Lejla’s Story
Adapted by Esther Jones from a story in the book Operation Christmas Child by Franklin Graham and Donna Toney

Born to impoverished parents, Lejla was just twelve years old when she received her first gift and heard about Jesus for the first time. If any American city had experienced a December snowfall of five feet, no school would have been open. But on that frosty morning in Bosnia, Lejla’s mother woke her, had her dress, and put on old pair of shoes on her feet. The toes of the shoes were ripped open. Her father had tried to close them up with steel wire but the leather was so rotten it wouldn’t hold together. Lejla’s mother wrapped her feet in bags and sent her out into the arctic chill.

Lejla may have been walking toward the school five miles away, but she had no intention of showing up there. She was on the brink of giving up. To prove it, she purposely detoured into a landmine field where just the day before her best friend had been killed and another friend had lost his leg in an explosion. Maybe if she walked through the same field she could end her miserable life. She had no reason to live. With no coat to keep her warm, maybe she would even die of the frigid temperatures, she thought. She was tired of being cold, weary of hunger pains, and afraid of the future. She knew that within two years her parents would give her away in marriage, according to tradition—it happened to all girls once they reached the eighth grade. “The horror was so real,” she said, “that I felt my soul being ripped from me.”

After forty-five minutes of wandering through the landmine field with no explosion, she headed toward Sniper Alley with the certainty it promised—100 percent guarantee of being shot to death. She slipped under the barricade and waited for a powerful boom to end her misery, but it didn’t happen.

“I found myself walking toward the school,” she said, “disappointed that I had survived Sniper Alley. As I approached, I saw some kids holding boxes, and I wondered where they had gotten them. We had nothing new; even primitive items were scarce. As I got closer, I noticed how bright and beautiful the boxes were. One of the boys said, ‘There are people inside giving these away. You can get one too.’ Why do I need a box? Lejla thought. I don’t have anything to put in it. It’s pretty, but it won’t do me any good. “When I walked inside, I saw an older gentleman sitting on the steps. He jumped up and grabbed a box from the top of the pile and headed toward me. But I didn’t want any interaction; I wanted to be left alone. I was bitter and hateful. To make matters worse, the man had a big smile on his face and gently said, ‘I want you to have this.’ I took it so he would go away quickly, but to my surprise the box was not empty. I took the box and ran as fast as I could until I found a solitary corner and slumped to the floor, cradling the box in my lap. My heart was racing and my emotions were fragile. Do I dare hope for what might be inside?”

Continued on page 3
Words Have a Face

Our words have a face. Just as the word-sounds shape in our mouths that reflect the connection to our hearts, so words have a face from which it is sent. Would you give mud-filled water to your family to drink? Would you give them poison to eat? Would you throw fire at them?

“No! Never!” we may say, but that’s exactly what we do with our words according to James 3. “And the tongue is a flame of fire. It is a whole world of wickedness, corrupting your entire body. It can set your whole life on fire, for it is set on fire by hell itself. . . . It is restless and evil, full of deadly poison.

Sometimes it praises our Lord and Father, and sometimes it curses those who have been made in the image of God. And so blessing and cursing come pouring out of the same mouth. Surely, my brothers and sisters, this is not right! Does a spring of water bubble out with both fresh water and bitter water?” (New Literal Translation, vs. 6-11)

Maybe we want to change our words to be more embracing by starting with the heart – as it is the heart of the matter. When the eyes of the heart see each other through Jesus Christ, our words, which reveal the truth in the heart, can then fully embrace each other without any bitterness or frustration. Let’s practice embracing each other with our words as it reflects our truly warm and inviting face.

Pastor Darrel le Roux

Extreme Servolution

On October 25, Dr. David Jamieson, lead pastor at the Aldergrove Adventist Church in British Columbia, Canada, spoke at Niles Westside for both services and a meeting in the afternoon about Extreme Servolution—creating a revolution in your community through extreme service and reaching your community with acts of kindness. Dr. Jamieson is also the director of the Acts of Kindness Society based out of Aldergrove, BC. See www.aldergrovesda.org for more information.

Here is some of the information that he shared with us:

1) We should serve others with no strings attached.
2) We should serve others with extreme generosity.
3) Our goal is to expand God’s kingdom, not just the church. If we will focus our attention on growing God’s kingdom, then He will see to it that His church grows.

“Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me.’” - Ellen G. White, Ministry of Healing, p. 143

5 Steps to Follow:
Socialize
Sympathize
Serve
Service (invite to a)
Salvation

An act of kindness can be heard by the deaf and seen by the blind. - Mark Twain
Leilja’s Story cont.

“After all, this is a shoe box. I looked down at my frozen feet, and then with great apprehension, lifted the lid. Inside was a pair of brand new sneakers!

For some time I sat and cried while lifting the lid and then closing it. As I drew the sneakers out of the box, my hands bumped into other things. The shoes that fit perfectly were enough, but there was more! I pulled out a twelve-pack of pencils. My entire class of fifty-eight students had been sharing a nub of one pencil all year long, and now I had twelve of my very own! A notebook was there to replace the one I had used for three years, with hardly scribble space left. Then I discovered erasers that smelled like strawberries—the first smell of anything pleasant that I could remember. We had grown accustomed to the smell of gun powder and decaying bodies. I found a tube of toothpaste, then opened and tasted it. The flavor was so delicious that I nearly ate it all. Energized by the thrill, I gathered my new belongings and ran home as fast as I could.

My mother was stunned when I came through the door and inquired where I had gotten all of my treasures. ‘A man gave them to me and said the box was from Jesus.’ I assumed there was someone in America by that name. That night, I pulled out my new pen and notebook and wrote a letter to Jesus, telling Him things I had never told anyone.

At school the next day, I found the man who had given me the box and asked him if he would take the letter to America and give it to Jesus. He explained that Jesus was God’s Son and that He came to pay the penalty for man’s sin. This was so different from what I had heard at home. He told me that Jesus is the One who died for our sins and that if I confessed my sin to Him, Jesus would forgive me and love me as His very own. The man spoke truth to me, and I had no reason to doubt him, for I already knew that Jesus had heard and answered my prayer. He was real and I knew He had mercy. I realized that God was not the god I had been taught to fear.

At first, my parents thought it was a phase that would pass, but in time, they saw my life and attitude change and that this was something that was staying with me. They threatened me and said I had to give Jesus up. When I wouldn’t give up Jesus they administered physical punishment. When that didn’t work, they were ready to take necessary steps to stop my obsession with Jesus.

I remember coming home with Bible pages that a friend had given me hidden inside my homework papers. I loved the book of Matthew and would read and study the verses. I hid the Word of God in my heart and realized that the more I talked about God, the more consequences would come from my parents. God’s protective hand spared me the horrors of an arranged marriage and teenage motherhood. Instead, I was led along a pathway He designed for me.

In Jesus’ wonderful way, He reached down from Heaven into a little girl’s frightened heart and saved me, and He used a shoe box to do this miracle in my life.”

Operation Christmas Child
by Esther Jones, OCC Area Coordinator

Sharing God’s love with hurting children is at the heart of the mission of Operation Christmas Child (OCC). The gift boxes serve as reminders to the children that there is a God who loves them and who sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to be their Savior. Millions of children and their families have become faithful followers of the Lord after receiving a box, the Gospel literature and follow-up Bible lessons.

This is our 18th year for NAS to be a Collection Center for OCC, serving the northwestern Indiana and southwestern Michigan area. We are expecting to receive as many as 30,000 shoe box gifts in our Michiana Area during the upcoming National Collection Week (November 17-24). As one of the Bible Labs for NAS, students eagerly assist with the unloading of vehicles, packing of shipping cartons, and the loading of the trailers. They also participated by packing their own boxes at a school-wide packing party on Friday, November 7. Most of the contents of these boxes were donated; however, assistance with the $7 suggested shipping fee per box is always helpful. (Please make checks payable to Operation Christmas Child and leave with the school office or give to Esther Jones.)

Through the power of a simple gift and the message of hope through Jesus Christ, children learn they are loved and not forgotten. For many children, the shoe box gift will be the first gift they have ever received, often providing necessary supplies to attend school, etc. Help us populate Heaven through participating in OCC! If you have questions or would like to help pack cartons or load semi-trailers, please contact Esther Jones (269-845-5770 or email occjester@gmail.com).

Thank you for assisting OCC in any way possible. Please remember to pray for the children who receive the gift boxes and for the thousands of volunteers around the world who help make OCC possible—helping fulfill the Great Commission of Matthew 28.
Meet Our New Member

Alison Duis & Family
by Alison Duis with Gina Meekma

Alison, Anthony, Colton (6 - first grade at Niles Adventist School), McKenna (4), and Kamdyn (3) Duis live in Niles. Anthony is from Niles, and Alison is from Berrien Springs. They met through mutual friends and have been married since 2007.

Looking for a smaller, family-friendly church, the Duis family decided to try Niles Westside since it is close to their home. Within a few weeks, they decided that they loved it and have been coming ever since. Alison was baptized at Maxwell Academy in Kenya, but came into the Niles Westside Church by Profession of Faith on September 20, 2014, due to record-keeping issues at the academy.

Anthony works for H&G Services in South Bend as a Union plumber/pipe fitter. Alison, a registered nurse, works at St. Joseph Regional Medical Center in Mishawaka in the NICU. At Niles Westside, Alison teaches Little Lambs for the Adventurers program.

The Duis family enjoys swimming and camping together.

We’re glad that you’re part of the Niles Westside Church family, Alison, Anthony, Colton, Kenna, and Kami!

The Holidays Are Coming--Need a Gift Idea?
by Tami le Roux, Director; featuring Amber Benjamin

Thanksgiving is a great time to remember why we love each other. We don’t always show our love, and sometimes even our spouses can forget that we appreciate and love them. We need to show love every day. Take this Thanksgiving time as an opportunity to hug, appreciate, help without being asked, and do random acts of kindness for your family today! And while you are doing that, plan to let at least two neighbors know that you are thankful they live near you. Spread the love!

Talking about love, the Niles Caterpillar Adventures have a great audio book for you to fall in love with. We are offering the CD audio book A Thousand Shall Fall to you for a donation of $30. We have limited quantities of this story–only 18 left! Here is what Amber Benjamin has to say about it: “I have listened to the audio book A Thousand Shall Fall and found it to be a faith building and very enjoyable story. It has shown me how God can provide and protect His people. Also, how I can trust in God to protect me even when it seems there’s no way out of a situation. The story made me laugh, cry, and I was sad when it was over.” To listen to a sample, please go to http://solemnappeal.com and search for A Thousand Shall Fall. This really is a “not to miss” opportunity to donate and get this wonderful story.

Alternatively, you can get a certificate for a dozen Krispy Kreme donuts for a $10 donation. Or how about a handmade “Thank you” card for a $5 donation?

Please consider these wonderful opportunities to support our Niles Caterpillar Adventurer Club. If you are interested in any of the items in the fundraiser, please email Tami le Roux at nwcaterpillars@gmail.com or pick up a Donation Form on the bulletin board in the church and return it to Tami le Roux or Isabel Acosta. We are praying for each of you to have a blessed Holiday Season. Remember: God is LOVE.
Pasta Fundraiser, Food Donations and New Honor Testing
by April Hughes, Deputy Director

It's not too late to purchase pasta and other food items from Fun Pasta to support the Pathfinder Club. We are raising money to purchase new tents. Fun Pasta is shaped like the holidays, sports, collegiate team logos, and more. Gluten free options, cookies, soups, chili and more are also available. The products are healthy, fun, and affordable—and make great gifts! You can still place an order online through the month of November. To place an order online, go to www.funpastafundraising.com/shop/niles-four-flags-pathfinder-club.

We are happy to report that we collected 1,584 nonperishable food items as a part of our Annual Can Food Drive! That is up from 1,015 items last year. We couldn’t have done it without you. Thanks for all of your donations and support! Some items have been donated to area families, and the rest has been given to a local food bank to assist those in need in our community. As always, it is our hope that families will be blessed and will see God’s love in action though this community service project.

The club has been given a great opportunity to pilot or test out a new honor! We will be working on the Business honor during November. This is a great opportunity for the club members to learn basic information about business, create a product, and sell it. We will be able to give feedback about what worked and what didn’t to help fine-tune the honor before it is officially approved. We are all looking forward to this new honor that has the potential to turn into a new fundraising opportunity.

Thank you again for your continued prayers and support. If you would like to pray for club members by name, a list is available through Director Janessa Howell. We are currently looking for adult volunteers that would be interested in helping us at Wednesday night meetings. If you are interested in helping or have questions, please contact Janessa at 269-240-7112 or email at niles4flagspathfinderclub@gmail.com.

Mother-Daughter Retreat
by Jenn Cook

Traditions. Every family has them. Traditions are those things that you look forward to, whether it is something each week, each month, or each year. One tradition that Anna and I began last year is attending the Michigan Conference’s Mother-Daughter retreat up at beautiful Camp Au Sable. It is such a wonderful weekend to bond together, and the Michigan Conference Women’s Ministry team always does such an amazing job putting this retreat together.

This past October 10-12, several mothers and their daughters from Niles Westside made the trip up to Camp Au Sable for the Mother-Daughter Retreat. The theme was Real Girls! Real Life! Real Faith! and the guest speakers were Dr. Jo Ann Richardson and her daughter Dr. Rahel Schafer. At the Friday evening program, Drs. Richardson and Schafer shared with us Sabbath traditions—ways their family celebrated and welcomed the Sabbath. Many of the same ideas are shared in the book, A Love Song for the Sabbath, by Richard Davidson.

Sabbath morning included worship and then a breakout session where the daughters had their own classes by age—Anna’s age group completed their Lady Bug Adventurer Award, and the older age group worked on prayer journals and beaded bookmarks, while all the moms gathered at the Observatory to share and discuss different family traditions with each other.

After Sabbath lunch (they sure do know how to feed you well up at Camp Au Sable!), there was time to enjoy nature, walk around the lake, and visit the nature center. It was such a perfect day with the crisp fall air and the changing colored leaves on the trees that Anna and I actually went around the lake twice, making sure to stop and check on the beaver dam!

Sabbath ended after dinner and vespers, and then the Saturday night activities began. We had the pleasure of having Stephanie Howard and her daughter, Anneliese, share with us a recipe from their Kidlicious cookbook, while all the moms and their daughters wore their matching aprons—a handmade gift to each of us from Women’s Ministry. Then there were more activities which included a tractor ride, kettle corn, and sessions on Pinterest and others crafts.

Sunday morning came fast with a closing session from our guest speakers as well as giveaways to some lucky moms and daughters whose names were drawn. Then came the announcement of next year’s theme, Pumpkin Patch Party, where we will learn how to study and apply God’s Word and be of service to those around...
Phyllis Shupp, Church Librarian

In October, some of our book club members enjoyed decorating tin cans to use to hold pencils and other items. Others used their creativity to make marble mazes. Our club really is “Beyond Books.” Thank you for sharing your kids with us!

We will meet once in November, on Thursday, November 6, from 3-4:30 p.m., and once in December, on Thursday, December 4.

Chili Cook-off Social: Saturday, November 15, at 6 p.m. Bring your best chili or just come vote for your favorite mild and spicy chili. Baked potatoes and toppings, corn bread, and baked goods will be for sale. Invite your friends and family for good food and a fun time!

Women’s Night Out: Thursday, November 20, at 6 p.m. at Red Robin (Mishawaka). Please RSVP to Kathy Dockerty (269-782-8567 or kadockerty@yahoo.com).

40 Days of Prayer: We are focusing on Niles Westside and its ministries, ending on Communion Sabbath, December 6. To receive daily email reminders regarding each day’s prayer focus, send your name and email address to Sue Fattic (suefattic@me.com).

Meijer Botanical Garden Winter Lights: Sabbath, December 6, leaving at 11 a.m. (after first service and SS) on the school bus (or drive yourself). See the bulletin board at church or call Denise Scroggs (574-315-0541) or Barb Harris (517-474-2434) for details and to sign up. Bring a sack lunch. We will leave the gardens at 5:15 p.m. Cost: $8 adults, $3.50 ages 3-18, and under 2 free. Fernwood Members listed on Membership Card get in free (bring card and ID). Must prepay by December 1.

Talent Night: Saturday, January 31, at 5 p.m. Please turn applications (found on the literature rack at church) to participate in the Talent Night in to Gina Meekma, Shari Lyons, or Cathy Leonor by December 20.

Welcome New Members!

Stephen & Kari Prouty from Lodi Fairmont Adventist Church, Lodi, CA
Bradley & Lori Yensho from Cicero Adventist Church, Cicero, IN

Farewell to Our Members:

Adam & Eva Keating to Houston West Adventist Church, Houston, TX
Candida Chole to Pioneer Memorial Church, Berrien Springs, MI

Our Sympathy to Terri Hebard and Family on the recent death of her father, Larry Jensen.

Children Ages 6-12 Needed for Choir: We will practice on Sabbath, November 8, right after second service, in the Youth Room, and on Sabbath, November 15, at 5:30.

Church Business Meeting: Sunday, November 9, at 6.

Singers Needed - Choir Practice: November 14, 21 and 26, at 7 p.m. We will be singing on November 29 and December 20. Please join us!

Women’s Night Out: Thursday, November 20, at 6 p.m. at Red Robin (Mishawaka). Please RSVP to Kathy Dockerty (269-782-8567 or kadockerty@yahoo.com).

40 Days of Prayer: We are focusing on Niles Westside and its ministries, ending on Communion Sabbath, December 6. To receive daily email reminders regarding each day’s prayer focus, send your name and email address to Sue Fattic (suefattic@me.com).

Meijer Botanical Garden Winter Lights: Sabbath, December 6, leaving at 11 a.m. (after first service and SS) on the school bus (or drive yourself). See the bulletin board at church or call Denise Scroggs (574-315-0541) or Barb Harris (517-474-2434) for details and to sign up. Bring a sack lunch. We will leave the gardens at 5:15 p.m. Cost: $8 adults, $3.50 ages 3-18, and under 2 free. Fernwood Members listed on Membership Card get in free (bring card and ID). Must prepay by December 1.

Talent Night: Saturday, January 31, at 5 p.m. Please turn applications (found on the literature rack at church) to participate in the Talent Night in to Gina Meekma, Shari Lyons, or Cathy Leonor by December 20.

Welcome New Members!

Stephen & Kari Prouty from Lodi Fairmont Adventist Church, Lodi, CA
Bradley & Lori Yensho from Cicero Adventist Church, Cicero, IN

Farewell to Our Members:

Adam & Eva Keating to Houston West Adventist Church, Houston, TX
Candida Chole to Pioneer Memorial Church, Berrien Springs, MI

Our Sympathy to Terri Hebard and Family on the recent death of her father, Larry Jensen.

Children Ages 6-12 Needed for Choir: We will practice on Sabbath, November 8, right after second service, in the Youth Room, and on Sabbath, November 15, at 5:30.

Church Business Meeting: Sunday, November 9, at 6.

Singers Needed - Choir Practice: November 14, 21 and 26, at 7 p.m. We will be singing on November 29 and December 20. Please join us!
Lifestyle Improvement for Teens (LIFT)

From October 5-8, seventh and eighth graders from Adventist schools around Michigan, along with their sponsors, went to Camp Au Sable for LIFT. Besides going to meetings and eating good food, they participated in breakout sessions and fun team-building activities. Here are some reflections from the NAS students who attended LIFT:

LIFT was an interesting experience. The Pastor talked about being connected to Jesus in an engaging, interesting way. I would go again. - Genna, 8th grade

I liked LIFT because it really opened my eyes to what to look forward to in high school and in future years. - Taylor, 8th grade

LIFT was a great way to become a contagious Christian and get to know Jesus more. - Isabella, 7th grade

LIFT was an inspirational, life informing retreat. It also intertwined learning and fun, which not many things do. LIFT taught me all about God and life. It was extremely fun. - John, 8th grade

LIFT was a piece of heaven. The air was clean, and the food was good. All things were good there, and that’s one reason why it’s worth emeralds. - Keren, 7th grade

LIFT was very fun, and I enjoyed it a ton. It taught me all sorts of stuff, but I most enjoyed the recreation time, when we could do anything. - Juan, 7th grade

LIFT was a good experience. We got to spend time with friends, make new ones, and get closer to God while having fun. Overall, LIFT was great. - Jalen, 7th grade

LIFT was an amazing experience because I feel like I got to learn a lot more about how to live as a better Christian, and I also got the opportunity to meet other people, which was really nice. - Nathan, 8th grade

I think LIFT was a great spiritual experience. - Jordan, 8th grade

Photos by Daphne Kent
5th Graders at Outdoor Education at Camp Au Sable

Photo by Bob Horvath

5th Graders at Outdoor Education at Camp Au Sable

NAS Calendar

Monday, November 3: Teacher In-service -
No School at NAS

Monday, November 3: Citrus Fruit Orders Due

Tuesdays, November 4 & 18: Scrip Shopping Card
Orders Due

Friday, November 7: OCC Packing Party

Tuesday, November 11: School Board, 7 p.m.

Friday, November 14: Citrus Fruit Delivery, 8 a.m.

Saturday, November 22: 4th & 5th Grades Music at
Niles Westside

Tuesday, November 25: Thanksgiving Meal and
Noon Dismissal

November 26-28: Thanksgiving Vacation

Bonfire Vespers Social

Photo by Gina Meekma

5th Graders atOutdoor Education at Camp Au Sable

Photo by Pastor Darrel le Roux

November 2014

Niles Westside News
Citrus Fruit Fundraiser

Donations & Proceeds will help the Niles Adventist School.

Ruby Red Grapefruit  $32 p/case  $16 half
Florida Navels    $35 p/case  $17.50 half
Tangerines        $25 half
Mandarins         $8/bag
Minneola          $50 p/case  $25 half
“Honeybells” - PREORDER for January Delivery
Variety Pack      $28 half

Variety pack contains 32-34 pieces: Bottom layer 16-20 navels; Top layer 6 grapefruit and 10 tangerines.

ORDER DUE DATES

Dec 1  Ruby Red Grapefruit, Florida Navels, Mandarins, Tangerines, Variety, Minneola “Honeybells” (Preorder for January delivery)

Jan 5  Ruby Red Grapefruit, Florida Navels, Minneola “Honeybells,” Mandarins, Variety (includes 8 Honeybells instead of Tangerines)

Feb 9  Ruby Red Grapefruit, California Navels, Tangerines, Temple Oranges, Mandarins

Mar 16 If enough orders: Ruby Red Grapefruit, California Navels, Tangerines, Florida Spring Orange, Mandarins

*** Pick up dates are usually 10-14 days after order due date, at NAS. ***

To place your order, please contact Gina Meekma (secretary@nilesadventistschool.org, 269-683-5444 or 269-845-8870). Or order online at www.goldenharvestsales.com, Account #7018.

November 2014

Niles Westside News

9

Lucilo Acosta  1  Donald Wheeler  14
Laura Robbins  2  Ronald Wheeler
Amber Benjamin  2  Lori Yensho
Ramona Bibi    3  Douglas Hawley  15
Kimberly Cruz  4  Alicia Cook  17
Gavin Irwin    5  William Dudgeon
Mary Patrick   6  David Peshka
Eva Prouty     4  Lesa Ashton  18
Alicia Franklin  5  Noah Chung
Karim Hill     8  Joseph Kidder
Lavonne Hirsch  9  Tiffany Howell  20
Victor Zindoga 6  Steven Warren
Aniya Emetu    10  Connor Robertson 21
Paul Eger      8  Matthew Rosenhagen
Vincent Hermenitt 11  Corey Ellis  22
Nevaeh Hippler  9  Kathy Dockerty  23
Dustin Wood    9  Frilancy Makungu
Ronald Benjamin 10  Gregory Barney 24
Travis Boykins 11  Tristan Pulsifer
Sue Rose       11  Ryleigh Snow
Abel Chole     10  Jan Carlson  25
Sandra Siebold 12  Sharon Liu
Sylvia Stiles  11  Dan Minter
Dawn Kingman   12  Grace Singer
Melanie Taylor 11  Michal Dowell  26
Marilyn Wood    12  Marcelino Medina
Michael Gonzales 13  Keren Acosta  27
Genevieve Prouty 13  John Jann
Alexander Horvath 13  Thomas Thompson 28
Lauren Horvath  13  Leon Zappia
Matthew Horvath 14  Hevanna Hippler 29
David Dulemba  14  Steve Carlsen 30

O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good.

PSALM 136:1, KJV

November Birthday