participation.

The plans to expand the impact of service are focused on very unique needs. Lifestyle challenges have long kept folks in a seemingly overwhelming combination of drug and alcohol addiction and poor nutrition that has resulted in diabetes rates that are 400 percent of the national average. This reality is further impacted by domestic violence and unemployment rates that reach as high as 50 percent in some areas of the reservation.

During the summer of 2018, the Texico Conference, through special funding from the NAD and the Southwestern Union, will host a special Community Festival in Crownpoint that will include food, music, health screenings and presentations about good nutrition and the importance of family support for positive steps to greater happiness. The goal is to serve the community with the compassion of the Gospel and to create connections with people for ongoing support of lifestyle change and spiritual nurture. Join us in praying for a special outpouring of God’s Spirit on this outreach event.

By Phil Robertson
Executive Secretary/Treasurer



Preaching Convocation

Churches Encourage Kids to Preach

ALBUQUERQUE – Every spring there is an event that children and adolescents from the Texico Conference highly anticipate. The Gran Convocatoria Infantil “Prediquemos” is a yearly event that gives children ages 4-16 the opportunity to develop a passion to preach.

In its fourth year, this year’s convocation took place on April 28, 2018 at the Albuquerque North Valley Spanish Seventh-day Adventist Church and was based on heroes from the Old Testament. This year, the participation by children and youth doubled with 40 participants from several Spanish churches in the Albuquerque and Santa Fe areas. Some even came from as far as Pagosa Springs, Colo.

Each participant was given five minutes to present their topic in Spanish

and was judged on several criteria including use of voice, body language, contact with the audience, knowledge of the topic, and conclusion.

A combination of members, pastors, and staff from the Texico Conference served as judges. They did an excellent job in motivating and encouraging the participants by giving them positive feedback and comments. One of the judges was Nelva Chacon from the Texico Conference who said, “It was great to see all the churches working together for the benefit of the children. The judges felt it was important to affirm each participant so that they will want to continue preaching.”

At the end, each participant was recognized with a special gift from the Texico Conference. Overall, organizers

were grateful for the support of those who attended and participated. They hope this event will continue to grow and be a blessing to participants and attendees.

By Julio Rueda



Young Adults in Texico

New Director Looks to Expand Ministry

ALBUQUERQUE – Exciting things are happening in the Texico Conference Young Adult Ministries Department. Since becoming the Young Adult Director in January 2018, Andre Arrais was surprised to hear that many young adults throughout the Texico Conference did not know that there was a ministry geared toward the 18-35 age group. Since then, Arrais has visited different regions throughout Texico to bring awareness of the ministry and is creating a network of young adult leaders from both English and Spanish churches.

With the help of many of these leaders, the Texico Young Adult Ministries presented a special Sabbath afternoon worship service on April 7, 2018. Nearly 100 young adults from the Albuquerque and Santa Fe areas attended the service and exceeded Arrais' expectations.

"The fact that a significant number of young adults from both English and Hispanic churches attended this event speaks volumes of the potential we have as a ministry if we are willing to work together," said Arrais.

In addition to this event, the young adults participated in their own program during the Texico Camp Meeting in June which included music, activities and powerful messages from guest speaker Tiago Arrais.

"Our goal was not to simply fill a gap. We wanted to offer something meaningful to our young adults," said Arrais. "I believe we accomplished this during this weekend. I truly believe that those who attended our program will definitely be looking forward to the next year."

- By *Debbie Márquez*, Communication Director



Winning Souls for Christ

18 Baptized in El Paso Spanish Meetings

EL PASO – In April, Javier Grijalva wrapped up a series of evangelistic meetings in the El Paso Montana Lee, El Paso Montana Vista, and El Paso West Spanish Seventh-day Adventist Churches and one in an unlikely venue. "We have a new group that has started to meet in Tornillo, Tex." said Grijalva. "The town is not very big, so we had no choice but to meet in their largest venue, a nightclub."

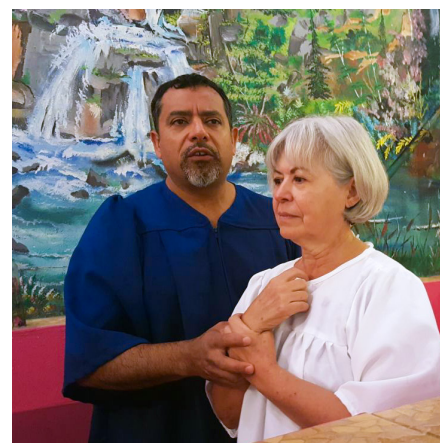
Evangelistic meetings have been held in non-traditional venues before and attendees were focused on the Christ-centered messages. "We were thrilled that

of the 18 baptisms, seven were from the meetings in Tornillo" said Grijalva.

More than 35 visitors attended the meetings presented by University of Montemorelos theology students Angel Morin, Johnnton Joseph, and Andres Ortega, along with their professor Omar Velasquez.

"We are very happy for the work that God allowed us to do in His name," said Grijalva. "We believe that this is only the beginning and God has many more blessings in store for the El Paso area."

- By *Debbie Marquez*, Communication Director



Albuquerque Central Church

Cultivating the Good News and Health

ALBUQUERQUE – The Albuquerque Central Seventh-day Adventist Church recently launched an initiative to improve the health of its members and the community. As its first step, the church began incorporating positive messages about eating healthier during the children’s story time.

Younger members have been learning the advantages of choosing colorful and healthy fruits, vegetables and nuts, rather than choosing fun-looking but unhealthy packaged snacks and treats. Some story presenters have provided

samples of healthy items like juicy red apples.

In addition to encouraging children to eat nutritious foods, several members volunteered to start a new community garden. Groundbreaking on the garden began in the winter of 2017, and crops began to flourish behind the church this past summer.

The goal of the community garden ministry is to grow and distribute produce to feed the less fortunate in the surrounding community year-round. The garden will minister to tummies,

hearts, minds, and souls. It is hoped that the new garden will be a door for members of the community to find hope accompanied by physical and emotional strength.

Along with providing produce grown at the church, garden volunteers will also be providing God’s word in the form of Bibles and other church literature.

— By Janet Van Why



Gardner Joins Conference

Texico Welcomes New Health Ministries Coordinator

ALBUQUERQUE – It is with great pleasure that we introduce and welcome Robert Gardner, M.D., as the new health ministries coordinator of the Texico Conference. Gardner is a graduate of Wayne State University School of Medicine and has specialized in internal medicine for 35 years. He is currently a member of the Rio Rancho Seventh-day Adventist Church and is a champion for promoting a healthy lifestyle and spiritual life, which is central to the Adventist health message.

“Health ministries is a vital part of the mission of the Adventist Church and we

are grateful and excited that God has led Gardner to the Texico Conference. We look forward to having him on our departmental team and working with him in the area of health and temperance,” said Texico Conference President Lee-Roy Chacon. As health ministries coordinator, Gardner will be assisting in planning conference-wide health and temperance trainings, promote health events for the community, and will help support local church health ministry directors throughout the Texico Conference.

- By Debbie Marquez, Communication Director



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Announcements

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Obituaries

Bates, Harold "Boze", born June 8, 1927, Akron, Ohio; died May 7, 2018. Church membership: Bonnerdale Seventh-day Adventist Church. He was preceded in death by his parents, William George Bates and Dorothy Lucille Weibel Bates; two brothers, Willis Daniel Bates and Ohio C. Bates; and one sister, Evelyn Marjorie Bates. Survivors: wife, June Bates of Bismarck; daughter, Mai Le Gallop of Mansfield, Tex.

Broussard, Ruth, born May 20, 1955; died Dec. 21, 2017, Los Angeles, Chili. Church membership: Lake Charles Seventh-day Adventist

Church. Survivors: mother, Ruth Bustamante; sisters, Georgina Robertson, Marta Fitzgibbons, Maria Robertson; brothers, Mario Robertson, Rafael Robertson, Eduardo Robertson, Haroldo Robertson, Jose Robertson and Jaime Robertson.

Davenport, Dr. Glenn, born March 15, 1917, Ringgold County, Iowa; died Dec. 6, 2017, Centerville, Ohio. Church membership: Kettering Seventh-day Adventist Church. Preceded in death by his wife, Bonita (Cozad) Davenport; daughter, Veryl (Davenport) Kelley. Survivors: granddaughter, Kim Lunde (Eric); grandson, David M. Kelley; four great-grandchildren.

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Davis, John James, born April 23, 1992, Shreveport, La.; died April 4, 2018, Clinton, La. Church membership: Baton Rouge Berean Seventh-day Adventist Church. Preceded in death by his mother, Carolyn Smith Davis; brother, Keith Ross. Survivors: father, James Earl (Jimmy) Davis, of Clinton; grandmother, Mattie Smith, of Clinton.

Denman, Jeffrey Lionel, born Feb. 8, 1965, Baton Rouge, La.; died May 17, 2018, Baton Rouge, La. Church membership: Berean Seventh-day Adventist Church. He was preceded in death by his mother, Joyce Marie Denman. Survivors: father, James Denman, Jr.; sister, Pamela Denman-Craig, of Zachary, La.; brother, Mark Terrell Denman (Sharon Richards) of Nashville, Tenn.

Dickinson, Jim, born July 27, 1934; died March 24, 2018. Church membership: Fort Smith Seventh-day Adventist Church. Survivors: wife, Lynn; sister, Barbara Carlson; four children; six grandchildren.

McDonald, Mary Elizabeth (Baskin), born Dec. 31, 1928, San Antonio, Tex.; died April 23, 2018, Monroe, La. Church membership: Westlakes Seventh-day Adventist Church. She was preceded in death by her husband, Baxter McDonald, Jr. and son Gene McDonald. Survivors: sons, Todd McDonald, Sr. (Frances) and Michael McDonald; five grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren.

Owens, Margaret, born August 26, 1951; died Feb. 27, 2018,

Lake Charles, La. Survivors: husband, Douglas Owens, of Lake Charles; daughter, Marla Van Meter, of Houston, Tex.; son, Michael Owens, of Lake Charles; sisters Earline Savoy of Lafayette, La., and Hilda Faulk, of Lake Charles; brother, Alex Butler of Hemphill, Tex.; three grandchildren.

Peters, Marjory Effiemay, born Oct. 20, 1926, Holland, Ohio; died April 18, 2018, Harrah, Okla. Preceded in death by her parents, Harry and Eva Reed, and her husband. Survivors: sons, Tim, Robin, Ricky, and Jeff; brothers, Ivan Lewis and Harry Lewis; five sisters; eight grandchildren.

Pressley, Irene, born Aug. 16, 1927, Natchez, Miss.; died Dec. 16, 2017, Lake Charles,

La. Survivors: daughter, Pamela Noble (John), of Lake Charles, La.; son, Albert F. O'Malley III (Charlene), of Lake Charles; brother, Henry Wooten, of Texas; half-brother, Bob Bazat (Frances); three grandchildren; two great-grandchildren.

Sauls, Wanda Betty Sue, born November 20, 1943; died March 18, 2018, Magnolia, Ark. Church membership: Magnolia Seventh-day Adventist Church. Preceded in death by her parents. Survivors: daughter, Sandra Holmes, of Waterford, Mich.

Smith, Donald G., born Nov. 2, 1925, Concrete, Colo.; died May 10, 2018, Florence, Colo. Church membership: Canyon City Seventh-day Adventist Church. Preceded in death

by his parents; daughter, Barbara Barnard; brother, Bill Smith; granddaughter Heidi Baer. Survivors: wife, Wildeana; daughters, Donna (Will) Feltman and Linda (Ron) McLean; seven grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren.

Thomas, Maxwell Luther, born July 25, 1922, North Bend, Wash.; died March 3, 2018, Amarillo, Tex. Church membership: Tulia Seventh-day Adventist Church. Preceded in death by his father, mother, wife, three sisters and an infant child. Survivors: daughter, Marynel Tibbles, of Wayside, Tex.; son, Nathan Lowell Thomas, of Amarillo, Tex.; one granddaughter.

Tilley, Blake Ryan, born Nov. 10, 1987, Baton Rouge, La.; died April 10, 2018,

Jackson, Miss. Church membership: Baton Rouge Faith Seventh-day Adventist Church. Preceded in death by his maternal grandparents, Louis and Minnie Keller; paternal grandparents Sylvester and Doretha J. Tilley; aunts, Joann T. Morgan and Alice R. Seales. Survivors: father, Sylvester Tilley, Jr.; mother, Janice Keller Tilley, of Baton Rouge; sister, Jessica Tilley Wright (Damien "Mond"), of Baton Rouge.

Vigner, George Martin, born April 16, 1948, Walla Walla, Wash.; died May 8, 2018. Survivors: wife, Thelma; daughter, Camelia Winkler (Troy), of Harrah, Okla.; two grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; brother, Arthur (Carlene) of Jones, Okla.

Wilson, Herman Bernard, born March 27, 1929; died May 3, 2018, West Monroe, La. Church membership: Westlakes Seventh-day Adventist Church. Survivors: wife, Dorothy T. Wilson; daughters, Terry Robinson (Orie), Debbie Annis, Robin Bernard (Mike), Pam Spencer (Pat); sons, Mickey Wilson and Roger B. Wilson (Rita); 11 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren.

Correction:

In the May/June issue of the *Record*, the article "New President" on page 18 should have said "executive committee session" rather than "special constituency session."

Submissions

Back Pages: To submit family milestones, obituaries, announcements or address changes, visit SouthwesternAdventist.org/Communication or call 817.295.0476.

The *Record* also accepts expanded obituaries. For submission and cost information, contact Record@SWUC.org or call 817.295.0476.

News and Articles: Send your local church news and high-resolution photos to your local conference communication representative listed on page 2.

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Advertising: Contact Bradley Ecord at BEcord@swuc.org or 817.295.0476

Sabbath Sunset Calendar

July-August 2018

	7/6	7/13	7/20	7/27	8/3	8/10	8/17	8/24	8/31
Abilene	8:50	8:48	8:45	8:41	8:36	8:30	8:22	8:14	8:06
Albuquerque	8:24	8:22	8:19	8:14	8:09	8:02	7:54	7:45	7:36
Amarillo	9:05	9:03	9:00	8:55	8:50	8:43	8:35	8:26	8:17
Brownsville	8:26	8:25	8:23	8:20	8:16	8:11	8:05	7:58	7:51
Dallas	8:39	8:37	8:34	8:30	8:25	8:18	8:11	8:03	7:54
El Paso	8:15	8:14	8:11	8:07	8:02	7:55	7:48	7:41	7:32
Fort Worth	8:41	8:39	8:36	8:32	8:27	8:20	8:13	8:05	7:57
Gallup	8:34	8:32	8:28	8:24	8:18	8:11	8:03	7:54	7:45
Gentry	8:39	8:37	8:33	8:28	8:22	8:15	8:07	7:58	7:49
Houston	8:26	8:25	8:22	8:18	8:14	8:08	8:01	7:54	7:46
Little Rock	8:26	8:24	8:21	8:16	8:11	8:04	7:56	7:48	7:38
Muskogee	8:41	8:39	8:35	8:31	8:25	8:18	8:10	8:01	7:51
New Orleans	8:05	8:04	8:01	7:57	7:53	7:47	7:40	7:33	7:25
Oklahoma City	8:49	8:47	8:43	8:39	8:33	8:26	8:18	8:09	8:00
Roswell	8:11	8:10	8:07	8:02	7:57	7:50	7:43	7:35	7:26
San Antonio	8:38	8:36	8:34	8:30	8:26	8:20	8:13	8:06	7:58
Shreveport	8:26	8:24	8:22	8:17	8:12	8:06	7:59	7:51	7:42
Tulsa	8:44	8:42	8:39	8:34	8:28	8:21	8:13	8:04	7:54

All 2018 Sunset Calendars are available at SouthwesternAdventist.org/sunset

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

I came so that they may **have and enjoy** life, and have it in **abundance**.

— John 10:10



Abundant Life

Adventist Health System takes a Christ-centered, whole-person approach to healthcare, serving more than 4.7 million patients each year. To do this, we look to the principles of Creation as the blueprint for helping others live an abundant life. Explore these eight principles of CREATION Health at [CreationHealth.com](https://www.adventisthealth.com).