

Lake Union HERALD

MARCH 2020



FRUITFUL STEWARDSHIP
ROOTED IN LOVE



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On January 24–27, the *It Is Written* (IIW) training weekend was held at the Glendale Church in Indianapolis. More than 50 attended to receive evangelism training taught by the IIW training team of Yves Monnier, Douglas Na'fa and Jack Phillips.



“Our conference will embark on probably the largest evangelistic effort it has ever been part of,” Vic Van Schaik wrote to Indiana members in reference to the Your Best Pathway to Health clinic, convening April 8–10.



Thank you to each Pathfinder who attended the Chosen International Camporee and gave during the Sabbath offering! Your donated dollars are already providing resources to Pathfinder leaders in Cuba, allowing them to be more effective in Pathfinder ministry.



On Oct. 14, 2019, Andrea Luxton, president of Andrews University, was awarded one of five “Women of the Year” awards given by Women’s Ministries during a special dinner program at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Let's Stay in Touch!



Evangelist Mark Finley is one of the Lake Union Prayer Conference speakers. He has a personal invitation for you.

<http://ourunitedcry.org>

New videos added on a regular basis



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Lake Union
HERALD
THIS WEEK



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I am excited about this issue of the *Herald* as it addresses stewardship — the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one’s care. We often think stewardship is only about finances; however, it also applies to the use of our talents, our time, and our service to others. I ask myself, “*Am I a good steward of the gospel message? Am I faithful to serve those whom God has placed in my path for His purpose?*”


 Gary Burns
 Editor



Sarah Duvivier

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COVER ILLUSTRATION: SARAH DUVIVIER

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God's Promises

We have rich promises in the Word of God. In Scripture, there are many passages that speak to financial matters; however, the text that serves as a North Star for me in the area of financial counsel is, *Honor the Lord with your possessions, and with the first fruits of all your increase; so your barns will be filled with plenty and your vats will overflow with new wine* (Proverbs 3: 9–10 NKJV). A proverb is a commonplace truth, wise saying or precept.



▲ Glynn Scott

As you reflect on this passage of Scripture, consider the Northwestern Mutual 2018 Planning & Progress Study:

- 30 percent of Americans are stressed out about money constantly and money is the number one reason Americans are stressed.
- Money is more stressful than work or relationships.
- More than 50 percent of Americans feel anxious or unsure about money “often or “all the time.”
- 87 percent of Americans agree that nothing makes them happier or more confident than feeling like their finances are in order.

I submit that we are living in a time where people are concerned about money and money management.

Scripture records multiple passages that highlight individuals that clearly understood Proverbs 3:9–10 as God’s promise and commitment to His faithful children. I have captured three for our consideration.

First, read the story of Jacob’s ladder in Genesis 28:12–22. As a result of the tension with Esau, his brother, Jacob departs from Beersheba and heads toward Haran. While resting at night, the Lord speaks the following words to Jacob: *Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this*

land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you (Genesis 28:15).

In response to God’s promise and commitment, Jacob made the following vow: *If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on, so that I come back to my father’s house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God. And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God’s house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You* (Genesis 28:20–22 NKJV). For 77 years, Jacob seems not to have been a faithful tithe payer as he left Canaan a poor fugitive with nothing but a staff in his hand. Yet he returned 20 years later with much cattle, flock, servants and a great large family.

Our second Scripture is from Exodus 35:5–10, 20–21 and Exodus 36:5–7.

Here Moses appeals to the children of Israel to give an offering to build God a tabernacle. “No sooner did they know what things would be accepted, than they vied with each other in supplying them. Whatever any man possessed that could be applied to the projected structure, he deemed it instantly an offering to God; and without hesitation consecrated it to the service of his God. Each seemed to think himself rich, not in



proportion to what he retained for his own use, but to the supplies he was able to contribute. The poorest among them were glad to give their jewels and their gold” (Logos Bible Commentary, Homiletics (Faithlife, 1986), p. 554). What a demonstration of unselfish surrender to God.

Our third and final text is Mark 12:41–44. Here Jesus affirms the widow in her financial gift, because she gave her all, one mite. Her whole livelihood! A mite was considered the smallest or lowest-valued copper coin. In Matthew 20, a laborer was given a denarius as a day’s wage. It would take 64 mites to equal one denarius.

“Her heart went with her gift; its value was estimated, not by the worth of the coin, but by the love to God and the interest in His work that prompted the deed. It is the motive that gives character to our acts, stamping them with ignominy or with high moral worth. Not the great things which every eye sees and every tongue praises does God account most precious. The little

duties cheerfully done, the little gifts which make no show and which to human eyes appear worthless, often stand highest in His sight.

“A heart of love and faith is dearer to God than the most costly gift. The poor widow deprived herself of food in order to give those two mites to the cause she loved. And she did it in faith, believing that her heavenly Father would not overlook her great need. It was this unselfish and childlike faith that won the Savior’s commendation” (Ellen G. White, *Desire of Ages*, p. 615).

In conclusion, there are two takeaway points important for us to remember: 1.) We must place our unconditional trust in God, willing always to serve as a faithful steward of Time, Talent, Treasure and Temperance, in whatever life cycle we might experience. 2.) In this new year, may we daily receive Heaven’s commendation, not for the things we do, but for the motives that prompt our deeds. ■

Glynn Scott is treasurer of the Lake Union Conference.

Belief Creates Hope

From the time of Creation, the human race has been given special attributes that set it apart from every other created entity. Men and women have been endowed with gifts that equip them to rule over all the earth.



▲ Judith Fisher

These gifts are intended not only to ensure that we are adequately equipped to rule, but also to sustain the image and likeness of God within us.

It is God's desire and objective that no matter where we are on our life journey, we have access to resources intended to restore us to His original plan for us. *Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth"* (Gen. 1:26 KJV).

Everything we know points to God as the ultimate in power, knowledge, character, wisdom, emotional and physical health, and the ultimate in everything that is good. He is an omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent God. Since we are called to live in the image and likeness of God, we can be assured of restoration no matter the circumstances. In other words, when life's challenges pull us away from moving toward God's image and likeness, we can believe that He has already set in motion steps that will bring us back to His original plan.

Jeremiah 30:17 emphasizes God promises restoration: *"For I will restore health to you and heal you of your wounds," says the LORD (Jeremiah 30:17)*. Believing that we can be restored to our healthier self can actually stimulate chemical changes in the brain yielding healing properties. Numerous studies suggest that hope, which involves both belief and expectations, is an essential catalyst for healing. In *The Anatomy of Hope*, physician Jerry Groopman describes the domino effect of hope producing a chain reaction that promotes healing.

From the time of our entry into this imperfect world, countless circumstances impact our lives, some hurting us and at times creating potentially life-crippling wounds — wounds produced by chronic stress, abuse, physical and mental health challenges, violence, situational setbacks and debilitating tendencies passed on from previous generations. These wounds can cause emotional deficits that threaten to interfere with our ability to live optimally. We don't get to choose the families into which we are born, neither do we always have control over factors that hurt us emotionally. However, achieving emotional healing is within everyone's reach.

The journey to healing begins with a belief that healing is achievable and expecting to experience evidences of healing along the way. Believing that we were created in God's image and hoping to achieve God's purpose in our lives provide us with an edge, setting us on the path to restoration. Steps to restoration include:

- Identifying factors contributing to the emotional deficits
- Seeking professional help
- Establishing healthy boundaries
- Surrounding one's self with supportive resources
- Developing the courage to love and value yourself as a child of God created in His image and His likeness
- Nurturing the hope that healing is achievable. ■

Judith Fisher, PhD, is a clinical psychologist who serves as director of Psychological Services at Andrews University.

Ingredients to Longevity

The ongoing intrigue of the Blue Zones presents an opportunity for Adventists. Hotspots of health and longevity have a magnetic pull on the minds of many who yearn for a better life.

One of the discoveries that aligns perfectly with Scripture is that love and connection are longevity boosters. Psychologist Susan Pinker, social science columnist for *The Wall Street Journal* and author of *The Village Effect: How Face-to-Face Contact Can Make Us Healthier and Happier*, found the top two predictors of a long life were close relationships and social integration. “Friendships create a biological force field against disease and decline,” said Pinker.¹

Harvard researcher, Dr. Robert Waldinger, found similar benefits in social connection.² Dan Buettner, the original Blue Zone researcher, also found this to be a key to the health of Adventists. “An Adventist in Loma Linda has such a strong face-to-face social network. You go to church with them, you hike with them, they’re there for you and you’re there for them. These are subtleties that are enormously powerful but vastly under-celebrated because there is no profit in them. If social connectedness and volunteerism were pharmaceuticals, they would be blockbuster drugs.”³

The opposite also is true. “We also know that loneliness kills. In America, it shaves eight years off your life expectancy,” says Buettner. This is a staggering fact considering that one in four Americans say they are lonely.

How can you benefit from these findings?

Pinker found that, statistically, each of us needs at least three very close and stable connections to feel socially fulfilled. “These are the people who you can call for a loan if you need money suddenly, who will call the doctor if you’re not feeling well, or who will take you to the hospital, or who would sit with you if you’re having an existential crisis, if you’re in despair.” It sounds like Jesus’ unique bond with Peter, James and John.

Pinker notes that extended family surrounds most centenarians in Sardina, the Italian Blue Zone. The first commandment with a promise rings true. *Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long . . .* (Exodus 20:12).

The second predictor is social integration, meaning the people you interact with throughout the day. Do you know the name of the bank teller or waitress? “Face-to-face contact releases a whole cascade of neurotransmitters; like a vaccine, they protect you in the present and well into the future,” found Pinker. All of these seemingly small interactions can positively affect your well-being.

Volunteerism has an even more significant effect as discovered by many participants in FARM STEW, a ministry I established a few years ago that provides hands-on classes in Africa and crews in the U.S. who come together to support the work.

Cooking and gardening together can lead to a feeling of abundant life, even in poor communities.

To increase your relationship benefits, it is vital to:

- Prioritize face-to-face relationships
 - Have at least three close, stable friendships
 - Interact with people you see daily
 - Reach out to meet your neighbors and colleagues
- Relationships take work, but the rewards are great!

May all of our relationships promote health and longevity, temporal and eternal. ■



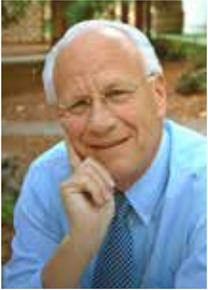
▲ Joy Kauffman

Joy Kauffman, MPH, is founder and president of FARM STEW International. For more information, please visit farmstew.org.

1. <http://bit.ly/2Tblr3d>
2. <http://bit.ly/3703X24>
3. <https://nbcnews.to/37R8pgx>

What About the Trinity? — 4

But of the Son he says, “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever” (Hebrews 1:8 RSV).



▲ George R. Knight

Even though the Bible has no problem calling Jesus God, the early Adventists did, undoubtedly from an anti-Middle Ages bias that held that the doctrine of the Trinity was a product of a church in apostasy.

And at the forefront of those pointing the church in new directions was Ellen White. While she never used the word “Trinity,” her writings in the 1888 era and beyond are full of Trinitarian phrases and concepts. She noted, for example, that “there are three living persons of the heavenly trio, . . . the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit” (*Evangelism* p. 615). And in 1901 she wrote of “the heavenly dignitaries — God, and Christ, and the Holy Spirit” (*ibid.* p. 616). Repeatedly she referred to the Holy Spirit as the “third person of the Godhead” (*ibid.* p. 617; *Desire of Ages* p. 671). And she had no doubt “that the Holy Spirit . . . is as much a person as God is a person” (*Evangelism* p. 616).

In regard to Christ, Ellen White moved infinitely beyond Waggoner, Smith, and most other Adventists of her day when she described Jesus as not only being “equal with God” but as being “the pre-existent, self-existed Son of God” (*ibid.* p. 615). He had been with the Father “from all eternity” (*Review & Herald*, April 5, 1906).

Perhaps Mrs. White’s most controversial and surprising statement for Adventists in the 1890s was a sentence in her book on the life of Jesus in which she noted that “*in Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived*” (*Desire of Ages*, p. 530, italics supplied). That statement caught the denomination off guard, and some wondered if she hadn’t left the faith.

We cannot have the slightest doubt that Ellen White was at the very forefront of those who sought to Christianize Adventism in its approach to the Godhead.

But, it is crucial to note, she never solved any problems and she never developed a theology of the Trinity. Rather, she sprinkled her writings with statements that led the ministers and church members to turn to their Bibles to restudy the topic for themselves.

Father in heaven, we are thankful today for a Christ sufficient to save and a Holy Spirit adequate for His redemptive task. ■

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.



<https://whiteestate.org/resources/photos/>

Our United Cry

“Jesus has been delivering His goods to His servants age after age. One generation after another has been gathering up the hereditary trust; the talents have increased largely by use and have descended to us.

“We are as His hired servants. He has bought us, paid the ransom money in His own blood to secure our willing service. Some, like yourself, feel the responsibility of trading upon the goods of Heaven committed to them. You long to bring a greater income to your Lord. You are unreconciled to the smallness of the largest gifts which you can lay on the altar for Christ. The utmost of time and effort you can give to the Master seems all too little, and you bemoan the imperfect service.

“Look to the uplifted Saviour. He is not dead and in Joseph’s new tomb, with a great stone rolled before it. He has risen! He has risen! He stands as our great High Priest! He maketh intercession for you. All He asks of you is just to use the talents entrusted. If you think that God has given you five talents, then be consoled that He does not require of you the improvement of ten. In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, I bid you look up. The rainbow of promise is encircling the throne.

“*Blessed are the poor in spirit* (Matthew 5:3). You may gratify your love for Jesus, and without stint pour out the wealth of affection you have for Him. Say, ‘I can in thought and desire serve Him continually.’ You may feel that your influence with men is limited; but you can have constant communication with God. While others plead with men, you plead with God, and then with men.

“Could there be a convocation of all the churches on earth, **the object of their united cry** should be for the Holy Spirit. When we have that, Christ our sufficiency is ever present. We shall have every want supplied. We shall have the mind of Christ. While you yearn over the whole human race, you will have One by your side who hath said, *Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world* (Matthew 28:20 KJV). Have you not then

a helper? One who died for the recovery of the world? Have you not a Sufficiency? Is not He your Counselor? and is He not devising fresh methods for the saving of the souls for whom He died? While we are His instruments to seek and save the lost, we must permit the work of saving to rest on our Saviour. While in your prayers you present the great want of souls before the world’s Redeemer, commit both yourself and them to Him as His own purchased possession. Your only hope for yourself and for them is in Jesus. He bears your name upon His breast. Your prayers may rise with an importunity that will not accept denial; that is faith.”■

Ellen G. White (Ms. 8-1892.8-12)

“Our United Cry” Prayer Conference, March 6 and 7, at the Embassy Suites in Plainfield, Indiana. To register: ourunitedcry.org.



Church Eliminates School's Lunch Debt

Several families are experiencing relief after Bolingbrook Church raises funds to pay off overdue school lunch accounts in the Valley View Public School District.

The church donated \$4,000 to clear the books for a still-to-be-determined number of students in the suburban Chicago school district. Sixty-one percent of the 17,000 student population qualify for free or reduced lunch program.

The decision to help the school was initiated as Christmas approached and Bolingbrook Church leaders began thinking of ways to bless their community.

“A lot of churches will do giving campaigns to raise money to cover their budget for the next year, or they just do a big push financially for the church,” explained Leilani Langdon, Bolingbrook’s director of Ministry and Operations. “The last couple of years we’ve decided that we wanted to forfeit that idea and raise money to do something impactful in the community.”

For example, two years ago the church raised \$36,000 to renovate an elderly couple’s home.

It was last summer that the church donated 100 backpacks to the students in the district and saw a huge need to do more. Once again, Langdon reached out to Leanne Lyons, the district’s Community School site coordinator.

“She said there’s a really high need to help students with delinquent bills, parents who can’t pay or afford to pay their child’s lunch bill because they don’t make

enough money on paper, but are living paycheck to paycheck: so, the working poor,” said Langdon.

After a three-week giving campaign at Bolingbrook Church, Lyons took to the stage at the end of their January 11 Sabbath service to thank the congregation for their support. “It tears me up because it’s amazing what you’ve done,” she said in response to applause from the congregation. She announced that the check was four times the largest donation she had ever received.

“I’m so grateful that I’ll have the job of telling people their lunch fees are forgiven, that they can go through the lunch line without feeling mom and dad owe some money,” said Lyons. The check is expected to cover all overdue lunch bills at Wood View Elementary School and leftover funds will go toward other schools in the district.

This outreach effort fits Bolingbrook’s mission, which was founded on the belief that the church exists to continue the work of Jesus Christ in the world.

“It is a privilege for our church to be able to extend grace and show compassion to those in our community,” said Bolingbrook’s pastor David Ocegueda. “Through this giving campaign, the church was able to tangibly share the message of Jesus by meeting real needs.” ■

▼ Wood View School was grateful for Bolingbrook’s donation to eliminate their lunch school debt. From left to right: Victoria Warpiniski, Nutrition Services worker; Robert Israelson, assistant principal; Jessica McCaslin, principal; Francine Crain, Nutrition Services manager; Carmen Garcia, Nutrition Services worker; Leanne Lyons, Valley View School District Community School site coordinator

▼ Bolingbrook Church associate pastor, David Quilatan, holds the ceremonial check for \$4,000, representing payment to cover school lunch debt at a suburban Chicago school district. Leilani Langdon, Bolingbrook Church leader (facing camera), hugs Leanne Lyons from the Valley View School District.



Courtesy Valley View School District



Courtesy Bolingbrook Church

La tumba vacía nos da esperanza

“No miréis el sepulcro vacío. No lloréis como los que están sin esperanza ni ayuda. Jesús vive, y porque vive, viviremos también.” Brote de los corazones agradecidos y de los labios tocados por el fuego santo el alegre canto: ¡Cristo ha resucitado! Vive para interceder por nosotros. Aceptad esta esperanza, y dará firmeza al alma como un ancla segura y probada. Creed y veréis la gloria de Dios” (El deseado de todas las gentes, p. 737).

Al comienzo del nuevo año mi esposa y yo, junto con los presidentes de las cinco asociaciones de la Unión del Lago y sus esposas, tuvimos el privilegio de visitar Jordania e Israel. Pasamos diez días paseando y conociendo aquellos lugares acerca de los cuales tanto hemos leído en las Santas Escrituras. Ya había hecho ese viaje, auspiciado por la División Norteamericana, hace seis años. Sin embargo, en esta ocasión la visita a las tierras santas me impactó mucho más por dos razones.

En primer lugar fue el hecho que durante el mismo período de los diez días que viajábamos se realizaba también otra jornada. La Asociación General había pedido a todas las iglesias del mundo que dedicaran diez días de oración. Me propuse no perder la oportunidad de orar, de manera que como dirigentes nos comprometimos a leer el material de oración para cada día. Envié el material a los presidentes, y preparé además meditaciones basadas en los lugares bíblicos que visitaríamos.

En segundo lugar fue el hecho de que habían ocurrido dos fallecimientos. El primero fue la pérdida de la mascota que nos había acompañado por más de trece años. Y el segundo fue el deceso de mi querida suegra, Amparo Prieto, quien falleció seis semanas más tarde.

Fue en el año 2006 que tuvimos que trasladarla de Merrillville, Indiana a un asilo de ancianos ubicado cerca de nuestra casa en South Bend. Doña Amparo sufría de la enfermedad de Alzheimer y debido a ello mi esposa debía estar siempre muy pendiente de ella. No es algo fácil ver a un ser querido debilitarse poco a poco física y mentalmente. Siempre encontrábamos tiempo

para visitarla y orar con ella. Falleció el 26 de noviembre de 2019 y fue sepultada el 4 de diciembre al lado de su esposo.

En Jerusalén visitamos una tumba vacía que se cree fue donde Cristo fue sepultado. La realidad de la muerte nos tocó a mi esposa y a mí muy de cerca el año pasado. Al ver esa tumba vacía comprendimos mejor que nunca, que Dios desea asegurarnos que la muerte no es el destino final de sus hijos. Salimos de ese lugar con la seguridad que cuando Cristo regrese veremos nuevamente a nuestros seres queridos.

Como adventistas tenemos esta bendita esperanza y mi apelación es que tomemos el tiempo para compartir esta esperanza a los que no la conocen. ■



▲ Amparo Prieto, madre de Rosanne Mercado



▲ Carmelo Mercado

Carmelo Mercado es el vicepresidente de la Unión del Lago.

Faith at Work

Employees make a surprising discovery

By LaShelle Greene

DO YOU BELIEVE IN ANSWERED PRAYER AND MIRACLES? I DO NOW!

I am a supervisor at a company in Grand Rapids, Michigan. I onboard new employees by providing orientation for them and then take them out to the department where I supervise and put them to work. Jules Mukunzi was one of the employees that began that day on third shift after his orientation.

It was a busy night. After placing him on an offline job, I set up to work next to him as we needed the extra support. Jules and I began talking about food. “I love vegetarian cooking,” I told him. His face lit up as we continued talking and he asked, “What church do you go to?” I told him I was raised a Seventh-day Adventist and that I had visited Adventist churches in the area but was praying for God to lead me to a good Adventist church where I could feel at home. I said, “Even though I am not a member anywhere, I have longed to join the church where God wants me to be — I’ve been praying for God to point me to a church where I can be used.” He exclaimed, “I am so happy to be here! I prayed for a job that wouldn’t require me to work on Sabbath (we work a four-day week, no Friday or Saturday hours) and that I would have an Adventist supervisor!” We began rejoicing! It was an answer to both of our prayers, all at the same moment! But this was only the beginning!

The next day I mentioned to another supervisor that we could use another operator to help Jules build more parts. She sent over a wonderful worker named David. Before David arrived, I told Jules that David didn’t speak English well, but then I found out God had already provided a solution for that problem. Jules was fluent in nine African languages! When David arrived, Jules began speaking Swahili

with David and soon both were laughing. It was the most I had ever seen David speak!

I had to leave for a moment but when I returned Jules was very excited and said, “David is Adventist, too!” Jules told David that I was raised Adventist and was looking for a church I could call home. David spoke in Swahili and Jules interpreted, “David wonders if you know this song?” David began singing in Swahili, “Would you be free from the burden of sin...?” Immediately I knew the tune and, with Jules and David singing in Swahili and I in English, we began to sing, “There’s Power in the Blood!”

It was *wonderful!* What a huge blessing for the three of us. David was finally connecting with an Adventist brother, singing with brothers of the faith I’ve always loved, and working in a company where we could keep Sabbath holy. But the story wasn’t over.

Several years ago, I went to 3ABN and did a day of musical recordings of me singing. I wanted to share one of the songs with Jules, so I pulled it up on my phone before work the next day. When I walked into my department, sitting there, waiting for the shift to start, was Gloria, one of my employees. I had a strong impression to share the video with her. I left her my phone, went to put the rest of my things at my desk, and began to walk back to retrieve my phone. She was standing and asked, “Is this you?” She seemed very surprised. I said, “Yes, when I was younger and thinner” and began laughing. She asked me, “What denomination are you?” I told her I was born and raised Seventh-day Adventist. Gloria said, “So was I!” She told me her entire family was Adventist! Glory be to God in Heaven! Now there were four of us! And if that wasn’t enough, God surprised us by sending another employee — a fifth Adventist — to join my department, whose father is an elder of an Adventist church!

I have learned two lessons from these experiences. First, always live and share your faith because you never know who you will meet! Second, pray and ask God for whatever you need because nothing is impossible for Him! You see, God not only answers prayer, He works miracles, too!

Since this happened, I began attending the Elwell Church and have asked to join. My desire is that this story can give hope to those that need to experience answers to prayer and the miraculous power of God. If God did it for me, He can do it for you! ■

LaShelle Greene is a production supervisor of Hadley Advantage in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Jules Muzunki is Pathfinder director at Elwell Church in Wyoming, Michigan.

I have learned two lessons from these experiences. First, always live and share your faith because you never know who you will meet! Second, pray and ask God for whatever you need because nothing is impossible for Him!





The Steward FAMILY TREE

Trees have played an important role in Scripture. The reason our world is in the mess it is involved a tree. The notorious fig tree in the New Testament that was cursed has provided many lessons about the importance of fruit-bearing.

By Jon
Corder

Nebuchadnezzar's dream tree was used to foretell the king's future and illustrate how people are dependent on each other in daily living. It was in the shade of a tree that Abraham entertained heavenly visitors, an opportunity he would have missed if he had not been hospitable.

And, one of my favorites: the Oak of Weeping, where Deborah, Rebekah's old nurse, was buried. She had been a faithful part of the family for years and it was a great loss when she was laid to rest — she had given so much during her life.

Another kind of tree is a family tree. Genealogy was very important in Bible times. I hardly know who my great-grandparents were (especially since I never met them), but detailed records in Scripture account for

generations of lineage letting one boast (or not) of who was a part of their family tree.

And so, I introduce another tree, the Steward family tree. The desire of all should include being a part of the Steward family. The reason? Because it is a family tree that defines how we can share ourselves, our resources, time, talents and influence with those around us. It also talks about caring for ourselves so we can do a better job doing the things that good steward family members do. Look it over; identify what your contributions can be. Stretch yourself; build momentum forward! You will make the world a better place! ■

Jon Corder, Lake Union Conference Stewardship director

ILLUSTRATION BY SARAH DUVIVIER



God Keeps HIS PROMISES

Again and again throughout my life, I have seen how faithful God is in keeping His promise in Malachi 3:10. As we return to Him that which is His, He *does* open the windows of heaven because He cannot lie (see Titus 1:2).

By Vialo Weis Jr.

My first recollection of God’s faithfulness goes back to when I was a child. My parents were committed to being a single income family so my mother could be home with us children. They also were determined that each of us four children receive a Seventh-day Adventist Christian education through college. My mother did not go back to teaching church school until my youngest brother entered the first grade.

Because we were a single-income family, there were not many extras, yet we had all we needed with God’s blessings because my parents were faithful in returning to God His tithe and offerings. We had plenty to eat, clothes to wear, a comfortable home, and a car that lasted from 1955 until my parents could afford a new one in 1969, after my mother completed her first year back teaching church school.

I remember my parents teaching me while I was young to return tithe and offerings to God out of my earnings from odd jobs, mowing lawns and delivering

newspapers. As far back as I can remember, I have returned tithe and offerings to God.

Why do I write “return” tithe and offerings to God rather than “paying” tithe and offerings? David writes, *The earth is the Lord’s, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein* (Psalm 24:1 NKJV). Since the earth, its fullness, and those who live on it are all God’s, how much does that leave for us to own? Paul reminds us, *Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit Who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s* (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20 NKJV). Since we and all we have belongs to God, how can we “pay” tithe and offerings? All we can do is return to Him that which is His.

Shortly before graduating from the ministerial program at Southwestern Adventist University, I had the opportunity to bid on a small home in Keene which was being sold by the Texas Conference. Prayerfully,

I submitted a sealed bid. I learned after the bids were opened that I had been outbid. However, the next morning, I received a telephone call from the conference treasurer letting me know that the number one bidder had backed out and I was the number two bidder. He wanted to know if I still wanted the house. I told him, “Yes!” Later I learned that my bid was \$10 higher than the number three bidder and \$15 higher than the number four bidder. God was faithful! By His grace, my bid was high enough, but not too high as the house needed a great deal of work. When the time came to move to another district, sweat equity in this home provided enough to purchase another home.

And so, the equity grew from houses one through three. When the time came to sell house number four (because of a move to another district), the Texas economy had taken a huge hit due to the oil economy. The downturn in the housing market wiped out all the equity and then some that had been gained from the sale of our previous houses. Then came another move to another district in a new conference in southern Oklahoma. House number four was still unsold and two payments were being made. For about four years, two house payments were made, not one was missed! After returning tithes and offerings, God had blessed the remainder unbelievably, and all our needs were cared for. There was great rejoicing, though, when house number four finally sold!

Sometimes there appears to be more expenses or more month than there is money. This situation can be intensified if a job is lost over Sabbath issues. In these situations, it can be tempting to think, “I can’t afford to return tithe and offerings to God.” When that temptation comes, remember Jesus’ promises, *But seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you* (Matthew 6:33 NKJV). What are the “things” Jesus is talking about? — food, drink, shelter and clothes. In other words, our necessities. The truth is, unless we put God first, we cannot be assured that even our necessities will be met.

Since coming to serve God and His people in Indiana, we have had several major experiences where God opened the windows of Heaven for us. The first was the opportunity to serve God and His people in Indiana. That has been a blessing in so many ways and we thank God for this opportunity! He provided a

pre-qualified buyer who made us a great offer for our home in Oklahoma. Because of God’s blessing, our home sold within seven months of coming to Indiana. We then prayed for and God provided a wonderful country home for our family, enabling us to live in harmony with the counsel given us as a people.

Are you willing to try Him, to put Him to the test? If so, I feel confident He will open the windows of Heaven so wide you will not be able to receive what He has in store for you! I am confident because He has done that for me!

Another experience we had involved a two-vehicle accident in which our car was totaled. My wife and I and our two children were unharmed nor was the other driver, for which we praise the Lord! In this instance, the other half of God’s opening the windows of Heaven for us was that He provided an identical replacement with about half of the miles of our wrecked car for only \$800 more than was covered by insurance.

Are you skeptical, wondering how God will keep His promises to you? He says, *“Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this,” says the Lord of hosts, “if I will not open for you the windows of Heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it”* (Malachi 3:10 NKJV).

Are you willing to try Him, to put Him to the test? If so, I feel confident He will open the windows of Heaven so wide you will not be able to receive what He has in store for you! I am confident because He has done that for me! ■

Vialo Weis Jr. serves God and the Indiana Conference as Planned Giving & Trust Services director, Public Affairs and Religious Liberty director, Stewardship director, and Association secretary.

ILLUSTRATION BY SARAH DUVIVIER



By Diana Santos Smith

I am a Millennial STEWARD

Turns out, I am more of a millennial than I thought. As a millennial, I don't take things at face value.

Skepticism is very much a part of my DNA. Appeals based on historical precedent or past performance are only as good as the real value they show today. The currency of my world is spending money on experiences instead of things. I crave the lifestyle flexibility of entrepreneurial ventures that create impact.

My millennial mindset reveals itself in another way. My parents' and grandparents' generations had an established sense of duty, but the word "duty" is pretty scarce in my vocabulary. Baby Boomers bought into

establishments and their support. Not so much millennials. We find that participation in civic duties and government don't meet our expectations. We center on items involving personal choice. Is it any wonder that consistent financial engagement with the organized church is at an all-time low? For us, tithing is a personal choice, not a Christian duty.

However, I believe the word "duty" connotes differently today. Talk to me about duty in the form of encouraging accountability and initiating change, and I'm in! I find

that to be especially true with those in my generation who are still engaged in being a Christ-follower. We vote with our dollars on what we perceive as important to our values, not because of any institutional loyalty.

It's not like I'm unengaged. I was a missionary kid in post-communist Europe, helped plant a church in college, and even did full-time Bible coaching for three years before I got my MBA. After I married, my husband and I made a decision to live 3,000 miles away from our family and friends for the primary purpose of helping a five-member church community grow in post-Christian New England. And, yes, I still sometimes struggle with giving on my own terms to whom and what I value, not out of any objective Christian duty.

What's been stretching my mind lately is the idea that the individualism leading us to participate out of preference and not duty can come at a cost. After all, what survives if all of us are isolated in our own bubbles of preference? As Os Guinness, author and social critic, brilliantly summarized, "Without individuals nothing happens; without institutions nothing survives."

The Jesus story that blew my mind on this dimension of faith is the one where Jesus commends the *sacrificial giving* of the poor widow to an institution that was planning His death (see Luke 21:1-4). There is no question in my mind that Jesus was challenging the religious leadership of His day. His very life was a 180-degree contrast to theirs. His words were powered by The Word and not by policy. Yet, He remained spiritually, physically and financially engaged while modeling a drastic difference. Jesus making the giving widow a model of faithfulness is a revelation that faith's priority is our heart. And my faith response to Him — as reflected by my time, talents, and finances — is the currency of freedom that vindicates to the universe that God's ways of other-centered love wins!

Selfishness looks for every excuse to opt out; faith looks for every reason to lean in. *That is Messiah-driven mission.* It beckons us to something greater than ourselves. It is a response to being radically loved, called and chosen. It is what it takes to fully engage the human heart — millennial or not — at a level where time, talents and finances are poised for action.

Reframing Stewardship

Last year, I had the privilege of being asked by North American Stewardship Ministries to "lean in" to help

create strategy and synergy around the challenge of re-framing stewardship for the next generation. I was encouraged to see administrative leadership questioning their own assumptions, thinking outside of the box, and earning trust by sharing the mic — capstoned by the AdventistGiving app that leverages technology to connect you to your local church's offering plate and broader Adventist-coordinated missions. The AdventistGiving App* is not revolutionary; it's leveraging technology to empower our funding of Messiah-driven mission. I've never been more excited about a simple app since forever and a day! I celebrate the tool that leverages tangible faith. But that's not all. The app contains inspiring stories from the lives of everyday Adventists. Featured as "I am a Steward," twenty-four stories were released in 2019, twice a month, which shared the stories of everyday millennial Adventists, be they an engineer, farmer, lawyer, chef, social worker or entrepreneur.

These are real stories of real people engaged in God's redemptive economy by experiencing God personally and professionally. All twenty-four stories revealed that engaging with the mission of reflecting Christ's radical commitment to us is practical and even sometimes dirty. This messiness is driven by leaning in to the trenches of an imperfect world and, yes, an imperfect church. It doesn't lessen my responsibility to reflect God's ideal of total engagement in Messiah-driven mission.

Stewardship is the act of carrying out mission in our everyday lives. I trust that like me, you, too, will be challenged and inspired by the experiences of the real people in these stories. Everyday people leveraging time, talent, *and* finances to make a difference in God's redemptive economy.

It has been a privilege to lean in to the ongoing opportunity to reframe stewardship because I'm like everyone else . . .

I am a Steward.

Diana is an impact strategist consultant who, along with her food craftsman husband, Kasee, lives in New England where, among other social-entrepreneurial ventures, they are helping build spiritual community in the tiny tourist town of Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts.

*AdventistGiving is a ministry of North American Division Information Technology Services.

ILLUSTRATION BY SARAH DUVIVIER



The Safest PLACE TO BE

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.

If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory and the power for ever and ever (1Peter 4:10-11 NIV).

It can seem a little daunting, especially when you think about all the possibilities, all the creative methods there are by which we can share God's love in practical ways. Where to start? Some will appeal to you more than others — we all have different gifts, different interests, different abilities.

You've heard this before, but it's no less important because it's familiar: **Spend time with God — talking to Him about His people, before you ever spend time with people — speaking to them, or doing anything for them — for the Kingdom.**

Here's an idea: Get together with one or two friends and pray. Better yet, prayerwalk, or prayerdrive, the neighborhoods in your area. Pray for the businesses you pass, for students and teachers in the schools you pass, for the customers in the bars you pass, for the families in the homes you pass.

Drive by the jails and pray. Drive by the government buildings and pray. Drive by the adult bookstores and pray. Drive by the hospital and pray.

We hear the question, "Why not just stay at home and pray?" Yes, you can do that. But when you're out in someone else's neighborhood and you see their situation, it's easier to really care for someone if you go where they are.

Jesus modeled that for us. Christ mingled with people. He went where they were so He could get acquainted with them, then He met their needs. Only then did He say, "Follow Me."

It may give you insight into another's world. In fact, some have called prayerwalking, "praying on-site with insight." You see what they're facing.

When Don and I moved from Maryland to the west coast of Florida, we were delighted with the "retirement atmosphere" in our neighborhood. It was almost like everyone was on vacation. We were both still working part-time, but the new schedule gave us some time to get acquainted.

In our neighborhood in Punta Gorda — all across Florida, actually, the terrain is *flat* (in fact, someone told us that the highest point in Florida is an overpass), so we could ride our bicycles or walk, and we tried to establish a routine of walking every morning.

We started praying for our neighbors, every day by name and, before long, we began to see hearts and doors

By Ruthie Jacobsen

opening. We were invited to their events, and into their homes, and they came to ours.

One afternoon, as I rode my bike past Jack and Penny's home, just around the corner from us, Jack was out in his yard, so I stopped to visit. He looked a little worried, so I asked him how he was doing. He told me that the day before he had been diagnosed with leukemia, and they weren't sure what might lie ahead. Penny was understandably troubled, too.

"Jack, would it be okay if I pray for you right here?" I asked.

"Sure, Ruthie, go ahead," he responded. So I prayed for Jack and Penny, for peace, for hope, for direction, for healing. Jack was a retired executive from a large pharmaceutical company in Michigan. They had lived in Punta Gorda for more than ten years and everyone in the neighborhood loved them. Jack was especially close to his golfing buddies.

We visited with Jack and Penny often after that. Because I was the only nurse in the neighborhood, I became the liaison between them and the doctors and the neighbors.

Penny wanted it that way. She wanted me to be part of the decisions and to pass on news to their friends. So as I contacted the neighbors, they always wanted to know about Jack's condition, and to have their greetings carried back to him.

We invited Jack's friends and the neighbors to pray for him. Most of them attended one of the area churches, if irregularly, somewhere in the community, and were pleased to be part of Jack's prayer support.

As the disease progressed, Jack had some difficult and dark days, but on one occasion when he came home from the hospital, the neighbors wanted to celebrate. We had a big "Jack is Back!" party. Jack's neighbor across the street, a retired vice president from Ford Motor Company and his wife, wanted to have it in their home, and they put up a huge banner that said, "JACK IS BACK!" It was a wonderful evening.

As the party drew to a close, my husband suggested that we gather for a prayer of thanksgiving. We had been praying individually, and now we gathered in a circle to pray together, thanking God for Jack and for keeping him in His care. Don's prayer was a special moment in the evening, and drew us all a little closer.

We saw Jack and Penny often over the next months and, finally, as we could see the end drawing nearer, we prayed especially for God's sustaining presence. Jack told me, just before he died, that he had a new understanding and a new relationship with God through all of this. "I've attended church most of my life, but I really never knew God, until now." He had peace to the end.

Prayerwalking has three different approaches or levels. First, it's just walking down the sidewalk, praying for others, taking cues from whatever or whoever we see, and asking the Lord to guide our prayers and to open the hearts of those for whom we're praying. You probably won't actually make contact with them at this time, but you're praying and taking them before the throne of the universe.

Spend time with God – talking to Him about His people, before you ever spend time with people – speaking to them, or doing anything for them – for the Kingdom.

There is a second type of prayerwalking, involving some contact with those for whom you're praying. Maybe you see someone in their yard and have an opportunity to visit and introduce yourself; you might tell them that you're just out walking and praying. You could ask them if they have any special prayer needs so you can be specific in your prayers.

The third level of ministry in prayer walking is to be alert for someone you can lead to Christ, as the occasion presents itself. This doesn't happen as often, but it can make obvious that this casual walk is really Kingdom Business.

As a steward for the Kingdom, I encourage you to be deliberate in using prayer as one of your stewardship tools. Keep a record of how God works through your prayers as you represent Him to those in your sphere of influence.

This article was adapted from Ruthie's book, Bridges 101, "The Safest Place to Be," pages 51-55.

Ruthie Jacobsen served as prayer coordinator for the North American Division from 1995 to 2018.



▲ Since June 2019, the medical center has teamed with the Hinsdale Church and Hinsdale Family Medicine Center to help put healthy food on the table through a pilot program offered by the Northern Illinois Food Bank.

Courtesy AMITA Health

Rx Mobile Food Pantry helps put healthy foods on the table

He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor.

—Proverbs 22:9, King James Version

AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center Hinsdale is partnering with three organizations to provide families in need and those with chronic medical conditions access to free, nutritious meals through the Rx Mobile Food Pantry.

Since June 2019, the medical center has teamed with the Hinsdale Church and Hinsdale Family Medicine Center to help put healthy food on the table through a pilot program offered by the Northern Illinois Food Bank. Community Memorial Foundation provided a grant to Northern Illinois Food Bank to support the program in Hinsdale.

Twice a month, for two hours each, a large refrigerated truck arrives at the Hinsdale church parking lot packed with healthy foods. The truck holds enough food to feed 150 families.

Until it's time to shop at the truck, participants can wait in the church's fellowship hall where written recipes and resource handouts are provided at tables along with refreshments.

"As a church, we want to help our neighbors — not only to worship together, but to

contribute to the community at large," said associate pastor Edye Campos, Hinsdale Church, noting the church and medical center have a long history of working together. "People who are volunteering are so blessed to help the needy."

To ensure the food distribution functions efficiently, Pastor Campos meets regularly with Julie Thomas, RN, MSN, CRRN, nurse case manager, AMITA Health Hinsdale Family Medicine Center and residency program, and Janet Kennedy, program manager, Mission Integration, AMITA Health.

"Many of these individuals have chronic conditions like diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure," said Thomas, noting a link between chronic disease and food insecurity. "The healthy food distributed at the mobile food truck is like a medicine. Providing this food will make an impact on the health and well-being of our guests and their families."

At AMITA Health Hinsdale, guests are screened for food insecurity at the Hinsdale Family Medicine Center. Those in need are referred to the Rx Mobile Food Pantry which is open to anyone — no questions asked.

About 20 volunteers — including church members, students, AMITA Health associates, Family Medicine residents and

Northern Illinois Food Bank workers — help with registration, truck set-up, food distribution and escorting guests through the line. Since the program started last June, the largest single distribution has served 115 families representing nearly 400 individuals. The mobile food pantry serves about 100 families per distribution, which is twice a month.

The pilot initiative will run through June 2020 in Hinsdale. The Food Bank and AMITA Health will then review the possibility of continuing the Rx Mobile Pantries on a regular basis.

"In the spirit of our healing mission, we are intentional to welcome each guest with open arms and a high level of dignity, compassion and respect," Kennedy said. "Our volunteers live this mission throughout the outreach by making personal connections from the moment guests arrive at registration to the time they depart. I have witnessed several guests and volunteers huddled in conversation and prayer before they leave with a car filled with groceries. We are truly honored to deliver hope and healing through this pantry." ■

Julie Busch, associate vice president, Internal Communications, AMITA Health

Conservation and ecology lab students present at international conference

At Andrews University, students frequently participate in research laboratories to enrich their educational experience and prepare for future careers. The Gonzalez-Socoloske Conservation and Ecology Lab, through the Department of Biology, was created in 2013 and focuses on behavioral ecology and conservation.

Daniel Gonzalez-Socoloske, associate professor of Biology and lab director, says, “We look at various species at the organismal level that are endangered, and we try to look at aspects of their biology to garner information for developing better conservation strategies.”

The lab typically consists of undergraduate juniors and seniors. In fall 2019, there were four undergraduate and two master’s student researchers, the largest the lab has been to date.

Gonzalez introduces the student researchers to theoretical backgrounds and helps them define their projects. He often pitches potential research ideas to students based on projects he is currently working on or has worked on in the past. “Students have been involved in an array of different studies — from habitat studies to the ecology and behavior of the endangered species,” he says.

Most students work on their projects independently and meet once a week to present their progress to Gonzalez. “It’s not cookie cutter,” he says. “The student really has to take ownership of that project and carry it through, of course with my guidance and assistance. But the project will live or die with their commitment to it.”



▲ (L-R) Mindy McLarty, graduate student alumni; Amanda Moore, graduate student; Adam Weir; Daniel Gonzalez-Socoloske; Nina Woodard; Juliane Johnson

Adam Weir, Nina Woodard and Juliane Johnson are undergraduate seniors and J.N. Andrews Honors students. Adam joined the lab his sophomore year, while Nina and Juliane joined the lab their junior year. Each studies a different aspect of manatee ecology. Adam’s research focuses on data he collected with Gonzalez from 17 manatees in Yucatan, Mexico; Nina studies the dental wear patterns of manatees; and Juliane researches the body size and structural differences between Florida manatees and Antillean manatees.

In December 2019, Adam, Nina and Juliane, along with Mindy McLarty and Amanda Moore (two graduate students from the lab), presented their research at the World Marine Mammal Conference in Barcelona, Spain. Approximately 2,500 scientists attend this biennial conference. “It’s a great opportunity for students to mingle with other students and meet other professionals. It’s where you get to meet all the people you’ve been reading papers about,” Gonzalez says.

Adam, Nina and Juliane each presented their research in “speed talks” — four

minutes of speaking and one minute for questions. “It’s quite prestigious to present at these meetings, especially to get an oral presentation,” Gonzalez says.

Presenting at the Conference was just one valuable experience for students in the Gonzalez-Socoloske Conservation and Ecology Lab. “The skillset that they learn — doing research, thinking critically, writing and defending their thesis, presenting at a professional meeting with peers not affiliated with Andrews, is vital experience for them for whatever field they go into,” Gonzalez says.

“I’m thrilled to be a part of this lab, as it’s been a major highlight of my undergraduate career,” says Juliane. “It’s allowed me to combine both my Biology and Mathematics majors into one project and shown me how to be a professional researcher. I’ve gotten to present my project all over the world, which has been invaluable and prepared me to interact with other researchers around the globe.” ■

Moriah McDonald and Hannah Gallant, University Communication student writers, Andrews University

Church re-planting moves members to love and care for neighbors

ILLINOIS CHURCH RE-VISIONS ITS ROLE IN THE COMMUNITY

When Elgin Church pastor Gabriel Bardan joined a clergy meeting and introduced himself as the pastor of the Elgin Adventist Church, the chairman, a mainline Protestant pastor, looked at him and asked, “Where have you been so far?”

“Indeed, we had been disconnected from the community for a long time,” Bardan acknowledges. “Now, our goal is to become a community hub!”

This renewed push for a higher profile in the community came after a brutally honest assessment during a church business meeting in the summer of 2017. Members of Elgin Church, located 40 miles northwest of Chicago, concluded that a radical change was needed — something beyond revival or a new direction. A rebirth of Elgin was required.

They call it re-planting, a process so rare it happens just a handful of times across the North American Division (NAD) each year. According to North American Division Evangelism Institute’s (NADEI) church plant expert, Anthony WagenerSmith, re-planting happens when “You put everything on the table, revisit the vision and discover a whole new paradigm.”

When the Elgin Church’s leadership met to analyze their church’s resources, skills and talents, they recognized they have a large building that is used mostly on weekends; six acres of land that doesn’t produce any benefit; medical skills never used collectively to alleviate the suffering around them and, despite the school closing decades ago, that section of the building was never repurposed to glorify God. Their assessment led to the church initiating the “Heal Elgin Project” under the



▲ **Top:** Registration line winding outside the building. About 200 people were served. **Bottom:** Elgin Church Outreach coordinator, Terri Dallas (right), with the Mayor of the City of Elgin (next to her), welcomes the volunteers to the Heal Elgin Clinic last June.

Photography courtesy Gabriel Bardan

leadership of Outreach coordinator, Terri Dallas, MD. But more on that later.

Why Re-plant

This wasn’t the first time Elgin church has re-planted itself.

The town of Elgin, halfway along the railroad from Chicago to Galena, was founded in 1835. Over the winter of 1856 and into the spring of 1857, John Loughborough labored in the area. For wages, he received “board, a buffalo skin, and \$10.” Elder Curtis was assigned as pastor in 1898, and records show that in 1909 Ellen White attended the Elgin camp meeting and delivered two sermons there.

During the Great Depression in 1929, most members moved away. Some had lost their faith and others had passed away so, for about 10 years, there was no Adventist presence in Elgin.

After 1939, a family moved into the area and started Sabbath School in their home. The Elgin Church was re-organized in 1944 with 25 members meeting in the Masonic Temple. Eventually they purchased six acres of land and built a school and then a church dedicated in 1970 and 1971, respectively.

In the last 15 years, the Elgin Church has helped to plant five new churches. Then, during summer 2017 church business meeting, the members voted unanimously to “start a process leading to the rebirth of the church, authorizing Pastor Gabriel Bardan to create and facilitate a visioning team.”

However, their first step was to establish a spiritual foundation team. Four months were dedicated to daily prayer and study of the gospel, plus a two-hour meeting each Saturday night to pray and share personal testimonies.

In 2018, the focus was on learning the skills of relational evangelism, leading small groups and relational Bible studies. Members started contacting friends, neighbors and coworkers. The team was experiencing revival, and others noticed. Bardan explained that they followed a vision framing process designed by Auxano, a church consulting organization but, by the time the vision framing process began, the congregation was already seeing people with different eyes — seeing others from Heaven’s perspective which was a tremendous help in defining the vision.

The second leg of the process was the breakthrough moment for the whole team.

After an in-depth analysis of the needs in their territory, the talent and resources in the church, and the passions of the leaders, they determined what they believed to be the direction of God's preferred future. The description of their mission and ministry reads as follows: "We honor God and make disciples in the greater Elgin area by becoming a healing community of faith, by operating a Recovery Center, and training those who are restored in the image of God to become agents of healing." That statement brought tremendous clarity to the process. Key words such as "brokenness," "restoring" and "healing" were popping up naturally in their conversations.

The next steps were easy to make. The local mission statement was "To restore the image of God in a world of brokenness, one life at a time." The values, measures of success and five-step strategy were defined with clarity.

Heal Elgin Project

The first dental and vision clinic was organized about two months before the June 2018 event. AMEN clinics provided the equipment, training and management using the church building to set up on Friday for the clinic on Sunday. Local dentists and ophthalmologists were contacted, tapping into their network of colleagues and volunteers. A partnership between three churches in the district and local organizations resulted in registering 101 volunteers before the weekend, most of them from the community. The clinic's tagline was, "We love to see you smile!"

Marketing assistance was a gift from God. Because the clinic would operate on the same weekend as the Love Elgin Day (a seven-campus Christian community service event), they were happy to distribute the invitations for the church's clinic.

"It rained very hard that Sunday but, inside, dental patients were smiling and volunteers were happy, even after 12 hours of work, (and) looking forward for the next year's clinic," said Bardan.

The second Heal Elgin Clinic was held on June 2, 2019. The church building and parking lot were limiting factors. "The Lord opened a door and the Lord's Park Pavilion, a beautiful mansion close to the church, was offered by the city for a very reasonable price," said Bardan, "Plus, they allowed setup on Friday for free." This time the clinic matured into a well-organized event.

The HealElgin.org website was the main hub of information. Volunteers came from places as far away as Missouri. The *Chicago Tribune*, with the largest circulation in Chicagoland, published an article with the title: "Heal Elgin Project Receives Grant from the Chicago Dental Society Foundation" (<http://bit.ly/HealElginProject>).

The *Northwestern Herald* newspaper, published the story, "Love Elgin and Heal Elgin Offering Free Goods and Services This Weekend" (<http://bit.ly/38Z8j79>) and the *Daily Herald* published "Love Elgin and Heal Elgin Offering Free Goods and Services This Weekend" (<http://bit.ly/38Dailyherald>).

Chicago Dental Association awarded a \$5,000 grant. Illinois State Dental Association gave another grant of \$5,000. More local businesses also helped. The Mayor of Elgin came on a Sunday morning at 6:30 a.m. to congratulate 125 volunteers.

Additional services were offered, such as a community closet from a sister church, hairstylists and immigration lawyer. The Lifestyle and Spiritual Counseling and trained church leaders talked and prayed with dozens of patients, many of whom registered for follow-up classes, such as depression recovery, nutrition, and more.

The Future

The Heal Elgin Clinic was the first building block of the Recovery Center followed by the Depression and Anxiety Recovery program. Nutrition and cooking classes are the next piece. They plan to run

these programs multiple times each year. Addiction recovery will be added by the middle of 2020. Eventually, the goal is to establish a community center of influence.

Dallas would like to name it, "Wellspring Center for Recovery and Education," with the goal of bringing eternal healing to a broken world.

What's next? Right now, the Recovery Center moves beyond the boundaries of the district. Another major component scheduled is training. A prevention program will follow shortly. A community garden is planned for the spring and the church's leadership is working on a church re-plant model that can easily be replicated in any part of the country.

If you want to learn more, please feel to contact Gabriel Bardan at 847-461-9609 or email Gabriel@HealElgin.org. ■

Gabriel Bardan with Lake Union Herald staff



Photography courtesy Gabriel Bardan

▲ **Top:** The Heal Elgin Clinic offering free dental care and other services was one of the opportunities to reconnect with the community. **Bottom:** A spiritual counselor (an elder) holds the hands of a lady who asked for prayer.



▲ Chicago is currently in the top five cities in the nation for sex trafficking crimes and Straford Church has seen victims right outside on their doorsteps. The church partnered with several local organizations to raise awareness of a problem that extends well beyond their neighborhood.

Chicago church members take to the streets to spotlight human trafficking

Thirty members of Straford Memorial Church stood on a Chicago block on the evening of Saturday, Jan. 18, to take a physical stand against human sex trafficking in the area.

Straford member, Victoria Davis Hollins, who also serves as the statewide Human Trafficking program manager for the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), was one of the volunteers in attendance for the event. She said that the church sees firsthand the need for such an event. Just outside their doors is a sex trafficking hotspot. These spots are called “tracks” where men, women and children are commercialized. Hollins said the aim is to provide outreach to the victims and let them know where they can go for help.

“I announced [the event] one week in church; by the next week I had supplies coming in,” said Hollins. “The members just jumped right in.”

The community-wide event, called “GIRLS Night Out: A Stroll Through the City,” was held Jan. 11, the National Human Trafficking Awareness Day. The night-out is the brainchild of Kisha Roberts-Tabb, a Cook County juvenile probation officer and founder of Roberts-Tabb & Associates, a nonprofit organization aimed at helping girls ages 13 to 18.

Roberts-Tabb has been organizing this event for the past two years and said she was compelled to start this initiative because she wanted to bring awareness to sex trafficking in black and brown communities. “The way we’ve seen sex trafficking portrayed across the city, across the state, and even nationally, we don’t tie it to poverty, we don’t tie it to adolescent minority women and boys,” she said. “It’s usually portrayed as something that goes on elsewhere, that goes on in another country.”



Photos courtesy Victoria Hollins

▲ The rally, which kicked off at Delta Alumni House near downtown Chicago, featured representatives from several government and nonprofit agencies, including the Chicago Police Department, Cook County Sheriff’s officers, State legislatures and DCFS Administration, as well as other churches.

But the statistics are hard to dismiss. Chicago is currently in the top five cities in the nation for sex trafficking crimes, according to Selah Freedom, a national organization that helps with child trafficking. Roughly 300,000 children every year are victims of this crime. Boys and girls between the ages of 12 to 14 are bought and sold and can be bought and sold 15 to 40 times every 24 hours.

In fiscal year 2019, Illinois DCFS investigated 255 allegations of human trafficking of children, 119 of those in Cook County — a number experts believe is lower than the true number of incidents that occurred during that time.

Often, victims of human trafficking do not seek help because they are fearful, ashamed of their situation, distrust law enforcement or become dependent on the perpetrator.

The rally, which kicked off at Delta Alumni House near downtown Chicago,

featured representatives from several government and nonprofit agencies, including the Chicago Police Department, Cook County Sheriff's officers, State legislatures and DCFS administration, as well as other churches such as New Covenant Baptist Church. "It was truly a community event," said Hollins.

At the end of the rally, volunteers fanned out into the community with "love bags" containing toiletries, snacks, pamphlets and other materials, in a walk against domestic human trafficking.

Church members offered to pray for those with whom they came in contact.

"It was kind of cool to see an intergenerational approach," said Khris Jones, elder at Straford Memorial Church, who remarked on the support from young and old. "There's definitely a willingness to go back out there." ■

Elijah Horton is a Chicago-based freelance writer.



▲ During the Christmas program, New Albany church members were overjoyed to realize they had surpassed their fundraising goals.



New Albany members surpass fundraising goals

Every year for the last ten years, the New Albany Church in Southern Indiana has presented a Christmas program. But, during its 2019 program, members experienced something on a level not seen before — a remarkable outpouring of generosity.

It has been Pastor Eric Freking's goal to raise money for an Adventist overseas ministry, feeling the need is greater there than here while ensuring that any funds raised would be used within the Adventist Church. For instance, earlier this year he brought the idea to the congregation

to raise money to build a water well in a poverty-stricken town and decided to give the money to Maranatha since they now build water wells next to their churches. "We can draw people to the well and that way they can get Living Water," said Joyce Blake, New Albany's church clerk.

Their goal for the August fundraising campaign was to raise \$10,000 to build one well. However, when the funds were counted at the end of the Christmas program, they were overjoyed to discover they had raised \$20,000 — enough to build two wells!

"There were a lot of tears shed," said Blake, a member of the congregation for ten years. "We were happy as the Lord really blessed!"

Beatriz Lopez, New Albany's Health Ministry director, explained the incredible impact this gift of generosity will make on the impoverished community where construction of the wells is expected. "Now, instead of spending all of their time and energy walking miles to get water, the people will have time to learn to read and go to school. The kids that once were lethargic from lack of water can be healthy and energetic. They will have free water to grow gardens!" What an amazing opportunity. ■

Beatriz Lopez, Health Ministry director for the New Albany Church

A closed door opens opportunity for mobile food ministry

After a door was closed to their ministry, a youth group discovered a creative avenue for serving the homeless. On Sabbath, Dec. 7, 2019, Cadillac (Michigan) area youth group, We Are Called, helped to feed over 250 people and gave away over 100 copies of *The Desire of Ages* at Project Christmas.

We Are Called (WAC), founded in 2017, started when the Youth Sabbath School class saw the needs of the homeless. So, in late 2017 through mid-2018, WAC gave away over 150 backpacks filled with necessities, including a Bible.

The majority of the backpacks were handed out in Grand Rapids and Traverse City, Mich. Later, they started serving a spaghetti dinner while they gave away the backpacks. This proved to be a success.

After several months, the youth group became aware of the needs of their own community. "We would drop off backpacks at the shelters at Christmastime along with other Christmas gifts. We also were helping people on the verge of homelessness," says Brenda Nelson, co-sponsor of WAC. They also started serving a hot meal at the local public library and provided warm clothes and toiletries, serving approximately 65 people each month. "It was something they looked forward to," Nelson added.

After a period of time, however, the library told WAC that they could not continue serving the meals at the library. They tried several options, including serving the meal at the park pavilion. However, attendance was lower, and they felt that they should look elsewhere. However, due to the State of Michigan Health Department regulations, they were not able to find a location where serving the food was allowed. But they also learned



Photos Connor Nelson



▲ On Sabbath, Dec. 7, Cadillac area youth group, We Are Called, helped to feed over 250 people and gave away over 100 *Desire of Ages* at Project Christmas in Cadillac, Mich.

that the State and Health Department do not regulate the use of food trailers. As a result, in mid-2019, WAC purchased a used food trailer in mint condition. This allowed them to go anywhere and serve a warm meal of spaghetti, rolls, hot chocolate and cookies, along with distributing warm clothes.

"Recently," said Brenda Nelson, "a lady who attends a local church stopped by to find out who we were and what we were doing. She was so impressed that these

youth were outside freezing in order to serve others. She plans to help out at our next outreach, along with a local surgeon and his family who also want to get involved."

If you want to find out more information, contact the Cadillac Church by calling 231-775-9545 or by emailing info@cadillacsdachurch.org. ■

Samuel Girvan is assistant Communication director of the Cadillac Church.

Ribbon-cutting ceremony for Advent Prayer Center

LONGTIME DREAMS COME TO FRUITION

On Sept. 9, 2019, a small crowd gathered in the newly built Advent Prayer Center on the campus of Andrews University for a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The program began with a welcome from Sung Um, Advent Prayer Center board member, and was followed by a thank you to donors from Peter Ahn, associate pastor, Ontario Church. Ahn recognized Carolyn Kim, Advent Prayer Center founder, for her fundraising efforts over the last 12 years. "On behalf of Mrs. Kim, I want to say "thank you," especially to those who have helped us through your prayers," he said. He also thanked the audience for attending.

Justin Ringstaff, executive secretary for the Michigan Conference, offered a few words and a prayer of thanks to God for allowing the group to achieve their goals. "If there was ever a time for a house of prayer, it is now. We give thanks to God for His leading in this," he said.

Following Ringstaff's prayer, Roy Castelbuono, pastor of the Michiana Fil-Am Church, recognized those who assisted with the building and finishing of the Prayer Center, reflecting on their contributions to the project.

Castelbuono noted that the concept for the Advent Prayer Center began in 2007 when a Korean prayer ministry dreamed about finding a permanent building from which to advance their work. After exploring this idea in Southern California, New Jersey and Arkansas, the group came to Berrien Springs in 2012 to work with the Advent Discipleship Center at the Fil-Am Church. This led to connections with Andrews University in 2015, where plans were made and construction began.



▲ Lobby of the new center



Photos by Darren Heslop

▲ Ribbon cutting for the Advent Prayer Center

After Castelbuono shared more about this process, Andrea Luxton, president of Andrews University, delivered a few brief remarks about the importance of prayer, saying, "Sometimes we think of prayer happening in churches or maybe personally in our own homes, but this is a wonderful place of community to show how important prayer is and how it can bring so much power as we pray

together." She added, "Going forward, this will be a wonderful place for many people to experience closeness to God."

Kang Eui Hong, Advent Prayer Center speaker, gave a prayer of dedication before the ceremony ended with the ribbon cutting and a tour of the facility for attendees. ■

Hannah Gallant and Moriah McDonald, University Communication student writers



Tom Mejeur

▲ A recording of "The Open Word" radio Bible study with, lower left, Wes Pepper, Michigan Conference associate Ministerial director; Ben Garcia, pastor of the Saginaw and St. Charles churches; Dakota Morgan of the Big Rapids, Reed City and Bristol churches.

Strong Tower Radio celebrates 10 years

Strong Tower Radio (STR) first went on the air on December 23, 2009. The idea of having a radio station had been percolating in David Bolduc's head for quite a few years, but that is another story. The actual STR story started in October 2007 when the FCC opened a window for new frequencies. David, who then lived in Decatur, Ill., wanted one of those frequencies, yet no frequencies were available.

So David decided to look in Michigan where his wife grew up. He learned that 91.9 was available in Cadillac, Mich., but he had only three weeks to form a board of directors, write by-laws, and file an application. The application was granted to build an FM radio station with the FM frequency of 91.9. All they needed now was \$150,000 to build the station. Later they needed call letters and discovered WGCP was available, which fit perfectly: "Where God's Character is Proclaimed!" So

David and his family moved North. God provided!

There was one little station proclaiming the Three Angels Messages in Cadillac, Mich." But God's dream was a bit different. STR has grown to 12 radio stations and a TV station, and now covers most of Michigan from Lansing and Grand Rapids to the Upper Peninsula, plus Sault Ste. Marie, Escanaba, and even Ironwood. David has even seen the fulfillment of his dream for a station in Decatur, Ill.!

As a 3ABN affiliate, STR now has TV23 in Cadillac, which rebroadcasts 3ABN, 3ABN Latino, 3ABN Proclaim, 3ABN Kids Network and Amazing Facts TV. STR airs a variety of programs, including sermons, music, health and children's programming. They also produce some of their own programs. Besides 3ABN, there are shows from Life Talk, Moody Radio, MoneyWise, Ranger Bill, Night Sounds, etc.

The name, Strong Tower Radio, came from George Corliss who was the first development and program director. He

said we needed a "logo" name. One day, during devotions, George came upon this text: *The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe* (Proverbs 18:10 NKJV).

George contributed significantly to the growth of the STR Network. As God led, George would follow up wherever people said they wished for a radio station. Since STR didn't have any money, they would pray and tell others about the need.

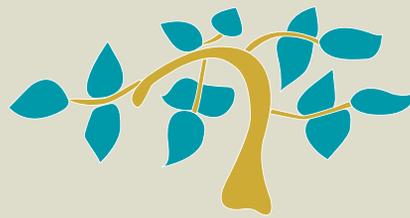
A station became available in Grand Rapids and they "only" needed \$1.5 million to get it. A 20,000 sq. ft. Fox TV studio came up for sale on 10 acres for \$466,000. George, forever optimistic, prayed with everyone, and went to work raising funds. God answered prayers in a big way. In 2017, STR hired Tom Mejeur to help with programming. He worked for a year under George's excellent mentoring. Sadly, after a long battle with health problems, George passed away in 2018, and Tom carries on the legacy.

STR now has three full-time and two part-time employees, several dedicated, full-time volunteers, and a few part-time volunteers. God has blessed abundantly. Hundreds of listeners call in for free materials and share their testimonies. Churches in the listening area (which covers approximately 5 million people) are baptizing new members who first heard the Truth on STR!

Please pray for Strong Tower Radio as it continues to grow. Currently, STR is looking to expand into the southeast and northern Michigan markets as God continues to lead. ■

By Jilane Fenner, Public Relations and Marketing





Your Best
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ANDREWS UNIVERSITY

GENERAL EVENTS

March 1–6: *Wellness Week*

March 5–7: *Andrews University Music Festival: Choir & Orchestra*

March 5: *College of Health & Human Sciences MLS Research Symposium*

March 6, 9 a.m.–12:30 p.m.: *Class of 2020 DPT Student Oral Research Presentations*

March 8–9: *March Preview*

March 10–12, 11:30 a.m.: *Seminary Week of Spiritual Emphasis, Bledi Leno, Seminary Chapel*

March 29–31: *Seminary Ministry Opportunity Days*

March 29, 12-7 p.m.: *International Food Fair, Johnson Gym*

April 11: *Passion Play (passionplay.andrews.edu)*

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.

March 4, 7 p.m.: *Andrews University Music Festival Showcase Concert*

March 6, 7:30 p.m.: *Andrews University Wind Symphony Vespers*

March 7, 4 p.m.: *Andrews University Music Festival Choir & Orchestra Concert*

March 8, 7 p.m.: *Howard Center Presents... Simply Sandi*

March 11, 7 p.m.: *Michigan SDA Elementary School Band & String Clinic Concert*

March 14, 8 p.m.: *Kettering Praise Orchestra: Celtic Celebration*

March 15, 4 p.m.: *Southwest Michigan Symphony Orchestra: Mozart and the Magical Flute*

March 28, 8:30 p.m.: *Howard Center Presents "Teshuah" by James Lee III*

March 29, 4 p.m.: *Howard Center Presents... The Jazz Ambassadors*

March 30, 7 p.m.: *MSBOA Middle School Honors Band Concert*

March 21: *Seminario Adventista Laico (SAL) I, Camino a Cristo Company*

March 27–30: *Motor City Youth Federation/ CFL Champion Weekend, City Temple Church, Detroit*

MICHIGAN

March 1–15: *Camp Meeting Registration, online or in Michigan Memo*

March 6–8: *Rest, Relax, Renew; Camp Au Sable*

March 13–15: *Marriage Commitment Retreat, Camp Au Sable*

March 28–29: *Conference-wide Fieldwork Evangelism, Berrien Springs, Mich.*

WISCONSIN

March 7: *Pathfinder Bible Experience (Conference Level), Green Bay Church*

March 13–15: *Jóvenes Adventistas Hispanos de Wisconsin Youth Rally, Milwaukee*

ILLINOIS

March 8: *Pathfinder Honors Academy*

March 28: *Hispanic Special Forces*

INDIANA

March 13–15: *Pathfinder and Adventurer Leaders Training, Timber Ridge Camp*

March 21–?: *Impact Indiana Evangelism Rally, Impact Indiana Constituent Churches*

LAKE REGION

March 7–8: *Pathfinder Bible Experience Conference Round, Michiana Area (location TBA)*

March 13–15: *Chicagoland Community Service Federation, Maywood Community Church*

LAKE UNION

March 1: *Adventist Community Health Initiative, Century Convention Center, South Bend, Ind.*

March 6–8: *Lake Union Prayer Conference, Plainfield, Ind.*

March 8: *Adventist Community Health Initiative, Three Angels Fellowship Church, Rockford, Ill.*

March 21: *Pathfinder Union Level Bible Experience, Berrien Springs, Mich.*

March 29: *Adventist Community Health Initiative, Indianapolis area*

MARCH





Welcome to the *Lake Union Herald* Readership Survey!

This is your opportunity to share your opinions and suggestions so the *Herald* magazine can best serve your interests. Your responses will help us gain a clearer understanding of what you expect to see in these pages and assist us in producing a magazine that is a better reflection of interests and concerns to our readers.

How often do you typically read an issue?

Every Most Occasionally Never

How much of each magazine do you read?

All Most Some None

How long do you keep an issue?

>1 mo. <1 mo. 1 wk. Discard

Total minutes reading each issue?

60+ 30-60 10-30 0-10

If additional content is available online only, how likely are you to go to the website to read it?

Not Some Moderately Very

Using either the list below, the Table of Contents (on p. 3) or by flipping through the magazine, please answer the questions that follow:

Feature articles which focus on a particular theme or topic for that issue

Perspectives (editorial, Lest We Forget, Conversations with God, Conexiones, One Voice)

Evangelism (Sharing Our Hope, Telling God's Stories, Partnership with God, On the Edge)

Lifestyle (Family Focus, Alive & Well)

Current Matters (AdventHealth, Andrews University, other News stories, Calendar of Events, Mileposts, Classifieds)

What type of articles would you like more of?

What article(s) do you *Always* read?

What article(s) do you *Never* read?

In general, the articles should be (*check one*):

Shorter Longer Remain Same

On a scale of 1-10, how valuable is the content to you?

In your opinion, how can we improve that value?

What article topic would you consider to be the most memorable in the last year?

What do you like the most about the magazine?

What do you like the least about the magazine?

Are there any changes or improvements you would like to suggest?

Do you subscribe to the weekly e-newsletter?

Yes No

Please sign me up (*provide info. below*)

Email address

Name

Please rate the quality of the current *Herald* magazine on the following:

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor	No opinion
Content						
Cover						
Readability						
Design						
Photography						
Writing						

Of what conference are you a member?

Ind. Ill. Mich. Lake Region
 Wis. None Other

What is your age? under 25

25-34 35-49 50-64 65+

What is your gender? Male Female

Please mail completed survey by

April 30, 2020, to: *Lake Union Herald*,
P.O. Box 287, Berrien Springs, MI 49103

Or, go online to fill out the survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VTYXSRJ>.

Or, scan this QR code.



Watch for survey results in the June/July issue of the *Herald*.

Thank you for your time and support in completing this survey.

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.

OBITUARIES

ARNOLD, Richard E., age 80; born March 20, 1939, in Pontiac, Mich.; died Nov. 27, 2019, in Waterford, Mich. He was a member of the Waterford Riverside Church in Waterford. Survivors include his wife, Karen (Paulson); daughters, Lesley (Craig) Hiltunen, Cheryl (Doug) Meyers, Anne (Wally) Fruit; brothers, Harley and Skip; eight grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. Funeral services were conducted by Pastor Todd Ervin; private inurnment.

BAILEY, Joan (Dougherty), age 87; born Aug. 28, 1932, in Davison, Mich.; died Sept. 15, 2019, in Davison. She was a member of the First Flint Church in Flint, Mich. Survivors include son, Paul Bailey; daughters, Virginia Hoeflaak and Sharon Hilgendorf; brother, Robert Tresler; sister, Joan Fitzpatrick; 11 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren; and three great-great-grandchildren. Funeral services were conducted by Pastor Todd Ervin; interment was at Pleasant Plains Cemetery in Harrison, Mich.

BOLIN, Janet Lee (Boyles), age 82; born March 21, 1937, in Hartford City, Ind.; died Dec. 14, 2019, in Arcadia, Ind. She was a member of the Cicero Church in Cicero, Ind. Survivors include sons, Dennis Bolin, Douglas Bolin, Duane Bolin, Darryl Bolin, and David Bolin; daughter, Delynne Shepard; sister, Shirley Ballenger; 11 grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren. Funeral services were conducted by Pastor Ron Kelly; interment was at Carey Cemetery in Noblesville, Ind.

FICK, Helene (Baumann), age 88; born Dec. 25, 1930, in Pratteln Baselland, Switzerland; died Nov. 10, 2019, in Boca Raton, Fla. She was a member of the Northwest Church in Milwaukee, Wis.

Survivors include sons, Philip Fick and Lucian (Jennifer) Fick; sister, Gertrude Baumann, Regin Notz, and Vreneli Gisiger. Private inurnment. Memorial services will be conducted in the summer of 2020 at Wisconsin Memorial Park in Brookfield, Wis.

GROLEAU, Romeo A., age 92; born July 22, 1927, in Escanaba, Mich.; died Dec. 21, 2019, in Wilson, Mich. He was a member of the Wilson Church in Wilson. Survivors include his wife, Irene; sons, Michael (Debbie) and Jonathan; daughter, Susan (Edward) Jenkins; sister, Rose Derouin; seven grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. Graveside service will be conducted in the spring at the Wilson Church Cemetery.

HENDERSON, Mary (Bennett), age 94; born Feb. 12, 1925, in Jeffersonville, Ind.; died Sept. 26, 2019, in Traverse City, Mich. She was a member of the Traverse City Church in Traverse City. Survivors include son, James Henderson; daughters, Betsy Henderson and Anita Riess; three grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. Funeral services were conducted by Pastor Jan Follett; interment was at Grand Traverse Memorial Gardens Cemetery in Traverse City.

JEFFRIES, Kenneth L., age 75; born Feb. 20, 1944, in Coldwater, Mich.; died June 21, 2019, in Kalamazoo, Mich. He was a member of the Burlington Church in Burlington, Mich. Survivors include his wife, Shirley A. (Morgan) Jeffries; daughters, Jacklyn R. Jeffries Gibson, Debbie A. Jeffries Upston, Christine M. Jeffries McGee; brothers, Eddie Jeffries and Daniel Jeffries; sisters, Elizabeth Jeffries Stone, Judy Jeffries Bordine, Kathy Jeffries Alexander; 17 grandchildren; and 37 great-grandchildren. Funeral services were conducted by Joel Nephew; interment was in Burlington Cemetery in Burlington.

KROLL, Mary A. (Byers), age 72; born Nov. 26, 1946, in Noblesville, Ind.; died Jan. 26, 2019, in Niles, Mich. She was a member of the South Bend Church, South Bend, Ind. Survivors include her husband, Sam J. Kroll; stepson, Branson W. Kroll; daughter, Jennifer Kate Kroll; stepdaughter, Tobi V. Rice; brother, Pete (Pam) Byers, Bill (Kathy) Byers; and two grandchildren. Private inurnment followed.

MUELLER, Marty, age 54; born May 26, 1965, in Flint, Mich.; died Sept. 21, 2019, in Swartz Creek, Mich. He was a member of the First Flint Church in Flint, Mich. Survivors include his wife, Mary (Hutchins); stepson, Mike Jones; daughters, Brittney Curtis and Brianna Thompson; father, Charley Mueller; brothers, Craig Mueller and Charles Mueller; and one grandchild. Funeral services were conducted by Pastor Tony Messer; interment was at Sunset Hills Cemetery in Flint.

PHILO, Claudia G. "Genie" (Soper), age 77; born Oct. 14, 1942, in Ann Arbor, Mich.; died Oct. 30, 2019, in Grand Haven, Mich. She was a member of the Holland Church in Holland, Mich. Survivors include her husband, Donald Philo; stepdaughters, Terri (Roger) Geach and Cyndi (Don) Reed; brother, Steve Soper; sister, Janet Sanford; seven step-grandchildren; and 10 step-great-grandchildren. Memorial services were conducted by Pastor Sean Reed; inurnment was in Grand Haven.

REWA, Thomas, age 61; born June 21, 1958, in Holland, Mich.; died Oct. 4, 2019, in Holland. He was a member of the Holland Church in Holland. Survivors include his wife, Cathy; son, Kevin (Rachel) Rewa; daughter, Sara (Andy) Fleming; brother, Lawrence Rewa; sister, Sandy (Dan) Fleming, Rosemary (Glenn) VandeVusse, Marilyn Jones (Ron Visser); and three grandchildren. Memorial services were conducted by Pastor Sean Reed.

RIVERS, Mattie Dolly, age 99; born Jan. 6, 1920, in Yazoo City, Miss.; died Sept. 18, 2019, in Sterling, Ill. She was a member of

the Sauk Valley Church in Dixon, Ill. Survivors include son, Aaron Raszel Rivers; daughters, Thelma Rivers, Diana Temple and Remell Smith; 20 grandchildren; 46 great-grandchildren; and 29 great-great-grandchildren. Funeral services were conducted by Pastor John Lewis; interment was at Preston-Schilling Funeral Home and Oakwood Cemetery in Dixon.

RUMSEY, Ray L., age 92; born May 25, 1927, in Pottersville, Mich.; died Nov. 9, 2019, in Ooltewah, Tenn. He was a member of the Charlotte Church (when growing up) in Charlotte, Mich. Survivors include his wife, Verginia F. (Griffith) Rumsey; sons, Greg G. Rumsey and Mark G. Rumsey; five grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren. Memorial services were conducted by Bryan Aalborg and Greg King; inurnment was in Sunset Memory Gardens in Charlotte, N.C.

WERY, Elizaneth "Betty" Jane (Borden), age 82; born Feb. 9, 1937, in Wilson, Mich.; died Nov. 12, 2019, in Wilson. She was a member of the Wilson Church in Wilson. Survivors include her husband, Edward Wery; son, Stephen (Debbie) Wery, Ronald (Terri) Wery, Gary (Margaret) Wery; daughter, Debra Wery (Steven) Besson; brothers, Robert (Elly) Borden, Wilfred (Rose) Borden, David (Pam) Borden, Dennis (LuAnn) Borden; sisters, Barbara Borden (Ed) Jenshack and Sandra Borden (Jay) Peters; eight grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; and two

great-great-grandchildren. Funeral services were conducted by Pastor Tom Hubbard; interment was at Wilson Church Cemetery.

WICKMAN, Gloria A. (Braman), age 84; born in July 23, 1935, in North Port, Mich.; died Dec. 29, 2019, in Highland, Mich. She was a member of the Waterford Riverside Church in Waterford, Mich. Survivors include sons, Kevin (Cheryl) Wickman and Robert (Molly) Wickman; daughter, Megan (Robert) Liebeck; eight grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral services were conducted by Todd Ervin; private inurnment.

CALENDAR OF OFFERINGS

- March 7** Local Church Budget
- March 14** World Budget
(Emphasis: Adventist World Radio/Hope Channel)
- March 21** Local Church Budget
- March 28** Local Conference Advance

Thirteenth Sabbath Offerings

- March 28** Inter-European Division (EUD)

CALENDAR OF SPECIAL DAYS

**FOCUS FOR THE MONTH:
WOMEN IN THE CHURCH**

- March 7** Women's Day of Prayer
- March 7-14** Adventist Youth Week of Prayer
- March 21** Disabilities Awareness Sabbath
- March 21** Weekend of Compassion
- March 21** Global Youth Day
- March 28** ARM Safety Sabbath

Go Light Your World

"You are the light of the world... Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."
Matthew 5:14-16

ASI Lake Union Spring Fellowship
ADVENTIST-LAYMEN'S SERVICES & INDUSTRIES

Fri. & Sat., April 3 & 4
Indiana Academy
24815 State Road 19, Cicero, IN

Headline Speaker: Pastor Eric Flickinger

For more details visit www.asilakeunion.org



Sabbath Sunset Calendar

	March 6	March 13	March 20	March 27
Berrien Springs, Mich.	6:42	7:50:	7:58	8:06
Chicago, Ill.	5:48	6:56:	7:04	7:11
Detroit, Mich.	6:29	7:37	7:45	7:53
Indianapolis, Ind.	6:43	7:50	7:57	8:04
La Crosse, Wis.	6:01	7:10:	7:18	7:27
Lansing, Mich.	6:35	7:43	7:51	7:59
Madison, Wis.	5:54	7:02	7:11	7:19
Springfield, Ill.	5:57	7:04	7:11	7:18

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>.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

“YE OLDE” CEDAR LAKE ACADEMY REUNION

will be **June 5–7** for alumni and schoolmates of 1970 and earlier at Great Lakes Adventist Academy, Cedar Lake, Michigan. Honor classes: 1940, 1950, 1960, 1970. Details will be sent by mail. You may contact GLAA Alumni office at 989-427-5181 or <http://www.glaa.net>.

THE ASI LAKE UNION SPRING FELLOWSHIP

will be held on **April 3–4** at Indiana Academy in Cicero, Ind, in conjunction with the Indiana Conference annual Sabbath Celebration. Eric Flickinger, associate speaker for It Is Written, is the weekend speaker. Seminar presenters are Dr. Nicholas P. Miller, Esq., legal counsel and director, Office of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty, Lake Union Conference, and David DeRose, MD, MPH, president, CompassHealth Consulting, Inc. Go to asilakeunion.org for more information.

ACADEMY DAYS AT OKLAHOMA ACADEMY!

If you are a student who is serious about your walk with the Lord and His mission for your life, Oklahoma Academy may be just the place for you. Come **April 17–19** for our Academy Days weekend and find out. Call 405-454-6211 to make your reservations today! Also visit www.oklahomaacademy.org.

GREAT LAKES ADVENTIST ACADEMY is looking for all students in grades 8–11 to come for an awesome experience at **Academy Days, April 19–20**. Visit classes, make new friends, and experience boarding academy life. Registration is from 1-2:30 p.m. on Sunday. To register, call 989-427-444, or online at glaa.net. Contact GLAA today!

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ATLANTA ADVENTIST ACADEMY OFFERS EXCELLENT ADVENTIST EDUCATION locally (Atlanta, Ga.) as well as virtually through our live online program for homeschoolers and distance campuses. To enroll your student, become a partner campus or receive more information, call 404-699-1400 or visit aaa.edu/admissions.

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EMPLOYMENT

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the general education program of the university, in our graduate program in community and international development, and to students and fellow faculty in a multi-disciplinary department offering programs and courses in psychology, sociology, geography, criminal justice, emergency preparedness, anthropology, and community and international development. Areas of instruction and advising will include general anthropology, development anthropology, and research methods, and community and international development. Candidates with Ph.D. in cultural anthropology (preferred) or a related field are especially encouraged to apply https://www.andrews.edu/admres/jobs/show/faculty#job_3.

OAK HAVEN/COUNTRY LIFE NATURAL

FOODS HAS A FULL-TIME OPENING for a practical, versatile and energetic person to help maintain and improve our campus. Duties include building and grounds maintenance, snow removal and equipment repair. Full job description with additional skills required is available. Contact us at mail@clnf.org

PACIFIC UNION COLLEGE IS SEEKING A FULL TIME MEN'S/WOMEN'S SOCCER COACH

— Major duties include management of all operations for soccer intercollegiate teams, provision of leadership and direction to support student athlete success, familiarity with NAIA governing rules. Must also have willingness to travel for competitions and recruiting, and work with NAIA and California Pacific Conference. Bachelor's degree required; Master's degree preferred. For more information or to apply, please call Human Resources at 707-965-6231 or visit our website at <https://www.puc.edu/campus-services/human-resources/current-job-postings/head-soccer-coach,-mens-and-womens>.

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY SEEKS A FULL-TIME FACULTY MEMBER FOR THE SCHOOL OF COMPUTING

— The ideal candidate will have an earned doctorate in computer science, information technology, information systems or a related area. Qualified candidate would teach graduate and undergraduate courses, develop course materials, advise students academically, serve on university committees, and perform other duties expected of full-time faculty. For a full job description and desired qualifications please visit: southern.edu/jobs

Awaken Us, Lord

By Ramona Seath-Lubke

HELLO, PRECIOUS PEOPLE! This is a very busy and worn out world! I know many just flip through pages of articles and close the magazine quickly without ever tasting the well thought-out words from those that have some very meaningful things to share with us. While I have your attention, and since I am now 91 years of age, I am gently asking you to find a quiet place for a few moments to hear what I have to say.

I am a child of God, just like you, but perhaps with some years that you have not yet seen. When one reaches my “time on the road,” life experience becomes very valuable, especially as you help others who have not traveled as far just yet.

I love to look back at all the awesome and wonderful truths that our church and its leaders, under God’s direction, have given us. I am a third generation Seventh-day Adventist and can remember how the early believers were so touched by the beauty of our truths. Folks back then were thrilled when the Sabbath hours approached! We were careful to make and guard time for Sabbath preparation and Sabbath observance because we would be meeting with our Creator. It seems now, in our hurry to care for tedious things and responsibilities, we have lost sight of those beautiful principles that were once so precious laid before us. I, too, am guilty. But it is so comforting to me when I run across someone, or hear in a sermon, things that remind me of the beauty of our “old time religion.”

I also see more clearly the responsibility we have towards others that live in this old world with us. Those around us are influenced by the way we live. They notice how we eat, care for our bodies, and treat each other. It can either bring joy and comfort to them or lessen their well-being while on this earth. I feel sad if



Courtesy Ramona Seath-Lubke

▲ Ramona Seath-Lubke

I, in any way, have caused their brokenness. We are our brother’s keeper!

Weighing heavily upon my mind is the realization that so many leave this earth prematurely because they did not care for themselves as they should have. They don’t fully comprehend how much pain and sorrow they cause for the ones that were comforted, inspired and made secure by their existence. I want to be broken so God can take me to a new level so my life can help others to be more productive and at peace. Oh, how we need the refreshing like those days of old — to become more thrilled with a closer walk with God. By so doing, those around us would feel the warmth and joy that results when someone lives a life according to God’s plan.

May God bless you all, dear souls! Remember that every being has a special place in this universe and that we need to love one another as God has loved us. Then we can awaken to the beauty God created for us and forever be blessed by His glorious presence when He comes to take us home. ■

By Ramona Seath-Lubke, Reed City, Michigan

We have revived our column, Partnership with God, and so in this space each month we’ll bring you articles on the topic of stewardship. This month, Ramona Seath-Lubke, a member of the Reed City (Michigan) Church has a timely reminder for us. Ramona has seen her share of trials, including witnessing her young son crushed to death in a freak car

CLASSIFIEDS CONTINUED

UNION COLLEGE SEEKS COMMITTED SDA CANDIDATE for tenure track faculty position in instrumental music beginning June 2020. Responsibilities include overseeing instrumental program, directing instrumental

groups, advising undergraduate music majors, and teaching undergraduate courses and instrumental lessons. Master’s degree in music required; doctoral degree preferred. Complete application at <https://ucollege.edu/>

employment/ and upload cover letter and resume/CV, and provide 3 references. For further information, email Bruce Forbes, chair, Division of Fine Arts bruce.forbes@ucollege.edu.



▲ Ruth Burn

Hard Lessons

“RUTH, YOU’RE GOING TO HAVE TO CANCEL YOUR DEBIT CARD, and you might have to file a dispute with the hotel.” My mom had called the hotel that morning to check on Mary, a stranger we had seen trudging through the snow one Sabbath afternoon and had stopped to help. Hearing her desperate plight that she was homeless and trying to reach a friend’s house, we decided to offer to put her up in a hotel for one night, giving her time to make contact with her friend. The hotel worker, however, revealed to my mom that Mary had informed the front desk after we left that she would be staying on my card for the next couple of months. When I checked my bank account, sure enough, there it was — a charge for almost a thousand dollars. I was devastated.

“I’m sorry, Ruth,” mom said. “She wasn’t who we thought she was, honey. I checked with a rehab center near where we picked her up and they told me she was

a drug addict who had been in their program, but chose to leave.”

That week I struggled. What had we done wrong? We had done the right thing, hadn’t we? God forbid, had we been so focused on doing “the right thing” that we had seen Mary as a good deed and not as a broken, needy individual? Again, the haunting question — how are we supposed to treat people “like Jesus” if they really aren’t like Jesus at all?

Over breakfast I shared my heart with a good friend and fellow theology major. She listened intently, munching on her food, before commenting, “You know what, Ruth? I think that’s a lot like how God sees us.” I was confused. This was about seeing people like Jesus, not about Jesus seeing us. Raabe put her fork down and explained, “We do the same thing to Him,” she explained, “with all the blessings He gives us, you know?” My stomach soured at the idea she so casually suggested. It *hurt* to be treated like this! Catching the look in my face, my friend laughed with surprise. “You really don’t like that, do you?” she said. I shook my head. She was right though and, the more I thought about it, the more it sunk in. It wasn’t the answer I had wanted, but it was the answer I needed.

Mary and I connected on Facebook a while after the incident. I’ve thought about telling her, “I forgive you,” but I realized that for me this was never about her. Telling Mary that I forgave her wouldn’t solve any of her problems. No, this was about me, the giver, the modern-day “Samaritan” of the story. If anything, I needed to forgive myself. It’s okay to be a giving person. It’s okay to be trusting and kind. Hurting people hurt people — unfortunately, they often hurt themselves the most. When we pass by the hurting people of this world, those who have been beaten, broken and robbed by sin, we must realize that they will not be like Jesus. We can’t blame them for this. And we can’t blame ourselves. As Samaritans, sometimes all we can do is love, just like Jesus would. ■

Ruth Burn is a senior studying Religion and English at Andrews University. Her passions include Moses, youth ministry, and finding beauty in God’s creation.

For a full version of this story, visit www.lakeunionherald.com. Ruth received a \$100 scholarship for his article. If you’re a youth or young adult interested in submitting an article for consideration, please contact: herald@lakeunion.org

A Refugee's Faith and Calling



▲ Aung Tun

Courtesy Aung Tun

AUNG TUN WAS BORN IN BURMA

and grew up in Mae La refugee camp in northwest Thailand, the largest camp for Karen refugees in Thailand. As of June 2019, over 50,000 refugees still reside there.

Aung was ten when his father passed away, and his already hardworking mother was forced to take on additional work to provide for him and his two younger brothers. To help, Aung dropped out of school and found a job tending cows.

When his mother was imprisoned for two years, he and his brothers were accepted into another family by a caring and sympathetic woman. A devout Baptist, she took the boys to church and taught them about the Bible, resulting in Aung's baptism.

Eventually, he met a young woman who introduced him to Adventist beliefs, and Aung was rebaptized into the Adventist church. They were soon married and, in 2011, the couple came to the U.S. as refugees and restarted their lives.

"I worked hard for my family and had no time to care for my spiritual life," Aung

says. "I let myself get further and further away from God as time went by."

On a whim, his wife began looking for the woman who had adopted Aung and his brothers all those years ago. She found her in Wisconsin. Despite his hesitancy to reconnect with someone who would expect him to be committed to Christ, Aung and his family moved to Wisconsin in 2016.

"We began to attend church every Sunday," he explains, "and the Holy Spirit worked with renewed vigor, encouraging me to find the truth."

Upon discovering a childhood friend now living in Rockford, Illinois, Aung and his family began attending the Adventist church there. Not long after, the Holy Spirit led him to accept a leadership position in starting a church plant. God led him to other Karen Adventists in Wisconsin, and together they began worshiping in homes until February 2017, when they officially started an Adventist group in Milwaukee.

"Although the devil continues to attack us, the members encourage me to be strong," Aung says. "They remind me often that God chose me to lead for a reason, and He will be with me."

Thanks to the generosity of a Wisconsin Adventist Church, the group is able to worship in their own language every Sabbath afternoon in a dedicated church building.

"Despite my unworthiness to lead, God chose me to work with Him, and I am joyful," Aung says with a smile. "I thank God for inviting me to join Him in His work, and I will continue to follow God's plan, working hard to fulfill my part." ■

Interview by Daniel Chit, Edited by Becky St. Clair

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