

Lake Union HERALD

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2019



"GOD WON'T LOVE YOU LESS"
OVERCOMING MENTAL ILLNESS STIGMA

ILLINOIS MEMBERS
ILLINOIS FOCUS
INSIDE

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...

Several pastors taped a segment on “3ABN Today,” promoting the Lake Union Prayer Conference, scheduled for March 6–7 in Plainfield, Ind.



...

The Lake Union Conference Education Department hosted a day for administrators and teachers to review what is currently happening with Creation Life’s school-wide health initiatives and STEM education in LUC schools.



...

Seniors fêted at Camp Au Sable. “We just want to thank you,” Ken Micheff, Camp Au Sable director, told those who attended the Golden Years Retreat held September 8–12, expressing gratitude for all they have done over the years for the Adventist Church.



...

Rebekah Helsius was featured on the cover of Adventist Journey magazine. Helsius designed and painted the entrance for the Wisconsin Conference campsite, as well as the Lake Union lighthouse display at the 2019 Chosen International Pathfinder Camporee.

Let's Stay in Touch!



As a follow up to the upcoming General Conference Session, an invitation is extended to young people willing to dedicate their life to One Year in Mission.

vimeo.com/lakeunionherald

New videos added on a regular basis



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’Tis the season! It is the best of times; it is the worst of times. The holidays are like that for many in our community. We have some stories of celebration and encouragement, and some of tragic loss — one of which, the Brad Bolejack story starting on p. 14, is very personal to me. I was inspired by what God was doing in his life and interviewed him for an article about his ministry in the August 2005 *Lake Union Herald*, page 19, lakeunionherald.org Archives.

So, we have included some articles with counsel on how to process and cope with the best of times and the worst of times. We pray that you will find something in this issue which will be of encouragement to you and draw you closer to the God of all comfort, hope, joy and peace (see 2 Corinthians 1:3; Romans 15:13).

Gary Burns
Editor



Courtesy/Jen Bolejack

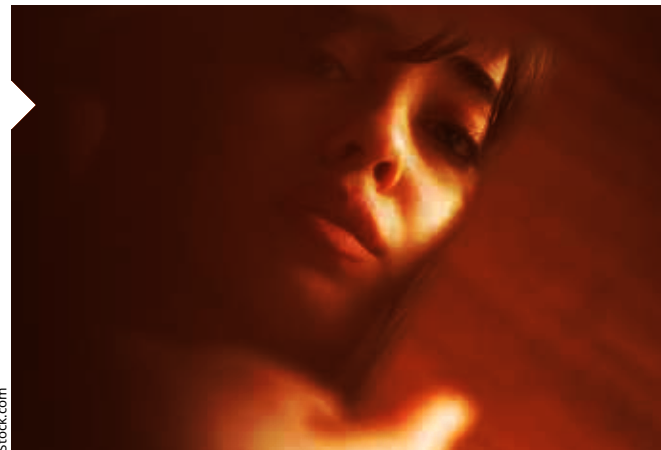
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By Esther Green



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COVER PHOTO: D’MITRI CASTRO

ON THE COVER: Brad Bolejack’s widow, Jen, photographed in Celebration, Fla.

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Enlarging Our Territory

Ten, nine, eight, seven, six . . . I still remember hearing the mind-riveting countdown echoing across Cape Canaveral with earnest expectation of liftoff on our family's TV. Who could forget the sound of air seemingly being torn like paper as that spacecraft vaulted through the heavens?



▲ Maurice Valentine

As we commemorate the celebration of the lunar launch and landing 50 years ago, which impressively ripped open the skies puncturing the heavens above in a manner never done since Jesus ascended to heaven, we, the Seventh-day Adventist Church some 150 years ago, like the Apollo rocket but with the might and speed of angels, encircled the globe with angelic winged messages that break every societal norm assuring mankind that grace abounds and heralds a touchdown for which we all long — the return of Jesus.

CONFERENCE ON MISSION

Recently, Sharon, my wonderful wife of 34 years, and I were at a three-day AdventHealth event called "Conference on Mission." That Sabbath, as we were leaving the worship service, Sharon stopped to ask a young lady how she became a Seventh-day Adventist. She replied, "Actually, I'm not." What she stated next reminded me of the blessing of our connectedness as a church family. She remarked with a smile, "But now that I see how close you all are, I'm considering becoming a Seventh-day Adventist. You all are like a big family!"

She is an employee of AdventHealth (the new name of the former Adventist Health System) and was attending the meetings in place of her boss who was on a mission trip. What a blessing that she observed our "community" as people were present from many states, most of which are east of the Rockies.

I've heard similar statements mentioned by others, such as, "In our denomination, we rarely interact with other churches right down the street. We might get together once or twice a year for a concert, maybe."

Thank God our pioneers recognized in our infancy that the fuel that would jettison these outstanding messages of the Three Angels to the farthest parts of the world required a global vision. That's why the mission story and offering were regular staples of the Sabbath School society.

The phrase, *enlarge my territory*, taken from the prayer of Jabez (1 Chronicles 4:10), is a truism for the Lake Union Conference. Our territory has been enlarged, not geographically but relationally with the broader Adventist faith community. In the last year, we were privileged to host the Seventh-day Adventist World Church on many occasions. The events range from three national level Treasury and Trust training events, a division-wide teachers convention, the Pathfinder Bible Experience — with participants from faraway lands and, of course, the International Pathfinder Camporee at Oshkosh, an event that has grown so big that the Lake Union Conference is no longer identified as its sponsoring organization.

INTERNATIONAL PATHFINDER CAMPOREE

While at Oshkosh, I was privileged to baptize a young man, who, just after changing back into his regular clothes, looked up toward the sky with an absolute

sense of amazement. Observing his face, I saw it lit up with a sense of awe one rarely sees. Not sure what he was looking at, I turned and saw the Pathfinder scarf blowing gently in the breeze. The scarf was held up by two cranes and visible from the adjacent highway. As I was turning, he exclaimed, "Wow, do you see that?!" A generous donor was kind enough to purchase the mammoth scarf which holds the Guinness world record for its size, spanning 100 feet tall by 300 feet wide.

Again, he smiled more broadly as he opened the thoughtfully prepared baptismal bag of gifts which contained a Pathfinder pin, a beautiful color baptismal certificate and a green Bible, causing the 17-year-old newly baptized member to say with delight, "Green's my favorite color." I felt honored to sign his beautifully designed color baptismal certificate.

To date, the total baptism count was in excess of 1,300 young people. As I write this editorial, the young people who were baptized are being contacted by our Youth director, Ron Whitehead, and his team which led the 55,000-attendee event representing 105 countries. By faith, the baptismal planners planned for 1,000 souls. They had to scurry to find enough gifts for the 300-plus more youth and young adults that chose to give their hearts to Jesus. Speaking with Pastor Ron, he stated, "Oshkosh is really a big evangelistic meeting!"

Evangelistic meetings require much planning. Thank God, once again, for Pastor Ron's team who planned and executed the largest baptism in the Lake Union and North American Division's history. As I visited several local businesses, both near and as far as 20 miles away, it was clear the event itself generated an interest in the surrounding community as to who we were. Moreover, we left knowing we had served the community as the Lake Union Adventist Community Health Initiative (dental/medical) event also worked in tandem with the main event, seeing to the needs of roughly 50 people. Special thanks are in order to Dr. Randy and Kathy Griffin and their team of volunteers for their ardent support of this major undertaking. Many other Lake Union Conference employees played key roles in the execution of this event too numerous to enumerate here. Thank God for a great team we have here in this office.

Moreover, many from within our union and from other union conferences worked arduously to see the youth and young adults evangelized truly encircling the globe.

Several biblically based, story-telling theaters I've attended that showcase period accurate costuming, live animals, and well-written and well-executed plays do not surpass the efforts of Ron's wife, Betty Whitehead, and her team. Biblical story theaters often display their stories many times, sometimes daily, not contending with having only one time to get it right. The actors at "Chosen" were committed Christian young (and young-at-heart) people who were happy to be used of the Lord. It was amazing to see that, although they had only one time to present, they knew their lines very well and acted on the level of professionals, not missing a single cue or beat.

Maybe the greatest unsung heroes are the Pathfinder leaders who organized, raised funds, gave up their vacations, drove or flew hundreds or thousands of miles, and keep the clubs going year in and year out. What a precious sacrifice they give to the Advent movement and, moreover, to building the Kingdom of Christ, rooting and grounding the next generation in the service of their Lord and Savior for years to come.

Because of our connectedness, we so often under-appreciate all the factors — from training educators and treasurers to a world-wide camporee, big and small — that work together to enlarge our territory and advance God's Kingdom. I'm glad to be a part of our global family!

Remember that young lady who is considering joining our church? Would you please pray for her and all those who are carefully listening to the Word preached at each of our evangelistic initiatives? She and many others certainly remain in our prayers as they contemplate that they, too, have been "Chosen" to serve the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Let's pray Oshkosh will be only the first fruits of greater things to come through the power of the Holy Spirit! ■

Maurice Valentine, Lake Union Conference president



▲ Valentine with the young man he baptized at the recent "Chosen" Pathfinder Camporee.

Dear Fellow Mama,

If you walked by me today and said, “Hi, how are you?” I would probably smile, “Well, and you?” to which we might nod and wish each other a wonderful day.



▲ Ingrid Weiss Slikkers

I might watch you walk away and marvel at how nice you looked. I may recall your Facebook post a few weeks back of a lovely vacation with smiling children. I might sigh as I think, “She sure is lucky, seems to have the perfect life.” However, I wonder what would happen if I had responded to you, “I’m exhausted. Today I’m feeling a bit defeated and could use some encouragement,” and then proceeded to break down in tears? What would happen if I was vulnerable?

Some have called it “parental burnout;” others call it an epidemic because of media and comparisons which other generations didn’t experience. Doing a web search will lead one to research studies, personal stories, and never-ending ideas and discussions of ideal parenting from experts.

Then, my dear friend, there’s the guilt. Guilt about not spending enough time with my spouse, or because we ate drive-through food yesterday, or because we hurried, and instead of having worship before bed, simply said a quick prayer in order to “check it off the list.” Oh, and the lists . . . lists on the fridge, in my purse, by the bedside table, on my desk in the office — and the list I drafted while stopped at the red light! Oh, no! I’d better not forget what’s on that one!

The secular world has many articles on the “mommy wars” created by comparisons. My dear sister, are we more loving of each other than the secular world? Do we love as Christ loved us? Or are we harsher with others and on ourselves because our lists of perfect parenting are longer from biblical examples and guidance from Ellen White? Are we even more frightened to be transparent because it may not appear as if we are “faithful” enough?

You may find it ironic that I am writing about these things; after all, I teach the Advanced Family Therapy class at Andrews University. But here I am — vulnerably writing this to you as a fellow warrior in the trenches. I tell my graduate students there are no perfect families. One look at families in the Bible shows us that. So, why do we judge? Or compare?

I recognize that the battle for the lives our children will never end until heaven. We shall not rest as we pour out our hearts for them (see Lamentations 2:19).

So, fellow mommy, in this battle that is not against each other, but against the world, can we be like Aaron and Hur in service to Moses as described in Exodus 17? Can we lift each other’s hands up when one is tired? The battle will continue to rage but, like the promise in Psalm 46:5, we need to remind each other that we will not fail, for God is within us and He will help us at the break of day! Like a strong city fortress, we will stand. I will commit to look to my sisters and lift their hands. Let me text one right now and remind her of this promise. And then, maybe, you can text me?

Sincerely,
Your Fellow Warrior Mama ■

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

The Core

I want to invite you to a different reading experience today. Are you ready? Great! Please follow the steps outlined below right now and give this a try (but do try this at your own risk!).

- Wherever you are currently sitting, scoot towards the front edge of your seat.
- Plant both feet solidly on the ground.
- Sit up nice and straight.
- Roll your shoulders back.
- Lift your chin up slightly.
- Contract your gluteus maximus (your buttocks!).
- Contract your stomach by sucking it in and holding it.
- Now continue breathing and hold this position throughout reading this article!

Many of us don’t actually know our own core very well, so let’s take a quick look at its function and what is actually part of “the Core.” It consists of muscles in the abdomen, pelvic floor, sides of the trunk, back, buttocks, hips and pelvis. Core muscles stabilize the spine and help transfer forces between the upper and lower body. In fact, there are 29 muscles attaching to the ribs, hips, spinal column and other bones in the trunk of the body.

Lack of core muscle fitness can create an unstable spine, and stress muscles and joints. Although back pain can be the result of a sudden and traumatic injury, more commonly it is due to weak and inflexible core muscles, poor posture and poor body mechanics during activities.

With the advent of modern technology, humans have started sitting more and moving less. This has contributed to poor posture and weak core muscles, as these are NOT stimulated sufficiently. Weak core muscles, especially the gluteal muscles, contribute to an unstable pelvis, which can lead to increased pronation of the lower extremity. In addition, the knees and feet can be severely impacted due to forced rotation of the lower extremities and injuries may result. Other parts of the

body may be forced to pick up the slack of weak core muscles.

Have you noticed how many of us have started to be permanently slouched over? It is because much of what we do each day includes a forward curve in our upper back, such as driving, typing, watching TV, etc. When the core muscles are weak, they cannot counteract this forward position. Slouching can contribute to neck tension and headaches.

The answer to many of these issues is to strategically train all core muscles to become stronger and more fit. You can build up core strength doing whole body exercises, using free weights and stability balls (just to name a few training modes) at least two to three times per week.

One of the best ways to strengthen your entire core is to incorporate a variety of planking exercises into your fitness regimen. Planking can be modified for all fitness levels and is a great way to start activating core muscles! At a minimum, however, you could begin working on sitting in the manner described at the beginning of this article on a regular basis.

Don’t underestimate the power of a strong core! It can prevent injuries, avoid pain and discomfort. It can protect your spine, improve posture and allow all areas of the body to function properly without overcompensating for a weak core. Do not delay; get “the Core” fit by starting your training today!

To learn, read and watch more, please visit: dominiquegummelt.com. ■

Dominique Gummelt, director of Andrews University Health and Wellness



▲ Dominique Gummelt

What About the Trinity? — 2

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God (John 1:1 KJV).



▲ George R. Knight

If the old line leadership of Seventh-day Adventism appears to have been almost unanimously antitrinitarian, what about the reformers at Minneapolis?

Here, interestingly enough, is a theological point on which E. J. Waggoner could agree with Uriah Smith, “There was a time,” Waggoner wrote in his 1890 book entitled *Christ and His Righteousness*, “when Christ proceeded forth and came from God, . . . but that time was so far back in the days of eternity that to finite comprehension it is practically without beginning.”

His statement remarkably parallels one that Smith made that same decade: “God alone is without beginning. At the earliest epoch when a beginning should be — a period so remote that to finite minds it is essentially eternity — appeared the Word.”

Now, if Smith and Waggoner were on the same side in regard to the Trinity, we need to ask, Where did the stimulus for change come from?

Here is where one of the other 1888 reformers comes in. The 1888 experience literally transformed Ellen White’s writing ministry. It was in the events surrounding that General Conference session that she fully realized the ignorance of the Adventist ministry and laity on the plan of salvation and the centrality of Christ.

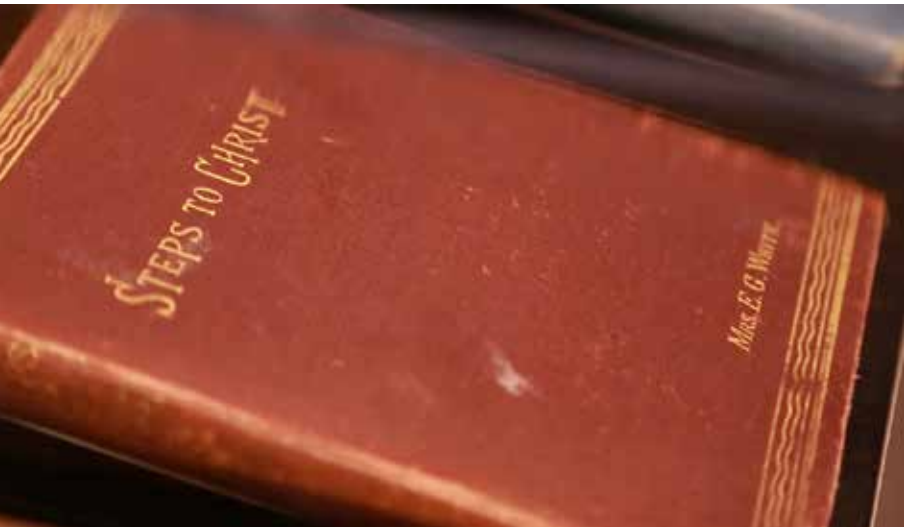
The years following would see the publication of her most important books on those topics.

- 1892 — her classic, *Steps to Christ*
- 1896 — *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, which treated the Sermon on the Mount
- 1898 — *The Desire of Ages*, her book on the life of Christ
- 1900 — *Christ’s Object Lessons*, a volume on the parables
- 1905 — *Ministry of Healing*, in which the opening chapters focus on the healing ministry of Jesus

Nowhere in any of those books did Ellen White offer a chapter or even a paragraph on the Trinity or the full divinity of Christ, but they set forth phrases and words that would drive Adventists back to the Bible to restudy the topic. That Bible study would eventually transform Adventism on the Trinity and related issues.

Thank you, Lord, for Your gentle guidance. You take Your church forward only as fast as it can absorb what you have for it. ■

George R. Knight is a retired professor of Church History at the Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University. This article is from his book, *Lest We Forget*, a daily devotional, published by the Review and Herald Publishing Association, page 289.



Lucille’s Healing

Writing with the pen of inspiration, Ellen White asked what seems to be a rhetorical question: “Why should the sons and daughters of God be reluctant to pray when prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock Heaven’s storehouse where are treasured the boundless resources of omnipotence?”

As a child growing up on the island of Jamaica, my parents were strong prayer warriors. Early mornings and late afternoons began and ended with long prayer sessions. I have occasionally tried to practice this with my children but they were not always very receptive.

In the fall of 2015, while serving on the LUC Executive Committee, President Don Livesay asked me to serve on the NAD Church Governance Committee. During these sessions, prayer was the primary feature in all our deliberations, discussions and debates. In those three years, I made great friends and renewed old acquaintances.

In the fall of 2016, I received a call from one of these friends, Dennis Williams from Seattle, Washington, asking me to visit and pray with a lady, Lucille Rhoads, in Indianapolis. She desperately wanted prayer and a visit from an Adventist church member. I quickly responded with food supplies and much intercessory prayer. Her only son was incarcerated in New Castle, Indiana, which brought her great sorrow and heartache. Our prayer was not only for the healing of Lucille, but for the early release of her son.

Weeks went by. Then one day we received a call that her son had been released. We celebrated with joy and thanksgiving. Our visits and prayers with food baskets continued until a few months ago when we received a call from her son that Lucille had taken a turn for the worse, transferred to hospice care and given only three

days to live. My wife and I quickly rushed to the house and offered prayers for Divine intervention. The following Sabbath, immediately after the worship service, Kevin Rogers (our pastor), my wife and I, rushed over to the house, anointed and prayed for her, and again sought heaven’s interposition. With only days to live, funeral arrangements also were discussed. We left with the expectation of funeral services later that week.

Weeks went by with no call from Lucille’s son. Then one Sabbath, I revisited the house. I knocked on the door, but no one answered. I began thinking that Lucille had died and been buried, but no one had informed us. Suddenly, her son drove up and, in the front seat next to him, was a smiling Lucille. After big hugs, laughter and tears of joy, Lucille informed us that from the moment we had anointed and prayed for her, she was healed. Her energy returned and her organs revived. She threw off her breathing tubes, stopped taking her medicines, discontinued hospice care, sat up and began a new life. God had answered our prayers in a marvelous way.

Today, we continue to give God the praise for His marvelous intervention in the lives of Lucille and her son, and look forward with great anticipation to seeing them in church and becoming members. ■

Clayton Loney is a member of the Lake Union executive committee.



▲ Lucille Rhoads



Photo courtesy Steve Martin

▲ Steve Martin collaborates with other musicians to bring the sounds of joy and hope to hospital patients.

Giving Back — One Note at a Time

It's every parent's nightmare. Steve Martin and his wife, Mary, learned their oldest daughter — who was just nine at the time — had a cancerous brain tumor. The diagnosis was admittedly grim, but they held tightly to their faith and the medical team charged with saving their young Karly. After numerous hospital stays, surgeries, and multiple treatments of radiation and chemo, Karly made it and continues to be in remission, now at age 26.

"I had a burning in my heart to give back. I was so thankful," stresses Steve. The professional musician

and Adventist educator went straight to what he knows — music.

He found out about a nonprofit group called Sharing Notes. The Chicago-based program, which has been up and running since 2012, is founded on a mission of "improving quality of life for patients . . . through uplifting, live music performances," often done right in their hospital rooms! Steve says it was a natural fit as he collaborated with the other musicians, giving their time and talents. Other than getting parking fees covered, no one is paid to perform. The North Shore Church member says it's the least he can do.

"Every time I play the banjo or guitar [for the patients] and see the reaction of happy smiles, my soul is lifted to a whole new level, knowing that I was able to make a positive difference," Steve expresses passionately. He sees it as his way to give back, and his goal is to make each performance personal.

"When it comes to music, the song that speaks to their heart is what I want to give them," he says.

Steve tells of one time in particular when he and a singer were performing in Northwestern Hospital's cardiac care unit for a woman in her mid-20s. She requested the Beatle's song, "Hey, Jude." Steve admits he had never played that on his banjo, but he and the singer were game and jumped into the catchy melody.

"When we finished, I looked up to see tears in her eyes. She repeatedly thanked us."

Steve explains how the woman had recently given birth to a baby boy but, due to newly discovered heart issues, she had been rushed back into the hospital, with little time to spend with her newborn. His name was Jude. Just one touching story, amidst dozens, confesses Steve, who remembers his own family's healing from music like it was yesterday.

"When we were in the hospital with Karly, we had a chaplain who would come in and play the guitar. Taking the attention off self and sickness . . ., the distraction was so relieving. It gave me an energy, a breath of fresh air, from those hours of the bad stuff," admits Steve.

Now, "His healing can reach [others] through me. God has called me to do this," says Steve. One note at a time. ■

Cheri Daniels-Lewis, freelance writer based in the Quad Cities of Illinois

¡Nuestro clamor unido!

"Si hubiera una convocación de todas las iglesias en la tierra, el objeto de su clamor unido debería ser el Espíritu Santo. Cuando tengamos eso, Cristo, nuestra suficiencia estará siempre presente y tendremos cada necesidad suplida. Tendremos la mente de Cristo" (*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 4, p. 24).

Me maravillo al pensar que ya nos estamos acercando al fin de este año y aproximándonos a una nueva década. No hay duda que el mundo social, económico, político y religioso ha cambiado muchísimo en los últimos diez años. ¿Qué eventos y acontecimientos ocurrirán en esta tercera década que comienza con el año 2020? Por supuesto, con la excepción de Dios, nadie sabe los detalles de lo que sucederá. Pero sí tenemos la Biblia que nos anima a prestar atención a las señales del fin. Es importante leer otra vez el capítulo 24 de Mateo y fijarnos en la primera palabra del versículo 20. La palabra es ORAD. Aquí Dios anima a sus seguidores a que oren cuando vean las señales.

El libro *Hechos de los Apóstoles* nos explica que la iniciación de la iglesia de Dios comenzó con oración. Dios encomendó a los discípulos que oraran, especialmente para tener la capacidad de presentar las buenas nuevas de salvación al mundo y poder enfrentar las pruebas que tendrían. El Señor los instó también a orar para recibir el Espíritu Santo. Cristo sabía que los discípulos no tenían la capacidad de predicar y ganar almas para el reino de los cielos. Era urgente que ellos rindieran sus vidas a Dios y se sometieran al bautismo del Espíritu Santo. Gracias a Dios, lo hicieron, y como consecuencia revolucionaron al mundo de su tiempo.

En la actualidad, tenemos una situación similar. A pesar del uso de la tecnología y la capacidad de

movernos a cualquier lugar del mundo en relativamente poco tiempo, la realidad es que el pueblo adventista tampoco tiene la capacidad de ganar almas por sus propias fuerzas. Es necesario que nos rindamos a Dios como lo hicieron los discípulos y que oremos por el bautismo del Espíritu Santo.

Es por esto que la Unión del Lago está organizando un retiro especial dedicado exclusivamente a la oración. El retiro se llama *Our United Cry* (Nuestro Clamor Unido). Será el viernes y sábado, 6 y 7 de marzo de 2020 en el hotel Embassy Suites en la ciudad de Plainfield, estado de Indiana, muy cerca de la ciudad de Indianapolis. Animamos a cada iglesia que envíe por lo menos dos delegados. El costo del retiro es \$55.00, pero subirá a \$65.00 después del 20 de noviembre. El costo no incluye el hospedaje en el hotel pero sí el privilegio de escuchar a los oradores, el almuerzo, el material que se entregará y especialmente la oportunidad de orar unidos por el Espíritu Santo. Para inscribirse vaya al sitio web www.ourunitedcry.org.

Quisiera animar al lector a que no pierda la oportunidad de orar con nosotros en esta ocasión especial. Nuestro deseo es que el resultado del retiro sea el comienzo de una revolución espiritual en nuestras vidas y en nuestras iglesias. ■

Carmelo Mercado es el vicepresidente de la Unión del Lago.



▲ Carmelo Mercado

Angels in the Outfield

By Priscilla Obeng-Akrofi

MY LIFE, AS WELL AS THAT OF MY FAMILY, has much to do with a direction from Scripture, especially with regards to our status as foreigners in the U.S. *As for the foreigner who does not belong to Your people Israel but has come from a distant land because of Your great name and Your mighty hand and Your outstretched arm — when they come and pray toward this temple, then hear from heaven, Your dwelling place. Do whatever the foreigner asks of you, so that all the peoples of the earth may know Your name and fear You, as do Your own people Israel, and may know that this house I have built bears Your Name* (2 Chronicles 6:32, 33 NIV).

My family and I have found in God's Word the assurance that God is with us and listens to our prayers. This verse in Scripture helps us realize the privileges that foreigners have when they pray to God. Solomon, himself, petitioned on behalf of the foreigner, when he was dedicating the newly-built temple *so that all the people of the earth may know and fear Him*.

A NEW BEGINNING

In 2012 and 2013, we moved from Ghana to the United States of America for my husband to pursue the Master of Divinity program at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University. The challenges and stress associated with transitioning from one continent to another were numerous. We arrived early February and were relieved to survive the brutal Michigan winter!

Our second child was born in the United States, but his birth came with some complications which led to a Cesarean section for a pre-term birth. Because of his low-birth weight, we did not get to bring our baby home right after delivery — he was kept in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit for close to a month. By the grace of God, he was discharged a healthy baby who is now six years old. As new arrivals, we were overwhelmed by the situation. God showed Himself merciful and provided for all our needs.

After my son's discharge from the hospital, I was attacked by deep vein thrombosis (DVT) for which I had to be admitted to the hospital. My admission to the hospital meant that the care of the children, especially our baby who needed more attention, was going to be borne by my husband who was a student and also a worker, but, by the grace of God, he was able to pull through as I recovered.

What gave me strength and hope during this time was my experience at a Seminary Spouse Retreat. While there, I prayed to God in prayer for strength to keep on trusting Him for His care and guidance. Another important source of strength was the story of George Müller in one of the books assigned to my husband to read for his coursework. I was inspired by Müller's trust in God as he depended on prayer to help him build and maintain an orphanage. I, too, decided to depend wholly on God for the fulfillment of my dreams.

I was interested in studying at Andrews University, but I did not have what it takes (especially the financial strength) to study. My husband and I found the hurdles on the way to achieve that dream were more than we could surmount, so we left it at the level of dreams and wishes, never knowing when it would turn into reality.

In 2015, my husband completed the MDiv program. However, just around that time, we heard of the spousal discount that the Seminary offers. Back in Ghana, I taught English in a secondary school and would have liked to further my studies in the field of English. I had no intention of becoming a pastor but, instead of remaining idle because I could not afford to study English, I could afford to take a program in the Seminary. So I applied to study for a M.A. in Religion and was accepted. We took this as a sign to move on ahead in faith and prayed for God's guidance.

However, we soon found that the spouse discount was only possible as long as my spouse was a student. I started my studies during the last semester of my husband's program which meant that I was going to



▲ Priscilla with her husband, George, and children, Gernyn and Benjamin

Jonathan Logan

bear the full cost of tuition for the remaining semesters when my spouse was no longer a student. I was willing to continue with the Religion program in faith at the Seminary, but God had another plan — *that* plan was for me to continue my education in the English Department. The core of the whole issue was that the tuition at the English Department was expensive (way more expensive than that of the Seminary). But my husband encouraged me to move on in faith. God blessed our faith with scholarships and the strength to learn. At last, I could study English.

FAMILY CRISIS

On January 6, 2018, just as I was about to complete my studies at Andrews, an argument ensued between me and my husband that became intense. The way we dealt with it got us into trouble, especially as foreigners. We almost got deported, and he was taken into immigration custody.

One evening, as I was asking myself, “*Why this challenge?*”, the Holy Spirit prompted me to listen to some of Bill Gaither's music. The song that caught my attention was a song by Charles Albert Tindley, “We'll Understand It Better By and By.” The second verse fit my situation: “Temptations, hidden snares, often take us unaware and our hearts are made to bleed for each thoughtless word or deed and we wonder why the test when we try to do our best. We will understand it better by and by.”

Another way God communicated with me during this crisis was through a reminder of a sermon preached the previous week at Pioneer Memorial Church. It was

about forgiveness. And that was exactly what I needed to do. Another sermon that spoke to my heart at that time was a sermon by the Pathfinders on the biblical topic of “Be Still and Know That I Am God.” This, too, was an important message because I had to stay calm and trust God for His providence.

One day, during my Bible study time, I came across the biblical quotation cited at the beginning of my testimony and I was then comforted by the words, *I cried out to God for help; I cried out to God to hear me. When I was in distress, I sought the Lord* (Psalm 77:1, 2a NIV).

God answered my prayers by providing the amount of money I needed for my husband to be released through the generosity of a good family friend of ours.

God listens and answers my prayers, but His answers have to be worked out or revealed through human agencies. It is interesting to note how our daily acts, which we may take for granted, may be an answer to another person's prayer. In my story, I appreciate all the people who availed themselves for God's answers to my prayers to be realized. They were angels in the outfield.

Finally, to the glory of God, I have completed Andrews University with a Master of Arts degree in the Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages (M.A. in TESOL). On my graduation day, I was beaming with smiles. Of all the graduates receiving their diplomas, I think I was the happiest because I knew I had come that far only by the providence of God. ■

Priscilla Obeng-Akrofi comes from Ghana and now lives in Berrien Springs with her husband and two children.

BY CHERI DANIELS LEWIS

Remembering WITH Love

SURVIVING A FAMILY MEMBER'S SUICIDE

Jen Bolejack is a go-getter who juggles the schedules of three kids (from toddler to teen), regularly serves during worship service (behind a keyboard and mic), and continues her music ministry by giving lessons. A life-changing event this time last year, though, would stop her in her tracks.

For the first six months, especially, she often had to remind herself he wasn't coming through the door. She clung to her phone, both so she wouldn't miss his call *and* to capture every milestone of their newest little one. "I wanted nothing more than to tell Brad or record [Jake's first steps] so that he could watch it later, almost as if he served in the military and was deployed for an indefinite amount of time," says Jen. But Brad Bolejack would not be coming home or calling. Jen now had to figure out how to add widow and single mom to her repertoire — two titles that weren't in the plans.

Brad died by suicide on November 16, 2018. He was just 33 years old. Jen admits it came after years of suffering from anxiety and depression. Still, it was an abrupt ending to a life filled with so much progress and promise.

Brad had been preaching since he was 16. In fact, says Jen, that's how they met. It was 2003, when she was a youth leader and needed a speaker for an upcoming event. A friend suggested Brad, who had already started

gaining a reputation as a moving orator. Jen learned he would be at a Bible study near her Indianapolis home, so she went to check him out and see if he could preach. "I'll be honest, I was looking for a nerdy guy, maybe in suspenders or a bow tie. What I found was a really handsome guy surrounded by all of the girls who went to this Bible study. We found out that we attended the same college and ended up having similar classes," remembers Jen. They became fast friends and married in 2005.

Jen's childhood church, Chapel West in Indianapolis, became their home base, but they soon traveled all over the Midwest, preaching and performing musical programs together. She served as principal of Indianapolis' Capitol City School until they relocated to Florida in 2017 where Brad took on the role of associate pastor for the Celebration Church. They had just added a boy to the family, too — little Jakob, but a perfect storm was brewing.

Brad had been bullied as a kid, Jen shares, but had never professionally processed those rough beginnings.



When you experience such a loss, everything is out of your control. There's nothing to hold on to but your *Faith*

That, coupled with a recent diagnosis and prescribed meds which drastically altered his mood, all formed a seemingly impenetrable wall. A wall Brad may have thought he couldn't get over or couldn't get through.

Not long before November 2018, Brad had been diagnosed with Perthes disease, a rare childhood condition which affects the hips. Jen tells how he had been an avid runner and was "always in the gym," but the physical pain became debilitating. He put on a lot of weight. Jen admits he began spiraling into a deeper depression. It was the change in his music, though, which started to tip off Brad, himself, that something was horribly wrong.

She regularly encouraged counseling and prayer partners for Brad and, eventually, he sought out a fellow pastor and started seeing a therapist who put him on antidepressants.

"The first week he was doing 'amazing' and told me he was finally 'feeling like himself.' By the second week, he woke up one morning in tears." Jen recalls he told her, 'I feel so hopeless . . .'"

Two weeks later and just hours after Jen and the kids boarded a plane, Brad was found unresponsive. "I was driving back to my parent's house [in Indiana] with my sister from wedding dress shopping," Jen remembers. She got a call from Brad's best friend who was concerned about a text he'd just received from him. It read, "When Jen comes home, play this video for her. She'll need to be surrounded by people, though, because it'll be really hard. You've been such a great friend to me. Love you, man." Jen immediately tried to call, but it went straight to Brad's voicemail. She became frantic, trying to reach people who were nearby and could check on him. Friends eventually found him in the house. CPR was started and continued until paramedics arrived, but it was too late. Brad was gone.

Meanwhile, Jen and her family were trying to figure out how to get her on the next plane back to Florida. Then she received the final call. "All I could do was scream, 'No. No. NO, NO, NO, NO!'" Jen says her sister just held her as she sobbed.

Jen admits Thanksgiving was a blur. "Instead of preparing for several large family gatherings, we were preparing for two memorials [in Indianapolis and at Celebration]. . . . Honestly, no one wanted to celebrate Christmas. It just felt like another day without Bradley," confesses Jen.

Jen learned later it's often advised one should be carefully monitored when starting antidepressants. "They often go through feelings of euphoria, then extreme hopelessness," the now-educated Jen explains.

"I did what I could . . . You don't know so many things 'til afterwards. Now I know."

Birth of a Ministry

What Jen knows now could help you and/or your loved one. That's her sincerest wish, her daily prayer, and what pushes her through the intense pain.

"I needed to do something with this. I needed to do something with his ministry . . . I needed to make sure he's not forgotten."

Jen and six of the couples' closest friends knew they wanted to leave a legacy in Brad's name, founding the BRAD Foundation. BRAD stands for Being Real about Anxiety and Depression. They wanted to try to stop the stigma surrounding mental illness, and arm others with the resources and awareness Jen felt she and Brad were never given.

Jen admits "the collaboration has been incredible." Just ten months after Brad's death, the BRAD Foundation had its kickoff event, bringing together counselors, artists, law enforcement, musicians, and some 300 attendees from the community, eager to find relief for themselves or a loved one.

One of the main purposes of the Foundation is for all involved in the mental health struggle to understand treatment doesn't come in a one-size-fits-all. "The solution is different for everyone," she says. While the solution to mental illness may vary, one thing is clear: Talking about mental health issues "doesn't make you less of a Christian. God won't love you less. You shouldn't be made to feel ashamed."

What's next for the group of organizers? Jen says they're plowing through the logistics of formally establishing The BRAD Foundation (including paperwork and retaining a lawyer, etc.). They're also continuing to raise funds and awareness for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. And they're already making arrangements to take the awareness program on the road. Georgia likely will be the next stop, where a pastor friend says there is a great need. Jen says she has received calls to bring it to their native Indiana, too.

Despite appearances and accomplishments, there are real consequences to the intense loss and pain of losing Brad. While Jen still teaches music lessons, she hasn't been able to return to her full-time classroom since his death. She says becoming a single parent is one of the hardest things, "Not having someone to bounce ideas off of or consult when giving permission for something. Never mind trying to establish rules and consequences on my own."

Leena, now 13, has gotten straight A's this year and is captain of the basketball team, but her mom admits Brad was the teen's best friend. They did Bible studies

together, had regular dinner dates — with the compulsory ice cream afterwards, and she told her dad everything. "To this day," says Jen, "[Leena] will text his phone and tell him things that are happening in her life."

Lani, age six, "talks about her daddy a lot," says Jen. "Lately, she has been saying that she wants to die so she can be with him because she misses him so much." Jen says Lani will pick any yellow flower she sees to bring back home and place on the box with his ashes. She knew yellow was her daddy's favorite color.

Baby Jakob was just nine months old when Brad died. "We're all scared he simply won't remember his dad, but we have pictures of him all over the house," says Jen, "and Jakob often points and says, 'Ada dada.'"

Jen acknowledges the support she's received from her church family "has been amazing! My kids have grandparents, cousins, aunts and uncles times a million," she says with a laugh. Members also regularly come by with meals, offer to clean the house, and have even provided monthly monetary gifts for the family since Brad's death.

"It's been a terrible thing, but also one of the most freeing things," Jen declares assuredly. "When you experience such a loss, everything is out of your control. There's nothing to hold on to but your faith . . . God knew his struggle — He knew his heart."

Jen says Brad's favorite hymn was "It is Well with My Soul." She's putting one foot in front of the other in hopes of making sure others have access to that fundamental peace, which seemed just out of reach for her husband. ■

Follow The BRAD Foundation on Facebook to find out more about their plans and upcoming events/benefits.

If you or someone you know is considering suicide, please contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (8255), text "home" to the Crisis Text Line at 741-741 or go to suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

Cheri Daniels Lewis, freelance writer in Quad Cities area of Illinois



Dmitri Castro



Wayne Burrell

▲ The BRAD Foundation held their kickoff event in September at AdventHealth in Celebration, Fla.

Restoring Shattered Lives

Through Christian Counseling

Beverly Murphy entered her college freshman year full of promise, only to have her hopes dashed. At 19, she was raped and later discovered she was pregnant. “I was utterly devastated by the trauma,” she relates in an interview more than four decades later.

She knew her parents would be furious, especially since they were pillars in the church and community. Yet, because of her convictions, abortion was not an option. She said she prayed that the baby would resemble her and her family, but, at the same time, began destroying her life and the fetus with alcohol. “I just couldn’t cope,” she says.

In the midst of the anguish and pain, Beverly found what she believes was a God-sent connection, a Christian doctor who was not only an obstetrician/gynecologist but also a psychiatrist. “I knew I had to face some issues that

would plague me for the rest of my life,” she acknowledges. She said she received exceptional counseling and by the time she left school, she was able to deal with most issues, including having parents who didn’t believe her story.

“Talking with my counselor gave me a handle on my situation,” she says, realizing the difference that professional help can make. “I had two friends who were in the same situation and they both rejected counseling. One young lady committed suicide, killing herself and the baby; my other friend turned to drugs and a life on the streets, leaving the baby with her mother.”

BY ESTHER GREEN



When it comes to mental health issues, we are a lot more reluctant to talk about it because there is quite a bit of shame and guilt, especially in the Christian world.

While Beverly's situation was resolved through counseling, unfortunately there remains certain hang-ups about it in Christian circles.

"There is still a sense that if I am connected to Christ, then all I need to do is pray when things are not working right, and it should go away. Or, a person may think, 'I am having this mental health issue because of sin in my life,'" explains Judith Fisher, director of the Counseling and Testing Center at Andrews University. "These are issues that have been repeated, even in church organizations. 'Well, you need to go back and see what you did wrong that God may be punishing you for.' These are beliefs that continue to keep people from reaching out and getting help." Fisher says that the fact of the matter is, mental health issues are just as real as medical issues. "If we have a toothache or we have a medical issue, we have no qualms with going to the doctor. We go there, and we tell people, 'Hey, I have a toothache' or 'I have a broken leg,' or something. But when it comes to mental health issues, we are a lot more reluctant to talk about it because there is quite a bit of shame and guilt, especially in the Christian world."

The question is, how do we help ourselves move past the negative associations of counseling to gain the relief and healing that's needed? In a series of interviews, two experts offer their professional wisdom in the application of mental health interventions and therapeutic modalities available for Christians today.

Spiritual Devotions as Therapy

David Sedlacek, PhD, LMSW, CFLE, professor of Family Ministry and Discipleship at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

"The Bible and meaningful time with the Lord have mental health benefits. That said, the reality is that here are some people who have more serious mental illnesses and may not have a solid trust relationship with God. Because of that, their ability to hold on to God is rather tenuous. In addition, most people in the church have not been taught how to use the Bible or their personal devotional time in a therapeutic way. Part of the challenge is that we can easily talk

problems. Most people who are depressed or anxious need experiential solutions, not just cognitive solutions.

"Cognitive solutions are left-brain solutions where you can figure it all out and rationally decide certain things. There is a place for that to challenge our own negative, self-defeating thinking and to change our thinking to be in harmony with the truth or God's Word. Jesus said, *You'll know the Truth and the Truth will set you free*. There's powerful, powerful truth to that. But, for most people, wounding occurred not primarily cognitively, but affectively. In other words, it's more of a right-brain experiential challenge for them.

"Therefore, we have to go beyond left-brain solutions to also right-brain solutions, which are more experiential. For example, if you take a verse like Isaiah 51:3, it says, *For the LORD shall comfort Zion: He will comfort all her waste places; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody* (KJV). If you have listened to someone's story of hurt and pain that's leading them to be anxious, sad or depressed, you could take that Scripture and put that person's name in there. Make it personal, experiential, as you're praying through it with them.

"As an example, *For the Lord will comfort 'Esther.' He will comfort all of your waste places*. When I'm praying through that with someone, I ask them to name the garbage can, waste place, hurtful, damaging experiences that they've had. I say as they are naming them, "The Lord will comfort all of your waste places and make your wilderness like Eden." Personally speaking, looking at my wilderness experience, the more I can then identify it and speak to the Lord about it and begin experiencing His comfort in that wilderness place. It is important that we tell our story to God. When there's a human ear that can hear us, too, who knows that their job is to connect you with God the way Jesus did, then that's a real powerful intervention because then God is using that person as His representative in order to touch and to heal people's lives."



Pastoral Counseling

Roy Gatton, DMin., BCCC, Diplomate, Psychotherapy associate professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling, director of Counseling Services, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

"Pastoral counselors are a major blessing to the church. It is important to know, however, that they are not trained to be professional counselors or psychologists. Pastoral counseling training gives pastors the opportunity to be able to become more effective in listening to people and being present with them. It allows us the opportunity to be able to process a person's story and what they are sharing.

"There is a difference between a Christian counselor and a secular counselor. The way they approach counseling and their counseling goals are different. Pastoral counseling is unique in that many times when someone comes, it's someone from the congregation whom the pastor might already know. Therefore, clear boundaries need to be set. This moment is for counseling as opposed to a chat session or time of general prayer. There is a specific modality for counseling and that is seen in the boundaries that it sets and how the pastor interacts with and listens to the person."

It is how we handle those storms in our lives that can mean the difference between utter devastation or, as in Beverly's case, restored health.

There has to be established counseling goals and then the identification of the issue or issues to be worked on. The work happens for a time and then there has to be a termination of that relationship so they can go back to a parishioner and pastor relationship.

“Another way pastoral counseling is different is that we recommend that a pastor does not do more than three to four counseling sessions. The pastoral counselor helps the person, enables the person and may also pray with the person, but if there needs to be long-term counseling involved, then they need to refer them to a licensed professional counselor or therapist.

“Indicators that something long-term may be needed or a referral made is when a pastor is dealing with addictions or mental disorders. At the seminary, we train pastors to identify disorders like bipolarism, schizophrenia, manic depression or critical depression. These issues are beyond the scope of pastoral training. A pastoral counselor needs to be wise enough to recognize his or her limitations, to know when they can help and when they need to refer.”

Both Sedlacek and Gatton have provided very practical and even insider information to help church members begin to make more informed use of the mental health resources that are freely and readily available to them. It is important to know, however, that while these tools and resources exist, they also have limits. Christians can and do have serious mental health issues that may require more specialized modalities in which other licensed practitioners are more versed.

It is how we handle those storms in our lives that can mean the difference between utter devastation or, as in Beverly's case, restored health. Forty-two years later, she can look back and see the difference counseling made. The child conceived from that traumatic event has grown to have a master's degree in electrical engineering and is a journeyman electrician for a union. She also had three more children who are thriving adults. “I know my story could have been different,” she says. “I credit this to the counseling received in a timely manner and the relationship I have with God.” ■

Esther Green is a second year MDiv student at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary.

You Can Help Prevent Suicide

The statistics are startling, heartbreaking and deeply concerning.

Tragically, in 2017, suicide claimed the lives of over 47,000 people, and was the tenth leading cause of death in the U.S. overall, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports.

Yet the numbers only hint at the profound emotional pain felt by those who take their own lives. Many of us want to know: How can we help those who hurt so much? How can we stop a suicide?

It could be anyone.

Anyone can be thinking of suicide — even a loved one or a friend who “seems fine.” But several experiences in a person's life may increase their risk.

Risk factors include having a history of abuse, depression, alcohol or other substance misuse, or a previous suicide attempt. Having recently experienced personal loss — such as loss of a relationship, job or physical health — is another risk factor.

And while suicide occurs among people of all ages and backgrounds, rates are higher among certain demographics, such as American Indians, Alaska Natives, older men and veterans. It's also the second leading cause of death among young people ages 10 to 34, CDC numbers show.

There are warning signs.

Even though some groups are at higher risk for suicide, it can happen to the people we least expect. It's good to know what the warning signs are so that you can get help before it's too late.

People having suicidal thoughts may show a number of behaviors, including any of the following:

- Talking about death a lot or saying they want to die.
- Talking about feeling trapped, with no way out of a difficult situation.

- Claiming to be a burden to others.
- Talking about feeling empty, hopeless or having no reason to live.
- Making a suicide plan — they may search online for ways to kill themselves, or try to obtain something to harm themselves with, such as a rope or a gun.
- Giving away important possessions.
- Starting to use drugs or alcohol more often.
- Withdrawing from family or friends.
- Telling loved ones goodbye.

You can help.

Not everyone who shows these signs may attempt suicide. But if there's any concern, don't hesitate to help. The National Institute of Mental Health recommends taking these four actions:

Be blunt and ask. Don't be afraid to ask the person, “Are you thinking of killing yourself?” Contrary to what you may have heard, asking this question will not put the idea of suicide in someone's head.

Listen carefully. Try to understand and acknowledge what they're going through.

Try to limit access to lethal means. For example, if the loved one you're concerned about lives with you, you may be able to safely remove or lock up any firearms, poisons or other lethal items in the home.

Share resources. Encourage the person to call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (8255). Or call the hotline yourself. You also might help connect the person to a spiritual advisor or mental health counselor.

Bottom line: If you know someone who is in crisis, take them seriously. If you think it's an emergency, call 911. ■

Adapted with permission from Adventist Health blogpost: <https://www.adventisthealth.org/blog/2019/september/you-can-help-prevent-suicide/>



▲ (Left to right) David Banks, chief strategy officer, Tim Cook, AdventHealth Altamonte CEO, and Jillyan McKinney, Littleton Adventist Hospital CEO, participate in the panel discussion, "Implications for AdventHealth."

Leaders explore impact of faith-based health care

Seventh-day Adventist Church leaders, community thought leaders and AdventHealth board members, executives and team members came together in Maitland, Fla., for the organization's 29th annual Conference on Mission, a three-day event centering around AdventHealth's mission of "Extending the Healing Ministry of Christ." This year, attendees were challenged to turn their attention forward and outward as they explored what makes faith-based health care relevant and distinct in their communities.

The new focus related to the conference's 2019 theme, "Whatsoever You Do...," which is based on Christ's words in Matthew 25:35-36, 40 where He calls on His followers to show concern for the weak and the vulnerable — *the least of these*.

"We had a different kind of mission conference this year," said Ted Hamilton, M.D., senior vice president and chief mission integration officer for AdventHealth.

"We gathered not just to talk about mission, but to demonstrate it and to wrestle with the kinds of questions we may not necessarily have answers to."

Throughout the three days, guest speakers, panelists and participants discussed the role that faith-based health care plays in society now and in the future. The keynote speaker, David Brooks, a well-known commentator and author of *The Second Mountain: The Quest for Moral Life*, contrasted the ideas of personal success and meaning, and highlighted moral character as the key to mission-driven leadership.

Ron Smith, AdventHealth board chair and president of the Southern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, presented a devotion on modeling Jesus' ministry, which kickstarted a morning of back-to-back panel discussions. During the "Who is Our Neighbor? What Do We Owe Our Neighbor" session, one of the panelists, Reverend Zina Jacque of

the Community Church of Barrington in Illinois, posed the idea of a "poof" test — a test that essentially asks whether anyone would notice if one day we were gone. The sobering thought was accompanied by conversations around what it means to "extend" Christ's healing ministry, and how it's not simply about expanding into new markets, but about crossing into new frontiers and doing the mission the organization has been called to do.

In his response to the panel discussions, AdventHealth president/CEO Terry Shaw shared four key take-aways with attendees:

- We are the face of the church in our community.
- We must think about who we need as partners to address the unmet needs of our community.
- We have to stand in the breach and be present when there appears to be no solutions.
- Something being too hard is not an excuse for not getting it done.

The 2019 Conference on Mission concluded with a Sabbath morning worship service featuring a mission spotlight on AdventHealth's Global Mission Impact program and its current Bahamas relief efforts, as well as a powerful sermon by Jimm Bunch, president/CEO for AdventHealth Hendersonville.

"I've been a part of AdventHealth for 30 years and the entire time our mission statement has been 'Extending the Healing Ministry of Christ,'" Bunch said during his sermon. "It's an inspired, God-given mission statement. And up until the last two days, I've paid the most attention to the words 'Healing Ministry of Christ.' This conference made me think of the first word, 'Extending.'" ■

Ingrid Hernández is senior Communications specialist for AdventHealth

Christina Hunter joins Andrews University staff



▲ Christina Hunter

Christina Hunter has joined the staff of Andrews University as dean of University Towers, director of Guest & Convention Services, and sponsor for the Andrews University Graduate Student Association (AUGSA).

Hunter grew up on the Andrews campus, attending junior high at Ruth Murdoch Elementary School and graduating from Andrews Academy. She earned a bachelor's degree in Psychology at Andrews University and, during her college years, worked as a student employee at Student Financial Services. "Interacting with students on a daily basis gave me my first inklings about the type of work I may one day like to do," she says. "I also was

very passionate about music and a major connection to the University came through becoming a member of the Deliverance Mass Choir. Little did I know I would later become a director of the choir. I learned so much about spiritual leadership and ministry and have carried those precious experiences with me throughout my life."

Hunter went on to earn a Master of Education in Clinical Mental Health Counseling with an emphasis in Diversity and Career Counseling from the University of Missouri-St. Louis. She spent 10 years of her career in higher education and Student Life, including work as a counselor, student assistance specialist and instructor. She notes, "I provided academic, personal and career counseling to students as well as worked closely with students in crisis."

In close contact with many Andrews faculty and staff as an alum, the University eventually reached out to her about a job. "After much prayer and exploration, I felt confident that God opened this door to allow me to return to my Andrews University community to serve our students and make a positive difference in their lives," she says.

In her role as dean, Hunter works primarily with graduate and upper-level student residents. She provides support related to residential life and develops programming that helps residents grow mentally, socially, emotionally, professionally and spiritually. "One of my favorite events is the Thursday night "Love+Commune" worship service, a weekly opportunity for

our students to connect with each other and God through meaningful worship, tasty food and fellowship."

Serving as the AUGSA sponsor gives her opportunity to further connect with students as she guides student leaders in building a community for graduate students through programming, events and support.

As director of Guest & Convention Services, Hunter oversees campus guest rooms and aims to provide memorable, comfortable accommodations with excellent customer service and great attention to detail for those visiting the Andrews University campus. "I am guided by the concept that first impressions are everything and strive to have our guest services reflect that. We are excited about the opening of the new Advent Prayer Center that will provide accommodations in addition to our Campus Center rooms," she states. "This Center will provide a beautiful, tranquil space for our guests to enjoy a relaxing and comfortable stay on campus."

Overall, she hopes to bring a caring spirit and personal interaction to her work. She says, "My prayer, especially for our graduate students, is that they can feel connected and valued while enhancing their academics and developing their careers. I look forward to making a meaningful impact on this campus for our students and our guests."

Married to Claval Hunter, a pastor, they have three children: Chloe, Isaiah and Adam. ■

Gillian Panigot, Media Communications manager and FOCUS editor, Andrews University.

Summit on Abuse focuses on helping to recognize and stop abuse

The Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary Chapel on the campus of Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Mich., was full during the afternoon and early evening on September 4, the first day of the North American Division's 2019 enditnow Summit on Abuse. This is the division's third summit, the first to be held on a university campus and was made available online over two days in English and Spanish.

The two-day summit was organized to give pastors, seminary students, teachers, volunteers, church staff and members the tools and knowledge to help end abuse within their scope of influence. The summit featured a number of experts ranging from church leaders, administrators, professional advocates, educators and women who shared their stories of abuse.*

"This is a very sober and serious subject facing our society and our church," said G. Alexander Bryant, North American Division (NAD) executive secretary, during an introduction to the summit. "It is my prayer that you leave this summit more equipped, informed and motivated to address abuse in the sphere of your influence — where you work, where you socialize, and even where you worship."

In addition to the live audience gathered both days in the chapel, according to Jamie Domm, digital media strategist for the NAD, more than 3,600 registered to watch the Facebook livestream event for both days. More than 500 on average continuously viewed the livestream video presentations on Facebook.

Before the summit's experts made their way to the platform, Ivan Williams, NAD Ministerial Association director, welcomed the audience, and on-site and online audiences participated in a survey on abuse. During both days, presenters (after their lectures), attorneys, pastors, and Adventist



▲ After day one of the livestream broadcast, Latoya Wright, a seminary student and abuse survivor, participates with the panel of speakers in the summit's Q&A session in Chan Shun Hall, Andrews University.

Risk Management representatives were available to answer questions generated on Twitter and Facebook.

"Why is addressing this incumbent upon the church?" asked first presenter René Drumm, who then shared the second part of Jesus' words in John 10:10. "Living a life of abuse is not abundant living. . . . One person is too many."

The topics covered during day one of the Summit on Abuse included: "Relational Abuse and Violence in the Seventh-day Adventist Church," Drumm, professor of Social Work; "Spiritual Abuse: Let's End It Now," David Sedlacek, professor of Family Ministry and Discipleship; "The Silent Victims of Domestic Violence," Ruben Muriente, outreach coordinator for the Family Justice Center (Tennessee); "Peer Abuse: Prevalence, Protection, and Prevention," Mindy Salyers, educator, counselor, bullying prevention specialist; "Pornography and Violence," Stanley Stevenson, Social Services regional director, Mississippi Department of Health; "Double Abuse and Its Consequences," Sarah McDugal, abuse recovery coach; and "The Heart of Abuse," with the coordinator of the Psalm 82 Initiative.

The second day's topics included "El Sutil Poder del Abuso Spiritual," Jorge Mayer; "Aprendiendo lo que Es Violencia Domestica," Melissa Ponce-Rodas, professor; "Dándole Voz a las Victimas Secundaria de la Violencia Domestica,"

Muriente; "Como Reconocer los Tipos de Hostigamiento contra un Niño/a, Gerry Lopez; "La Relacion Entre la Pornografia y la Violencia Domestica," Claudio Consuegra; and "Cómo Evitar el Abuso Doble," Melissa Ramos-Mota.

Testimonies were shared by Latoya Wright (English) and Dalia Padró (Spanish), survivors of abuse.

One Facebook viewer, Nicole Crosier Parker, shared her appreciation for the summit via comment: "This. Was. Amazing." She continued, "Thank you to all of these awesome presenters, and everyone else who put so much work into this! This is how change happens!"

After the livestreams concluded, in another first, presenters and attendees were invited to a reception and Q&A session. There, audience members asked the presenter panel questions, and got to hear about real-life situations and solutions.

Presenter Perspective

First presenter, René Drumm, Ph.D., who has been doing research on domestic violence and intimate partner violence (IPV) in the church for decades, said she believes that the Adventist Church is uniquely poised to be a world leader in the area of abuse response and prevention.

"The first study in the early 2000s showed that our rates of IPV are about on par with U.S. national statistics," said Drumm. "The second study took an in-depth look at Adventist victim/survivors of IPV, which

captured my heart and energy. The pain from the survivor's stories convinced us that the most pressing need was to train pastors to respond to disclosures of abuse. From there, the Lord opened the doors for our research team to train the pastors in our area (then Georgia-Cumberland Conference) on abuse response. We developed a 4-hour training that the conference mandated for all of their pastors with amazing and lasting results."

Drumm concluded, "Because a significant number of people in our church are suffering with this silent affliction, we need to act. We have the data; we know what needs to be done; and we have a proven path for improvement."

Another presenter, Ruben Muriente, said that he is participating in the summit because he wants to equip the Adventist Church with the best available resources, education and awareness possible to battle abuse head on. Muriente, the outreach coordinator for the Family Justice Center in Tennessee, spoke both days of the summit, presenting in English and Spanish.

"My goal is to eradicate abuse in our church," said Muriente. "At the summit, I will be presenting on the effects of abuse on children who witness abuse. I want the audience to understand that children need our help and support."

David Sedlacek, a professor at Andrews University, said that "as a survivor of spiritual and emotional abuse, I am convinced that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has a responsibility to create safe churches — not only for our own members, but also for the communities surrounding us."

Sedlacek believes that the enditnow NAD Summit on Abuse has provided information, testimonials and strategies to help deal with abuse and violence of all sorts. "It will help to move our church forward. . . . This is an essential element of the healing mission of the church as we prepare for the Second Coming of Jesus," added Sedlacek.

"The enditnow Summit on Abuse is crucial for the Adventist church because it is long

past time for us to take the subject of abuse seriously," shared Sarah McDugal. "We carry a gospel mandate to accurately represent the loving character of God to those who are vulnerable and wounded. Properly dealing with abuse and abusers is an evangelistic imperative, because poorly handled abuse situations is one of the overwhelming contributors to young people leaving the church. How can we expect our young people to stay, when they too often see leaders misrepresent God's character by protecting abusers and sweeping victims aside?"

McDugal hopes the audience comes away from the summit with a healing awareness that there are people in the church who care about counteracting abuse, a sense of more freedom to speak out about pain and find support, and a connection to practical tools to be used to increase education on abuse topics.

From the NAD

While many from the North American Division administration and leadership have supported the summit in myriad ways — from hosting to planning to presenting, two gave presentations at this year's event during the Spanish-language broadcast.

Gerry Lopez, associate director of NAD Children's Ministries, said "It is time for our church to talk and inform about these topics, to put them out there in the open. We need to educate our leaders and members, and make them aware that this is a real problem that exists in our church. We really have to educate everyone so that we all can know how to identify the problem and help the victims."

Lopez presented on bullying with the hope that viewers would gain a better understanding about not only what bullying is and how to prevent it, but also how to help kids deal with it. "As pastors, Sabbath School teachers, children's ministry leaders, school teachers and parents, we must be the people that the victims of bullying can go to for help and protection. The only way that will happen is they can trust us enough

to come to us; the only way we can help is if we ourselves are informed on what to do."

"I spoke about the relationship between pornographers and intimate partner abuse," said Claudio Consuegra, D.Min., NAD Family Ministries director. "Our hope is to shed some more light on the growing problem with pornography in our churches and communities."

Additional Information

If you are in immediate need of help, visit enditnownorthamerica.org/get-help to connect with resources in your area.

The Seventh-day Church in North America also offers a silent whistle program that allows users to send anonymous reports of abuse. Visit silentwhistle.com. Click on "file an ethics/compliance incident report," then enter "Adventist." The reports go to the Office of General Counsel for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. ■

**Both days of the Summit on Abuse are available to watch on the NAD enditnow facebook page at facebook.com/enditnowNAD/*

You also can watch the Summit on Abuse by visiting enditnownorthamerica.org/watch2019.

Kimberly Luste Maran, associate director of Communication, North American Division



▲ David Sedlacek, professor of Family Ministry and Discipleship at Andrews University, addresses both the online audience as well as those gathered at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary Chapel on September 4.



Photography by Dave Sherwin and Christina Rogers

Dozens of Academy students pledge a year to mission by age 25

Against a backdrop of fiery autumn colors, almost 50 academy students attending leadership camp pledged to dedicate a year of their life to mission.

The students were part of a group of 75 from seven Lake Union academies who gathered Oct. 3-6 at Camp Au Sable in preparation for leadership roles in their schools. Training took the form of general sessions discussing leadership principles, sectional meetings for different student leadership roles, fellowship with leaders from different schools, and time for reflection and planning with their sponsors.

For over twenty years, the Lake Union Education Department has organized a leadership camp for junior and senior student leaders; this year featured some unique aspects.

Some students from Indiana Academy gained practical experience as the worship team. "The Lord led in that regard," said Ruth Horton, Lake Union associate director of Education who oversaw planning for the event. "I had planned to ask one of the music teachers to lead the music, but he recommended a student, Ben Kwon, who leads praise and worship at his school and church. He pulled together a group of students to help him, and I met and prayed with them. I was very impressed with their intentionality in preparing for this."

Asking students at the conference to facilitate worship at each meeting was not the only change made this year. "We added a sectional meeting for dormitory resident assistants," Horton explained. "There was interest in having a sectional for this last year, and I asked Matt Hill, vice principal at Great Lakes Adventist Academy, to lead it because he has a lot of experience and loves serving as dean."

The weekend speaker, Center for Youth Evangelism director, Ron Whitehead, challenged the group to ponder the questions:

"What is your definition of greatness? More importantly, what is God's definition of greatness?" He shared about his own high school leadership experiences and the importance of treating everyone as someone important, which students were immediately able to put into practice as they washed each other's feet.

Students took a break from their sessions on Friday afternoon to enjoy a variety of pursuits, including basketball, hiking, canoeing and driving go-carts. A new recreation activity for Friday afternoon, horseback riding, was added this year. "I really enjoyed horseback riding," said Elizabeth Bateman, a senior at Battle Creek Academy. "I liked being able to bond with an animal that I love. I don't get to do that very often."

As they enjoyed the beautiful fall colors and time with friends both old and new, students looked forward to the spiritual highlights of the weekend, beginning with vespers.

The focus shifted from their relationships with others to their relationship with God as they shared communion, contemplating Camp au Sable director Ken Micheff's message about the disciples' relationships with Jesus and the stark difference between Judas and the others. He issued a call for students to dedicate a year of their lives to service before they turn 25, and more than 40 responded.

Nathan Fernandez, Andrews Academy senior, was one of the students who stood up. For him, it was a decision which came naturally. "In my sectional breakout, we talked about being part of something bigger than yourself. That inspired me to not so much focus on me and just getting my education done as soon as possible, but being part of something bigger than myself and bringing other people to Christ."

On Sabbath, Andrews University students led in worship and asked yet another important set of questions: "Do young people need the church?" and "Does the church need young people?" The resounding response was yes!

► Right (top to bottom): Dormitory resident advisors; yearbook editors; campus religious activities leaders; Student Association officers; Junior and Senior class officers

Beyond the Retreat

As they return to their schools, students take the theme of "greatness" with them. After this weekend, some leaders were thinking of simply going back to basics. Jalend Hardy, junior, Battle Creek Academy said, "I think one thing I'd like to try is doing a prayer with the school every morning over the speaker system at our school so everyone can worship together."

Senior Hinsdale Adventist Academy student Isaac Webb had a similar plan. "One idea we talked about was a prayer committee of all the pastors in our school. People can come to get prayer if they get the urge, and we can pray with them."

Jacob Pierce, junior at Great Lakes Adventist Academy, is a class pastor and wants to figure out a time for morning dorm worship and devotional thoughts. "Our Bible teacher runs in the morning, and I thought we could invite more people to that in order to pray with us and have a devotional thought." Another opportunity is visiting people in the community with his church pastor. "I'd like to have good conversations with them — what they want to see me doing, help them, see where they are."

Cade Bolin, senior at Indiana Academy, was one of the worship leaders for the weekend and said he learned the importance of prayer. "I'm hoping to mentor other students at my school," he said, "and prepare them to be leaders by sharing the characteristics of Christ with them."

Many students expressed appreciation for the opportunity to meet other students which allowed for cross-pollination of ideas. For instance, Andrews Academy junior Giancarlo Leonor said one idea he has is to do a vespers rake day where we rake leaves for people in the community and then have a vesper at the end of the day where everyone can come together. "We're not a boarding school, so we want to draw people in and build our community."

Adrian Pichardo, senior at Grand Rapids Adventist Academy, said he was moved to return to his school and try to involve the newer classes. "We heard a story about an eighth-grader invited to participate in gymnastics. One older kid devoted his time to helping him, and he lost time with his friends to be there. I want to be the person, like him, who helps others feel comfortable."

Abigail Lopez, senior, Wisconsin Academy, is also looking forward to placing a greater priority on her classmates' well-being. "I plan to reach out more because sometimes I only reach out to specific people," she said. "I pray that God will give me Jesus' eyes and see the people that need me. Everyone has a purpose and some people don't know theirs — that is what we are here for. I also plan to be more confident about my leadership skills. God is preparing me. You're never ready for leadership, but God prepares you through your mistakes and through people." ■

Janelle Sundin, Battle Creek Academy English teacher





David Sherwin

▲ President emeritus Niels-Erik Andreasen and Dominique Gummelt, director of University Wellness and executive director of the Andreasen Center

Ribbon Cutting Celebration for Andreasen Center for Wellness

On Thursday, Sept. 26, hundreds of individuals from the Andrews University community gathered in front of the Andreasen Center for Wellness for the Ribbon Cutting Celebration.

David Faehner, vice president for University Advancement, recalled the groundbreaking of the Andreasen Center for Wellness 18 months prior and noted that 1,400 gifts from many people had added up to provide the building. He also recognized Niels-Erik Andreasen, the Center's namesake, who served Andrews for 22 years.

Dominique Gummelt, director of University Wellness and executive director of the Andreasen Center, reflected on the purpose of the Center, saying, "It is the mission of the University Wellness initiative to help every person live their life to the fullest potential, and as we have started on this journey, the new Andreasen Center for Wellness will provide a new, massive pathway to make our desires for wellness become a reality."

Andrews University Graduate Student Association president Kenneth Choi shared a student perspective on the building, noting how it will better connect students on



▲ Twenty individuals participated in the Andreasen Center for Wellness ribbon cutting.

campus. "Now we have a reason to get up in the morning and take a short walk.... this is a place for us to hang out and to get healthy at the same time. To socialize and to get fit. This is an opportunity for us to bring together all the different students, all the different people on our campus, as well."

The director of the Counseling & Testing Center, Judith Fisher, noted that faculty and staff also are looking forward to a healthier campus. "Our Andrews University world premiere changing institution has partnered once more with a community of friends, and today celebrates yet another investment destined to yield life-transforming results. This is an electrifying moment for each one of us, faculty, staff, members of this community of faith, who have watched with anticipation as this edifice emerged. And now, at last, the moment has come. The state-of-the-art wellness center is a symbol of our pledge to prioritizing the nurturing of our minds, our bodies and our souls as faithful stewards created in the image of a healthy God."

Michael Hildebrand, president of Oronoko Township, brought his congratulations to Andrews University and posed the question, "What if the community joined together with the University and chose to be the healthiest community in the world?" He added, "I don't even know if that's an achievable moniker, but it might be a conversation worth having."

Next, Paul Stokstad, co-chair of the President's Council, shared his reflections. He said, "This is the high day for Andrews, and hopefully it will be a high day that continues on for year and year and year thereafter. So, Lord, we thank you for this wonderful gift, and we use it to your glory!"

Dan Carrick, district director for Michigan Senator Kim LaSata, shared a tribute on behalf of LaSata, State Representative Brad Paquette and Congressman Fred Upton. The message noted, "The determination exhibited by the University is an effort to provide and establish the importance of wellness to all individuals, both on campus and throughout the entire community." It also stated, "Perhaps the most important characteristic of [the] Andreasen Center for Wellness is that the Center will focus on connecting wellness to the Creator."

President Andrea Luxton reiterated the hope that the Andreasen Center for Wellness will be a place for both members of the campus and wider community to connect. She encouraged those in attendance to take the gift of the book, *Rest and Redemption* by Niels-Erik Andreasen, published as a special edition by the Andrews University Press. She also noted there would be plaques recognizing donors as well as room names representing various locations around the world that Andrews students call home. In particular, Luxton emphasized

three individuals honored in the Center for Wellness: Barbara Friesen, a faculty member who was committed to bettering lives through wellness; Dick Scott, a staff member who engaged with every area of campus and lived the mission of Andrews in every action he took; and Newton Hoilette, former vice president for Student Affairs who worked to deepen the student experience.

President emeritus Niels-Erik Andreasen noted, "This Center is attractive and inviting, bright inside and out, spacious and filled with exciting opportunities designed to keep us well and in good health. It is making the University a good place for students, faculty, staff, friends and neighbors to meet, a second 'hello building' on our campus, and I am pleased and honored to provide it with its name."

The Andrews University Andreasen Center for Wellness officially opened for business on Sunday, Oct. 6. To learn more about the Center and for information about becoming a member, please visit andrews.edu/wellnesscenter. ■

Gillian Panigot, Media Communications manager and FOCUS editor

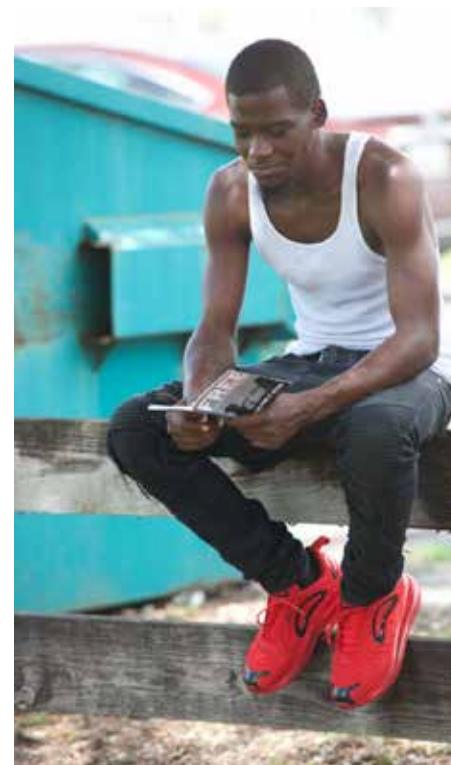


Photo courtesy Breath of Life Ministries

▲ Community member in the Miami area reads a copy of *FREE: Revisiting God's Plan for Oppressed People*, which was distributed by local church members.

Breath of Life Ministries empowers members, publishes its first book for literature evangelism

Carlton P. Byrd, speaker/director of Breath of Life Ministries and senior pastor of Oakwood University Church in Huntsville, Ala., believes spiritual health is partially dependent on personal involvement in outreach. One way Byrd

encourages members to be active participants in sharing the gospel is through literature distribution. While organizing members to distribute literature isn't a new concept, for some churches, it is a newly revived practice that generates a lot of enthusiasm.

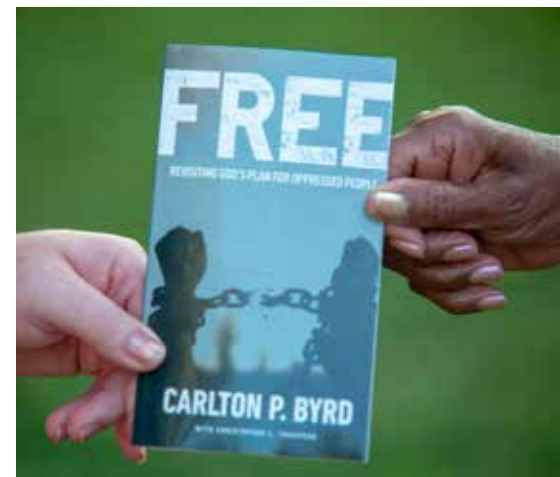
"Praise God for the spoken word and the sung word, but some will be won by reading the Word of God and truth-filled literature. I am a proponent of literature because when literature goes out, it can go places we can't go," said Byrd.

This emphasis birthed *Breath of Life's* first sharing book, *FREE: Revisiting God's Plan for Oppressed People*, co-authored by Byrd and Christopher C. Thompson, Communication and Marketing director for Breath of Life. The pocket-sized volume points readers to a Deliverer who is concerned about the social, economic and political circumstances that oppress people and suppress the voices of millions in America and around the world.

Released on June 19, *FREE* has already been distributed to hundreds of people in preparation for the ministry's public evangelism meetings. Several churches in Miami have shared the book throughout their neighborhoods, but especially in the city's Brownsville community.

After receiving a copy and reading several of its pages, one community member said, "Thank you for this. I love this!"

Brownsville is the home of Bethany Church, which served as the location of the "Breath of Life Summer Revival."



At the end of the revival, Byrd and area pastors baptized 120 people into the Adventist Church.

"It is Breath of Life's sincere desire that this project will help empower local churches to similarly experience the joy of personal outreach in preparation for public evangelism," said Byrd. "Jesus isn't coming anywhere until the gospel goes everywhere." ■

Christopher Thompson, Communication and Marketing director, Breath of Life Ministries, and Carl McRoy, director of Literature Ministries, North American Division

Nov./Dec.

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY

GENERAL EVENTS

Oct. 31–Nov. 1: 5th Annual Wellness Fest

Nov. 1–2: Andrews Autumn Conference on Religion and Science

Nov. 3–4: Lake Union Conference Juniors Preview Event

Nov. 11: Health Professions, Transfer and Graduate Student Preview

Nov. 16, 11:45 a.m.: Honors Church, Seminary Chapel

Dec. 3, 4–6 p.m.: Fall Honors Thesis Symposium, Buller Hall

Dec. 13: Andrews Academy Feast of Lights, Pioneer Memorial Church

HOWARD PERFORMING ARTS CENTER EVENTS

For more information on the following events and to purchase tickets, call 888-467-6442 or 269-471-3560, or visit howard.andrews.edu.

Nov. 7, 7 p.m.: Andrews Academy Concerto Night

Nov. 17, 7 p.m.: Howard Center Presents...Canadian Brass

Nov. 23, 8 p.m.: Andrews University Symphony Orchestra
Thanksgiving Concert

Nov. 24, 4 p.m.: Sunday Music Series: Chi Yong Yun

Nov. 26, 7 p.m.: Andrews Academy Holiday Pops Concert

Dec. 6, 7 p.m.: Welcome Christmas Choral Concert

Dec. 7, 8 p.m.: Andrews University Wind Symphony Christmas Concert

INDIANA

Nov. 1–3: Pathfinder/Adventurer Leadership Training, Timber Ridge Camp

Nov. 12: Central Zone Prayer Meeting, 7 p.m., Indianapolis Southside Church

Nov. 15–17: Pathfinder Council Retreat, Timber Ridge Camp

Nov. 23: Your Best Pathway to Health Expo Rally, 3 p.m., Embassy Suites, Indy West Side

Dec. 6–8: "Journey to Bethlehem," Cicero Church

Dec. 14: "Night of Hope" music program, Cicero Church

ILLINOIS

Nov. 1–3: Young Adult Summit

LAKE REGION

Nov. 1: 2019 LRC TLT Boot Camp, Camp Wagner

Nov. 2: PARL Rally, Indianapolis

Nov. 8: Illiana Youth Federation Bible Trivia, Westside Church

Nov. 9: Illiana Youth Federation AYS, Tabernacle of Hope Church

MICHIGAN

Nov. 1–3: Public Hi-C Retreat, Camp Au Sable

Nov. 10: Public Campus Ministries, Camp Au Sable

Nov. 8–10: Marriage Retreat, Crystal Mountain

WISCONSIN

Nov. 10: Hispanic SAL, North Milwaukee Hispanic Church

Nov. 17: Hispanic Women's Evangelistic Banquet

Dec. 7: Jovenes Adventista Wisconsin Hispania (JAWHI) Youth Rally, Camp Wakonda

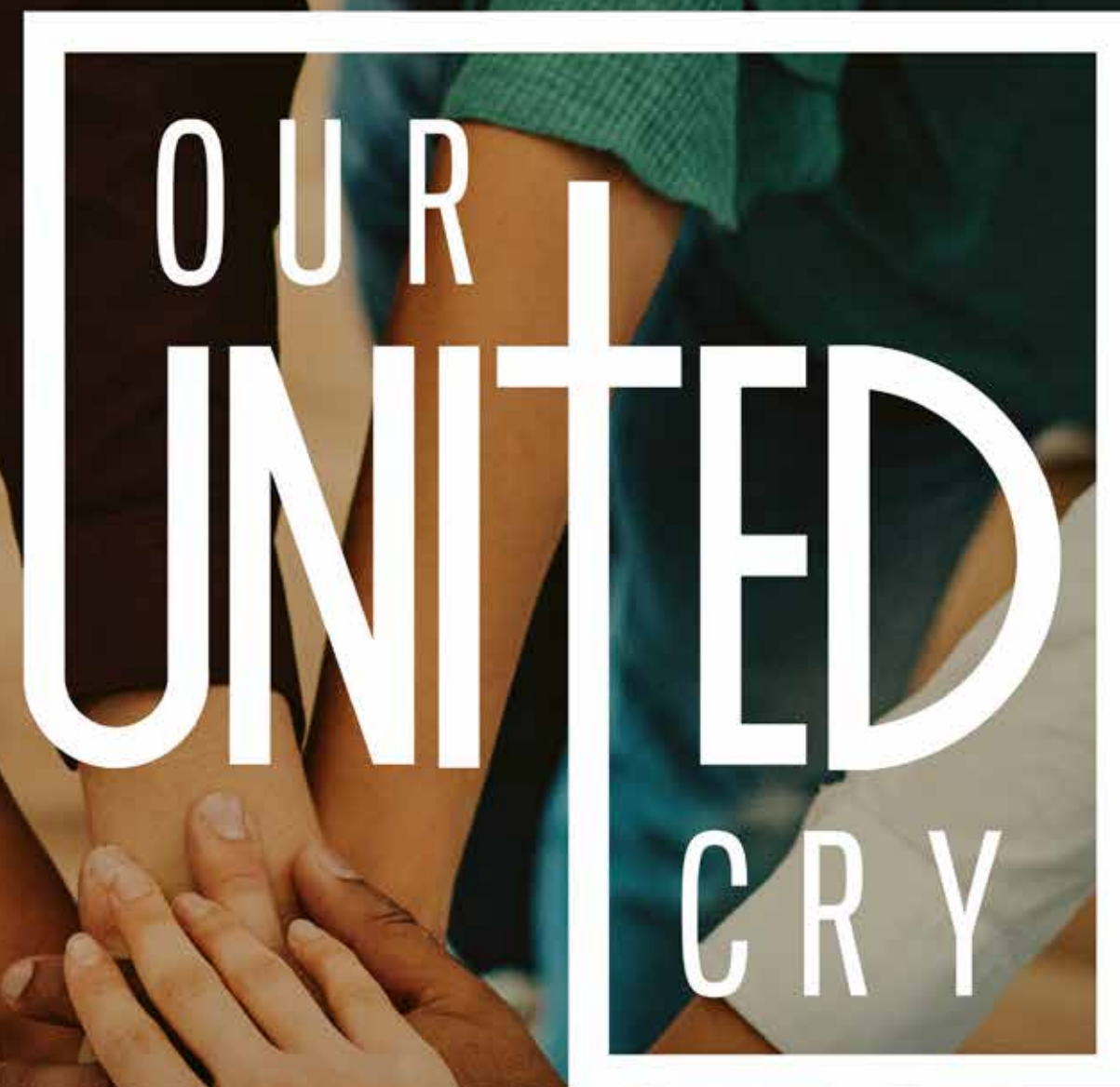
Dec. 15: Hispanic SAL, North Milwaukee Hispanic Church

LAKE UNION

Nov. 3: Adventist Community Health Initiative, Hammond/Northwest Indiana, Dynasty Banquet Hall

Nov. 10: Adventist Community Health Initiative, West Central Adventist Church gym, Oak Park, Ill.

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Seventh-day
Adventist Church
LAKE UNION HEADQUARTERS

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

ANNIVERSARY



JOHN and MARIAN MENDEL recently celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary. They met at Broadview Academy and graduated together in 1948. The Mendels have been members of the Chikaming Church in Sawyer, Mich., for 31 years.

John Mendel and Marian Spohr were married on September 25, 1949, in Western Springs, Ill., by Pastor Halvard Thomsen. John taught elementary and high school starting in Eau Claire, Mich., then Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Indiana, and finally substituting in the Berrien County area. Marian did secretarial work and is now retiring as administrative assistant for three adult foster care homes.

They have two daughters, Michelle (Winston) Nwoke of Berrien Springs, Mich., and Leanne (Micheal) Sauers of Indianapolis, Ind.; and 11 grandchildren.

OBITUARIES

BROWN, Margaret R. (Foster); age 76, born Mar. 23, 1943, in Hamtramck, Mich.; died, May 31, 2019, in Cilo, Mich. She was

a member of the First Flint Church in Flint, Mich. Survivors include her husband, Ronald F. Brown; and sister, Evelyn Hosea. Private inurnment.

BURNS, Todd; age 69; born Dec. 6, 1949, in Saginaw, Mich.; died Aug. 7, 2019, in Zeeland, Mich. He was a member of the Holland Church in Holland, Mich. Survivors include brothers, Robert (Audrey) Burns and Dr. Thomas (Caroll) Burns; sisters, Beryle (Burns) Silvernale and MiMi (Burns) Sackett. Funeral services were conducted by Pastor Sean Reed; interment was at Riverside Cemetery in St. Charles, Mich.

COLE, Marjorie E. Danielson; born April 16, 1926, in Prentice, Wis.; died Jan. 1, 2019, in Berrien Springs, Mich. She was a member of the Pioneer Memorial Church in Berrien Springs. Survivors include her husband, Wendell Cole; sons, Daniel Cole and Donald Cole; daughter, Wendy Fivash; brother, Kenneth Danielson; five grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. Memorial services were conducted by John Glass.

DENNIS, Orville Sr.; age 91, born Dec. 5, 1927, in Morgan County, Ken.; died April 8, 2019, in Angola, Ind. He was a member of the Angola Church in Angola. Survivors include his wife, Annabell Lea (Walker) Dennis; son, Orville Dennis, Jr.; daughter, Debra Barrone; five grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren. Funeral services were conducted by Don Greulich; interment was at Fairfield Cemetery in Corunna, Ind.

DRAKE, Ann H. (Harper); age 91, born June 21, 1928, in Petoskey, Mich.; died Sept. 1, 2019, in Coopersville, Mich. She was a member of the Wright Church in Coopersville. Survivors include son, Ken Gowell; daughter, Cindy (Rex) Burkall; sister, Catherine (Bruce) Kleinhenz; five

grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren. Memorial services were conducted by Bernie Andersen; inurnment was in Maple Hill Cemetery in Wright.

JONES, Janette L. (Berry); age 98, born July 13, 1921, in Evansville, Wis.; died Sept. 1, 2019, in Highland, Mich. She was a member of the Waterford Riverside Church in Waterford, Mich. Survivors include her daughters, Judy (Gary) Hiiter and Jana Thompson; four grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. Memorial services were conducted by Todd Ervin; interment was at Milton Lawns Cemetery in Janesville, Wis.

McINTYRE, Coralie S. “Coke” (Phalp); age 84, born June 7, 1934, in Marion, Ill.; died March 24, 2019, in Monmouth, Ill. She was a member of the Parkview Church in Galesburg, Ill. Survivors include her husband, John McIntyre; son, David McIntyre; daughter, Connie McIntyre; and 12 grandchildren. Inurnment was in McGuire & Davies Funeral Home and Crematory and Cemetery.

MULDER, Marian (Eaton); age 85, born June 5, 1934, in McBain County, Mich.; died Aug. 13, 2019, in Holland, Mich. She was a member of the Holland Church in Holland. Survivors include sons, Kevin (Sharon) Ridlington, James (Susan) Ridlington, Joel Ridlington, and Donald Jr. (Kim) Mulder; daughter, Melody Fedney; brothers, Arnold (Barbara) Eaton, Alvin (Mae) Eaton, and Ray (Marcia) Eaton; 15 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren; and 1 great-great grandchild. Funeral services were conducted by Pastor Sean Reed; interment was at Lakeshore Memorial Services in Holland.

SMITH, Kenneth Romaine, Jr.; age 69, born June 27, 1949, in Blossburg, Penn.; died June 4, 2019, in Flint, Mich. He was a member of the First Flint Church in Flint. Survivors include his wife, Susan LaLonde; sons, Kenneth III, Aaron, and Alex; daughter, Amanda Evans; sisters, Rosemary Phelps, Peggy Smith, and Ruth Gardner; and two grandchildren. Private inurnment.

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

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MOVE WITH AN AWARD-WINNING AGENCY — Apex Moving & Storage partners with the General Conference to provide quality moves for you. Call us for all your relocation needs. Contact Marcy Danté at 800-766-1902, or visit our website: apexmoving.com/adventist.

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FOR SALE

WANTED TO BUY — 1-10,000 used SDA books to include SOP, doctrinal, school, song, cook, story and SDA games. **FOR SALE:** same as above. I have lists of authors and subjects to help in your search. This includes older or newer books. Call John at 269-781-6379.

PATHFINDER/ADVENTURER CLUB NAME CREST — Order your Pathfinder and Adventurer club name crest at pathfinderclubnames.com. For more information, call 269-208-5853 or email us at pathfinderclubnames@gmail.com.

MISCELLANEOUS

FARMERS & GARDENERS (AdAgrA's) 6th annual Adventist Agriculture Association conference — **Jan. 14–18, 2020**, High Springs, Fla. Since 2013, AdAgrA encourages, supports and mentors those who wish to follow God's agriculture plan. Great information and inspiration for how and why Adventists need to be in the garden. Registration and info: adventistag.org.

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE DEGREES — Feed the world with Agribusiness. Beautify the world with Environmental Landscape Design. Care for the creatures that share our world with Animal Science. Change the world with International Agriculture Development. See our new Agriculture Education Center at andrews.edu/agriculture; email: agriculture@andrews.edu; 269-471-6006.

REAL ESTATE

FOR SALE — Country home with 7.6 acres adjacent to church school and woods. 6 bedroom; 2.5 bath. Roof and siding new this year. Heated one-car garage with attached carport. Work area with 6-plus bay garage. Located in Sheridan, Ill. Contact 815-474-6601.

LAND FOR SALE NEAR SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY — Approximately 45 min. away, Pikeville, TN. Mountaintop land parcels for sale. 5-acre mountaintop lot with breathtaking view to build your dream home: \$130,000. 10-acre wooded lot across the street from the bluff view: \$50,000. Call the Dixon Team-Keller Williams Realty at 423-702-2000 for more info (office: 423-664-1800), or visit doxonteam.com for photos.

EMPLOYMENT

FEMALE NEEDED to live with and provide care for a 92-year-old woman in her home in London, Ken. If interested, please contact Jan Grentz at 606-682-5890.

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Sabbath Sunset Calendar

	Nov. 1	Nov. 8	Nov. 15	Nov. 22	Nov. 29	Dec. 6	Dec.13	Dec. 20	Dec. 27
Berrien Springs, Mich.	6:39	5:30	5:24	5:19	5:15	5:14	5:14	5:16	5:21
Chicago, Ill.	5:44	4:36	4:29	4:24	4:20	4:19	4:19	4:22	4:26
Detroit, Mich.	5:18	5:04	4:51	4:40	4:31	4:26	4:23	4:25	4:29
Indianapolis, Ind.	6:42	5:34	5:28	5:24	5:21	5:19	5:20	5:23	5:27
La Crosse, Wis.	5:55	4:46	4:39	4:33	4:29	4:27	4:27	4:30	4:34
Lansing, Mich.	6:30	5:22	5:15	5:09	5:06	5:04	5:04	5:07	5:11
Madison, Wis.	5:49	4:40	4:33	4:28	4:24	4:22	4:23	4:25	4:29
Springfield, Ill.	5:56	4:48	4:42	4:37	4:34	4:33	4:34	4:37	4:41

CALENDAR OF OFFERINGS 2019
NOVEMBER

- Nov. 2** Local Church Budget
Nov. 9 World Budget
(Emphasis: Annual Sacrifice
Global Mission)
Nov. 16 Local Church Budget
Nov. 23 Local Conference Advance
Nov. 30 Union-designated

DECEMBER

- Dec. 7** Local Church Budget
Dec. 14 World Budget
(Emphasis: NAD Adventist
Community Services)
Dec. 21 Local Church Budget
Dec. 28 Local Conference Advance

THIRTEENTH SABBATH OFFERING

- Dec. 28** Inter-European Division



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Counting Your Blessings

By Jon Corder

THIS ARTICLE IS THE BEGINNING OF SOMETHING NEW — a spot in the *Herald* dedicated to stories, perspectives and insights on stewardship. My hope is that you will find it interesting, helpful, and even thought-provoking occasionally. The articles will be short, written by different authors which will bring a wealth of ideas to the table. In time, if these articles could help all of us be more comfortable with and excited over this assignment God has given — to be stewards, I would be delighted.

At the beginning of this journey, I would encourage you to start a list. You could journal it in a special notebook, you could put it on your mobile device, or you could put up sticky notes — in Bible times they used rocks. Do it in writing. This would be a list of blessings God has given. The blessing could be an answered prayer, thankfulness for a close friend, or garden

produce shared by someone that loves to garden. The idea would be to review it now and then to remember how God has blessed. You could even use it to encourage others at a time when they need encouragement. Ellen White suggested this in a May 7, 1908, *Review and Herald* article. She wrote, “The blessings received should be promptly acknowledged. The record of them should be placed in our diary, that when we take the book in hand, we may remember the goodness of the Lord, and praise His holy name.”

James 4:8 NLT (first part) says, *Come close to God, and God will come close to you.* Remembering and reviewing your record of God’s blessings is one way of coming close to God, and His promise is that He will come close to you. I think coming close to God is part of being a good steward, don’t you?

Jon Corder is Stewardship director of the Lake Union Conference.



Evangelism Schedule

NOVEMBER 23, 2019: Your Best Pathway to Health rally, Embassy Suite, Plainfield, Ind.

JANUARY 24–27, 2020: It Is Written (IIW) training weekend, Indianapolis

FEBRUARY 14–16: Lake Union Youth Evangelism Congress, Shipshewana, Ind.

FEBRUARY 22: Statewide evangelism rally — John Bradshaw, IIW, English rally; Robert Costa, IIW, Spanish rally

MARCH 6–7: Lake Union Prayer Conference, Plainfield, Ind.

APRIL 8–10: Your Best Pathway to Health Expo, Lucas Oil Stadium, Indianapolis

APRIL 10–MAY 9: North American Division Evangelism Institute (NADEI) evangelistic meetings and field schools, North and South Zone Ignition churches

APRIL 17–MAY 16: Evangelistic meetings, IIW Central Zone Ignition churches

APRIL 18–25: Robert Costa, IIW, Hispanic evangelistic meetings

MAY 23–JUNE 12: Carlton Byrd, Breath of Life evangelistic meetings

JUNE 1–20: General Conference Field School of Evangelism

JUNE 12–20: Ted Wilson, General Conference evangelistic series

JUNE 13–20: Alejandro Bullón, Caravan of Evangelism, Hispanic Ignition churches



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THE LAKE UNION HERALD STAFF

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

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

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

CORRESPONDENTS

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

LAKE UNION CONFERENCE DEPARTMENTS

P.O. Box 287, Berrien Springs, MI 49103-0287 | (269) 473-8200
President Maurice Valentine
Secretary Steven Poenitz
Treasurer Glynn Scott
Vice President Carmelo Mercado
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Ministerial Steven Poenitz
Multiethnic Ministries. Carmelo Mercado
Native Ministries. Gary Burns
Public Affairs and Religious Liberty. Nicholas Miller
Trust Services Jon Corder
Women's Ministries
Youth Ministries Ron Whitehead

LOCAL CONFERENCES AND INSTITUTIONS

AdventHealth: Terry Shaw, president/CEO, 900 Hope Way, Altamonte Springs, FL 32714; 407-357-1000.
Andrews University: Andrea Luxton, president, Berrien Springs, MI 49104-0670; 269-471-7771.
Illinois: Ron Aguilera, president; John Grys, secretary; Michael Daum, treasurer; 619 Plainfield Rd., Willowbrook, IL 60527-8438; 630-856-2850.
Indiana: Vic Van Schaik, president; Mark Eaton, secretary/treasurer; street address: 15205 Westfield Blvd., Carmel, IN 46032; mailing address: P.O. Box 5000, Westfield, IN 46074; 317-844-6201.
Lake Region: R. Clifford Jones, president; Garth Gabriel, secretary; Yvonne Collins, treasurer; 19860 South LaGrange Rd., Mokena, IL 60448; 773-846-2661.
Michigan: James Micheff, Jr., president; Justin Ringstaff, secretary; Michael Bernard, treasurer; street address: 5801 W. Michigan Ave., Lansing, MI 48917; mailing address: P.O. Box 24187, Lansing , MI 48909; 517-316-1500.
Wisconsin: Michael G. Edge, president; Brian Stephan, secretary/treasurer; street address: N2561 Old Highway 16, Fall River, WI 53932; mailing address: P.O. Box 100, Fall River, WI 53932; 920-484-6555.
Contributors: Writer guidelines are available online at http://lakeunionherald.org.
Indexed in the Seventh-day Adventist Periodical Index

On the Battlefield

By Jeff Baxter



▲ Jeff Baxter

LaDonna Baxter

AS A SKINNY CROSS-COUNTRY RUNNER IN HIGH SCHOOL, I mainly hung out with other skinny, cross-country runners. Runners stick together, train together and fight together, on and off the course. I loved that!

But I wanted more. Although raised as an Adventist and knowing better, I wanted to be in “the cool kid club” — the partiers, the “Free Spirit-ers,” the fashion gurus wearing designer trends, and expensive jewelry. When I went away to college, a change began. I was top of my class in “swag” and even got signed to a modeling agency in Atlanta. My college roommate also was very much into fashion and partying; before I knew it, we were hitting the best party spots off campus. Sad to say, school was no longer my priority.

I eventually dropped out of school but didn’t want to return to Detroit just yet. Freedom tasted too good!

But then things started getting too crazy with that lifestyle, and I decided to finally go home.

Soon after, I enlisted in the Marine Corps, where I got even further from Christ. The effects of a non-filling lifestyle began to take a real toll on my mood, outlook on life and, ultimately, my soul. Emptiness grew, and I became suicidal. I remember having a gun to my head, gently pulling on the trigger to see how close I could get to the “break.”

Coming from a family who loves the Lord, I still had a knowledge of spiritual things. I knew there was a God. When friends would speak crazy about our Savior, I would hypocritically correct them, saying, “I know the truth, but don’t look at me as an example.” I accepted my fate of an eternal death in the lake of fire. I would say to myself, “It’s too hard to be saved; I might as well give up, enjoy the counterfeits of this life, and burn in hell with the rest of the world.”

However, when my grandfather, Pastor P.C. Willis Sr., died, for once, I saw that it is possible to live a great life for Christ. It is possible to be cool and enjoy life how God intends it! I finally cried out to God, but not like I did before. This time was different. I wanted to be free from sin, free from depression, and sorrow. I knew the only way to peace was through Christ Jesus.

My testimony is ongoing. I still struggle and try my best to deny self when worldly temptations and discouragement sneak back around. But, no longer am I that insecure runner trying to impress people; I am more fixated on running the race set before me, to please my ever-loving Creator.

Because he hath set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high because he hath known My name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him (Psalms 91:14–15 KJV). ■

Jeff Baxter, 22, was baptized in May and has launched Battlefront Ministries to help other youth gear up for the battle against the devil’s deceptions.

Blink of an Eye

By Carmen Mora



Courtesy of Karina Martinez

▲ Karina Martinez

IN JUNE 2006, THEN SEVEN-YEAR-OLD KARINA MARTINEZ was traveling back with her family from a trip to Mexico. It was late and “I was feeling tired,” Karina recalls, “so I took off my seatbelt and laid down to sleep.” The next thing Karina remembers was her mom yelling, ‘Get Karina out!’ When Karina opened her eyes, her dad was struggling to remove her seatbelt. The car had overturned.

Months after the accident, Zeferino, Karina’s father, a tireless missionary, was ready to get back on track conducting Bible studies. He asked Karina to join him. For years, Karina was exposed to the teachings of the Bible. After each Bible study, Zeferino would do an appeal. Karina questioned why the appeal was never directed at her, “My dad said to people, ‘Do you want to be saved? Do you want to serve God?’” Karina wondered, “*Why am I not being baptized?*”

Karina considers her parents, her role models. They live out the Gospel both in

word and in action, always sharing the Gospel and ministering to those in need. Her parents’ example and a realization that God spared her life for a reason drove her decision to be baptized, which she did at age 10.

By 16, Karina had developed many fears that sometimes get in the way of living life to the fullest. She was especially afraid of communicating with other people. One day her dad dropped her off at school. As she got out of the car, her backpack got trapped in the passenger door as she closed it. Her dad did not notice and drove off. Her backpack tore off and she collapsed on the ground. Miraculously, the only thing wounded was her pride. Just then she had an epiphany: the memory of the accident years ago came rushing back. If she had unfastened her seat-belt to lay down in the backseat, then why was her father struggling to unbuckle her when the car overturned? Surely, an angel of the Lord had protected her.

From then on, she decided to live life with no fear. She has been more active in the Racine Hispanic Church, serving as Sabbath School secretary and using her artistic talents to create beautiful pieces used during kids’ programs and evangelistic meetings.

Now 20, Karina desires to make a difference through a career in nursing, and her love for Christ is stronger than ever. “I pray every morning and every night. I have conversations with God, and talk to Him about my day — I thank Him for the bad days, too. This time with God helps me to remember that God has a plan for me.” ■

Carmen Mora is a member of the Racine Hispanic Church.



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