

SERVING SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS IN THE LAKE UNION SINCE 1908

HERALD

APRIL 2021

*Adventist
Education*

THE BREACH?

ILLINOIS MEMBERS
ILLINOIS FOCUS
INSIDE



This is indeed the Education issue that you're holding. I could tell stories about my time as a professor at Andrews University in the Communication Department. But indulge me for a moment. I'd like to pay tribute to a gentle giant who is inspiring and has now retired.

Gary Burns and I became acquainted about six years ago when he asked me to join him at the *Lake Union Herald*. At the time, I was teaching at Andrews and had become quite comfortable in that role. His warmth and humility struck a chord immediately. Over the years, the stories he spun about his 17 years at the helm of this magazine were captivating. However, it's the lesson of kindness in leadership that will stick with me. It's a biblical kindness in mentoring, modelled by Elijah with Elisha (2 Kings 2: 1-6) and in Christ who taught us to love and serve people (John 15:17).

Isn't that also what Adventist Christian education is about? ■

Debbie

Debbie Michel
Associate Director of Communication



ONLINE NEWS

The 2022 General Conference (GC) Session, the quinquennial business meeting of the denomination, will move from Indianapolis, Ind., to St. Louis, Mo., United States. This decision comes when it was discovered that the Indianapolis space was no longer available for the June 6-11, 2022, dates.



On Feb. 19, 2021, Phillip Willis Jr. who serves as a chaplain in the U.S. Army Reserves was promoted to colonel, the highest field-grade officer rank. Willis, an Iraq War veteran, pastors the Lake Region churches of Maywood and Robbins in the Chicagoland area.



Peter Cousins has accepted the post as Indiana's superintendent of Education. Cousins is currently the principal of Tri-City Christian Academy in High Point, N.C., which God has blessed with marked growth in enrollment, course offerings and outreach opportunities under his leadership.



On Feb. 24, Illinois Conference named Lori Aguilera as superintendent of schools. She served in an interim role since last year. Before coming to Illinois, she taught special education in both public and Adventist schools and served as director of Special Education for the Potomac Conference.



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COVER ILLUSTRATION: COURTNEY SAUNDERS

The *Lake Union Herald* (ISSN 0194-908X) is published monthly (except for January/February, June/July and November/December) by the Lake Union Conference, P.O. Box 287, Berrien Springs, MI 49103-0287. Periodicals postage paid at Berrien Springs, Michigan, and additional mailing offices. Yearly subscription price is \$12.50. Vol. 113, No. 3. POSTMASTER: Send all address changes to: *Lake Union Herald*, P.O. Box 287, Berrien Springs, MI 49103-0287.

ADDRESS CORRECTION Only paid subscribers (see below) should contact the *Lake Union Herald* office with their address changes. Members should contact their local church clerks directly for all *Lake Union Herald* address changes. Contact phone numbers and our mailing address are listed below for your convenience. Online submissions can be made at <https://www.lakeunionherald.com/contact>.

Lake Union Herald office: 269-473-8242
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Michigan: 517-316-1552
Indiana: 317-844-6201 ext. 241
Wisconsin: 920-484-6555

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Note: If you are a member of a church in the Lake Union but are not receiving the *Lake Union Herald*, please request it through your church clerk or local conference secretary.

Mission Unstoppable

What a privilege to serve the Lord and His church in ministry over these past forty-six years! Certainly, God has this church in His hands (Matt. 16:18).



▲ Steve Poenitz

Remember how God protected His people from the curses of Balaam (Num. 22:12)? However, there is no question that the church has met growing pains in its path. We have encountered “ology” crises (Christology, ecclesiology, eschatology, soteriology, etc.) and conflicting practices with wedding bands, worship styles and women’s ordination. The enemy of souls relishes the “divide and conquer” method in these struggles. We naturally focus on ourselves, our needs, our wants, our desires, which distract us from the Three Angels’ mission (Rev. 14:6-12). I believe our church’s main agenda today should be seeking a *balanced* approach to mission.

During my elementary church school days, recess included riding the teeter totter. Lest I suddenly become airborne and fly off the ride, I gripped the wood and balanced myself to ride with my classmate. The motion was stimulating but I hung on tightly, enjoying the ride.

Take this balance metaphor from the school to the church. With all of the issues circulating around us, shouldn’t we reconsider a balanced approach to mission? Sometimes we surge ahead with a particular program, current news interpreted by “my” prophetic understanding, a nuanced doctrinal strain or a model of church ministry, causing imbalance or lack of movement. How rapidly mission can be jeopardized by side issues. I can envision the devil and his imps taking their victory laps around the church and school playgrounds when this happens! However, please understand, balance does include dialogue on issues.

What would you think of this sermon title? “Both/And, Not Either/Or.” A seminary professor planted this balance concept in my mind over forty years ago! Why the delay in preaching this topic? Probably because I

also needed to develop this message for myself. Our Seventh-day Adventist message calls us to be a people of biblical balance in our mission. As a matter of fact, lack of balance has influenced us to follow the teeter-totter to extreme highs or lows in our practice and proclamation of mission.

Note John the Revelator’s example of “Both/And, Not Either/Or” which features our unique mission as a church. *Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus* (Rev. 14:12). We endorse **both** the keeping of the commandments and the centrality of the faith of Jesus. These two points of faith keep us balanced in our mission.

Jesus’ mission also included balance. John testified of Him coming as the *only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth* (John 1:14). Friends, it’s not a matter of one or the other, but *both* grace and truth. These qualities in Jesus’ mission come packaged together. Jesus Himself appealed to Thomas for complete balance. “*I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life*” (John 14:6).

Calvary displayed the balance of Jesus’ mission. “The mystery of the cross explains all other mysteries. In the light that streams from Calvary, the attributes of God which had filled us with fear and awe appear beautiful and attractive. *Mercy, tenderness, and parental love are seen to blend with holiness, justice, and power.* While we behold the majesty of His throne, high and lifted up, we see His character in its gracious manifestations, and comprehend, as never before, the significance of that endearing title, our Father” (GC 652, emphasis supplied). Jesus’ salvation gift blends both mercy and justice. God’s justice is also good news along with His mercy because it tells us He will not permit Planet

Earth to unravel in destruction, but that He will soon settle the Great Controversy. We don't have to fear His final judgment. (Dan 7:22; Rom 9:28; Rev 12:10-12)

At the Cross, we have a marvelous demonstration of Jesus' balanced mission.

Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed (Ps. 85:10).

My friends, the gospel seed still sprouts. In 2005, researcher Elaine Solowey planted a 2000-year-old date palm seed which was discovered in an enclosed hot, dry jar atop Masada. But today, that tree is more than four feet tall and blooms annually (Clouzet, *In the Name of Jesus*, 2020). The Good News may be 2000 years old (see 1 Pet. 1:10), but we continue to plant the seeds (Matt. 13:8) and God gives the increase (1 Cor. 3:7).

The United Cry Prayer Summit, March 6-7, 2020, depicted missional balance. Church members and leaders of the five Lake Union conferences assembled in Indianapolis, seeking the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Fervent seasons of prayer ascended to heaven. I'm confident the Lord heard our prayers. Prayer can unite us in a balanced mission.

Whose agenda are we on? When we're tempted to take sides on an issue, will we stay true to Jesus' mission (Matt. 28:18-20), or digress into our own mission? Will we continue to seek the lost and tell them about a soon coming Savior? or will we choose to flounder in imbalanced side trips? I confess I've been guilty in embroiling myself in nonessentials. However, when I engage in ministry for others, these side issues evaporate.

Like the seesaw at school, our challenge is to hang on (John 15:5) while embracing Jesus' commission and evading distractions. His mission addresses much more than a playground; we're the theater of the universe. Heavenly spectators anticipate our participation (1 Cor. 4:9). Of this we do know. The Holy Spirit will descend in Pentecost II (Acts 2:17, 18). Christ's prayer will be fulfilled (John 17:18). The mission is unstoppable. The appeal to our hearts? Will we "hang" onto a balanced mission?

Jesus' Olivet discourse will come to fruition. *"But he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this gospel of the*

kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come" (Matt. 24:13, 14).

Seeking His Balanced Mission.

Jesus is coming soon! ■

Steven N. Poenitz, Lake Union Executive/Ministerial secretary



Adventist Christian Education Begins at Home

Christ must be the center of Christian education.
It must begin and end with Christ.



▲ David Sedlacek

Ideally Christ is first taught in the home by Christian parents, but research shows that many parents abdicate this responsibility to the church and to the school because they do not have a vibrant, living relationship with Jesus themselves (Barna, 2003). Perhaps a necessary focus of Christian education is filling this void in the lives of our adult parents. They cannot give what they don't have.

What do we mean by Christ-focused education? Children learn by what their parents, teachers, Sabbath School teachers, siblings, friends and other influential persons in their lives teach. Some of this education is formal, that is, teaching about Jesus throughout Bible history from Genesis to Revelation. This is content-based education designed to anchor and ground the mind of the child in the facts of Jesus being foretold in the book of Genesis — the covenant that God established with His people through Abraham; the response of His people to that covenant over time; the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and the revelation of Jesus and His second coming.

Just as important, if not more so, is Christ-centered education that is modeled and experienced. Children experience Jesus through the love of their parents, teachers and other loved ones. When parents demonstrate love through selfless sacrifice for their children and express that love in words and hugs, their children experience Jesus through them. When parents affirm their children as the Father did with Jesus at His baptism (Luke 3:21-22), are actively involved in their lives, protect them, forgive them, discipline them and guide them in loving ways, they model Jesus and help their children experience Jesus through them.

The secure attachment that both formal teaching and experiential modeling of the love of Jesus brings to their children gives them a solid sense of both who they are and Whose they are. The brain becomes wired to both give and receive agape self-sacrificing love. This type of Christian education will prepare our children to be used by God as emissaries to spread the love of God to those they encounter in these last days.

Layered on top of this love foundation are specific biblical understandings that have been captured in the fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. These fundamental beliefs must be taught (and modeled) by parents, Adventist educators, pastors and Sabbath school teachers in a way that teaches grace, redemption and trust. As students grow from infancy, through childhood and adolescence and into young adulthood, the methods of instruction must vary to suit their stage of development. In particular, adolescents and young adults must be given the freedom to think for themselves and ask difficult questions. Wise Adventist educators will support the growth that these questions imply and be willing to engage in a personal, biblical dialogue and resist dogmatic, pat answers that will push these students farther away from the church. We must trust that the Jesus we have taught them to love will keep and guide them on their Christ-centered journey. ■

Barna, G. (2003). Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions. Ventura, CA: Regal Books.

David Sedlacek is professor of Family Ministry and Discipleship at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary.

Promoting a Healthy Lifestyle

In the United States, leading causes of disability and death are related to chronic diseases; however, being physically active, eating a healthy diet and abstaining from tobacco use have been linked to chronic disease prevention (heart.org).

It's easier and more effective to encourage and establish healthy behaviors in younger people than trying to change established behaviors in adults (heart.org). Children and adolescents can learn and establish lifelong health behaviors when these behaviors are promoted in school. Adventist Christian education must continue to promote healthy lifestyles because these behaviors are important for lifelong health, academic achievement and spiritual growth.

Diet and exercise play a central role in memory and learning, which are important for academic achievement. Diet affects multiple brain processes through regulation of neurotransmitter pathways, synaptic transmission, membrane fluidity and signal-transduction pathways (Gomez-Pinilla, 2008), all of which are important for learning. The gut can directly stimulate molecular systems associated with synaptic plasticity and learning. In addition, gut hormones influence emotions and cognitive processes (Gomez-Pinilla, 2008). Increases in physical activity have been shown to improve academic performance (Committee on Physical Activity and Physical Education in the School Environment, 2013).

If a child has difficulties with learning or behavior, diet, exercise and sleep may be a part of the problem. Eating a diet high in sugar has been associated with reduced impulse control, anxiety and depression (Jacques, et al., 2019). There is also evidence for an association between diets high in saturated fats (butter, cake, biscuits, sausages, lunch meat, cheese, pastries, etc.) and refined carbohydrates (sugar, white flour, white bread, white rice, pastries, soda, etc.) and impaired cognitive function (Francis & Stevenson, 2013).

Because diet impacts brain function and brain function is important to comprehension of spiritual things, we can conclude that diet impacts spiritual discernment. "You need clear, energetic minds, in order to appreciate the exalted character of the truth, to value the atonement, and to place the right estimate upon eternal things" (White, 1938).

Establishing healthy lifelong behaviors should start in childhood when the brain is most plastic and able to change and adapt. A famous quote by Virginia Wolf states, "One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well." Let us teach our children to dine on that which will be most healthful to the mind, body, and soul so that they may appreciate the Bread of Life, which is Jesus Christ. ■



▲ Christina Wells

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Christina Wells, MD, is the Lake Region Conference Health director

The Baptism of Adventist Education — 1

Those whom I love, I reprove and chasten; so be zealous and repent. Rev. 3:19, RSV.



▲ George R. Knight

In December 1890, as we saw last time, Christ came to William Warren Prescott and knocked on the door of his heart. The young educator answered it. And he would never be the same. And neither would Uriah Smith. One result of Prescott's conversion was a ministry to Smith that led to his public confession and a healing between him and Ellen White.

And so it is that the message of Christ changes lives and reshapes them. But in the case of Prescott the reshaping not only affected individual lives but also had a mighty impact on Adventist education.

You see, Prescott was not merely the president of Battle Creek College — he also was the head of the Seventh-day Adventist Educational Association and soon would be the president of both Union College

and Walla Walla College. Being leader of the association and president of three colleges at the same time, the articulate Prescott was in a position to make serious changes in Adventist education.

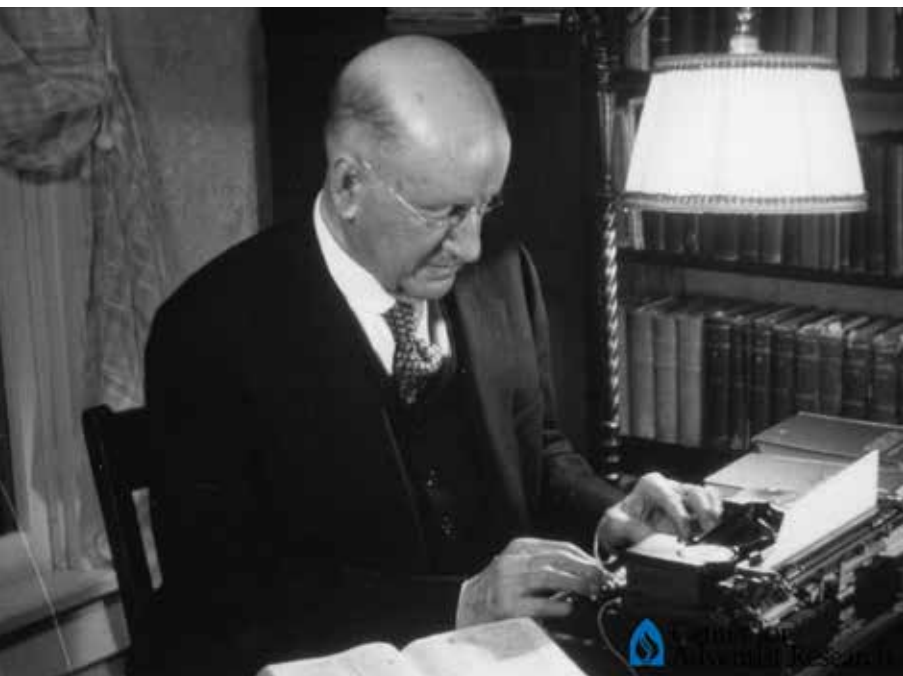
He would initiate the transformation of Adventist education at an educational convention he sponsored at a little place called Harbor Springs in northern Michigan during July and August 1891.

Up to that point, Adventist education had struggled with its mission and identity. Although Adventists had founded it to be distinctively Christian and to prepare ministers and missionaries, from its beginning at Battle Creek College in 1874 it had been held captive to the pagan classics and the study of Latin and classical Greek. Some reforms had been attempted, but most yet remained to be accomplished.

That is where you and I come in. God wants to take our lives and shape us in such a way that He can use us to reach out and affect others and the larger church. Now, I know that some of you are saying that you have no influence. Not so! Each of us touches other people in some small way every day. It is through bits and pieces of such influence that the snowball of change eventually comes about. ■

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 302. Reprinted with permission.

▼ William Warren Prescott



Bridge the Gap – Cubre la Brecha

“Por la transgresión el hombre fue separado de Dios, la comunión entre ellos se rompió; pero Jesucristo murió en la cruz del Calvario, llevando en Su cuerpo los pecados del mundo entero, y el abismo entre el cielo y la tierra fue salvado por esa cruz. Cristo conduce a los hombres al golfo y señala el puente que lo cruza, diciendo: “Si alguno quiere venir en pos de mí, niéguese a sí mismo, tome su cruz cada día y sígame”. (7BC 941.8).

Ya ha pasado un año desde que el mundo fue impactado en forma masiva por la pandemia. Aunque no me imaginaba que estaríamos pasando por una situación tan diferente en este año, a la misma vez no me sorprende, porque Lucas 21 enseña que entre las señales del fin que vendrían en los últimos días se encuentran “terremotos, hambres y pestes” (vs.11). El libro de Lucas también señala que cuando estas cosas vengan debemos estar velando y orando en todo tiempo (vs. 36). Doy gracias a Dios porque a pesar de las limitaciones que la pandemia nos ha traído la iglesia de Dios no se ha quedado atrás, por el contrario, sigue fiel en cumplir el mandato del Señor presentando las buenas nuevas del evangelio. Gracias doy a Dios porque nuestro departamento hispano sigue el ejemplo de muchas iglesias y conferencias, en sus planes y actividades, de darse ánimo los unos a los otros con eventos especiales.

Como muchos ya saben, cada otro año en el mes de junio, en los predios de la Universidad Andrews, acostumbramos a tener el congreso de jóvenes llamado *Conectate*. Durante este año por razones de cuidado de la salud de nuestros hermanos, nuestra Unión del Lago ha tomado la posición de auspiciar eventos en forma virtual y no en persona.

En el caso de *Conectate* la directiva de este congreso de jóvenes ha tomado la decisión de seguir adelante con el congreso en forma virtual. El lema de este año es

“Bridge the Gap”, traducido como “Cubre la Brecha”. Este lema fue escogido para enfatizar como Dios nos da el poder de cubrir la variedad de brechas sociales y espirituales que la pandemia ha traído al mundo hoy. Nuestro evento tomará lugar **el viernes 4 de junio y el sábado 5 de junio vía Zoom**.

En este congreso de Jóvenes tendremos dos oradores extraordinarios, el **Pastor Jose Escobar** de la Conferencia de Florida y el **Dr. Andres Peralta**, Director Asociado de Jóvenes en la Conferencia General. También se ofrecerá una variedad de seminarios sobre salud mental, justicia social, relaciones interracial, crecimiento en nuestra vida devocional, buscando propósito en la vida, cómo tener buena comunicación entre las diferentes generaciones y cómo ser un buen líder usando la influencia.

Para más información, síguenos en nuestras redes sociales y sitio web @ *ConectateLUC*, las inscripciones están abiertas ■

Carmelo Mercado es el vicepresidente de la Unión del Lago.



▲ Carmelo Mercado



Lessons in Perseverance

ANDREWS ACADEMY ALUM
LOOKS FOR EARLY SIGNS OF
LIFE ON MARS

By Debbie Michel

THE SPARK WAS GOD.

That's how NASA scientist R. Aileen Yingst describes her involvement with numerous space missions, including the latest one involving the Perseverance Mars Rover landing in mid-February this year.

Like most of us, Aileen was home watching as the NASA engineers at the Jet Propulsion Lab in California skillfully landed the small car-size rover after its seven-month journey in space. As a member of the Sherloc instrument team, she's responsible for helping to analyze photographs of the planet's geology, looking for any clues in rocks or sand grains that might tell scientists whether Mars could have supported life.

When she heard the words, "Touchdown complete," it was an emotional culmination of years of hard work. "I cried," she said. "You have been working on an instrument for five to eight years, depending on which one we're talking about, and all of that time, it is in your imagination."

Aileen recalls as a little girl growing up in Southwest Michigan and feeling drawn to God's "second book," nature. She enjoyed putting puzzle pieces together outlining the planets. She played in the sands by the Lake Michigan shores, looking at the shapes of the granules and wondered how they were formed. She dreamt about flying to heaven and asking God to stop for a moment to enjoy the starry skies.

Over the years, she would learn her own valuable lessons in perseverance. What she remembers most from her years at Village Elementary and Andrews Academy were teachers, such as Mrs. Hunt and Mr. Baker, who pushed her to excel. "Mr. Baker gave me the gift of having to really work at something," she said. His writing classes were foundational for the grant-writing skills pivotal to her science career.

These lessons propelled her toward prestigious universities, Dartmouth and Brown, and then a career in space missions. She said that although she struggled through her university calculus and physics class, she persisted because of teachers who continued to encourage her to dream big and press on.

GOD ORDAINING HER CALLING

After graduate school, Aileen moved to Wisconsin and, on the very first day of the job, her boss told her about the possibility of a grant to run the NASA Space Grant program in Wisconsin. He proposed that she write a grant to move the program to where they were working, Space Explorers in Green Bay. It was a long shot. Only one position exists in each state, and the directorship is usually held by high level professors at prestigious universities, and they hold on to the job for decades. She ended up getting funded and was named



▲ R. Aileen Yingst

know you're a person of faith, so can we pray together?" These interactions have pushed Aileen to be more analytical in how she observes the sharing of her faith.

"Those are all things that I think we as Adventists sometimes don't realize. We have a tendency to look at scientists as 'them' which is absolutely 180 degrees wrong. They are me; they are us. Scientists are people for whom Christ died."

GOD OF CREATION

Now that the rover is on Mars and we're beginning to get reports of sounds on the red planet, 139 million miles from Earth, what can this exploration teach non-believers about our great God of the universe?

"There is something about my business that constantly reminds me that it doesn't start with me. It starts with God," she explains. "God is creative. We are creative because God is a creative God."

"The examples that we see are the shadows, and we have a tendency to look at those shadows and assume that they're the reality, and they are not. We are the shadows and God is the reality, and it turns my attention outward constantly. It reminds me of what it means to worship an awesome God." ■

Debbie Michel, Lake Union associate director of Communication

We hosted a special broadcast featuring a dialogue with Aileen Yingst and Adventist Theological Seminary professor Martin Hanna on the intersection of Science and theology. To view that program, visit: <https://bit.ly/3834hwx>.

the director, which she believes could only have happened as a result of God opening those doors.

In her current position as senior scientist for the non-profit corporation, Planetary Science Institute, the Brunswick (Maine) church member mingles with colleagues, some atheists and some Christian.

"My joy is when if someone comes to me and says, 'Aileen, I know you're a person of faith, you know I don't believe but I need to talk to somebody.' 'Aileen, I

Mattie's Mite

By Jon Corder



Courtesy Heritage Woods of Sterling Assisted Living Facility

▲ *Mattie wasn't rich by worldly standards, but she shared willingly of what she had. From an early age, her life was one of sacrifice for the benefit of others.*

MATTIE'S "GROWING UP" WASN'T A BED OF

ROSES. By the time she was eight, both of her parents had died, and she and her brothers went to live with their uncle and his wife and their four kids. Because she was older than her uncle's children and a good worker, a great deal of the housekeeping and child-rearing responsibilities fell on her shoulders. As a result, she was only able to make it to the fifth grade before leaving school to help full-time around the house. It was a blessing that her mother had been a stay-at-home mom

because the training she got from her helped in the new role in which she found herself. It was not until she was 16 years old that she was able to leave that environment and get full-time employment at a boarding house.

It was while attending school, however, that Mattie discovered music was her greatest joy. It was reaffirmed at the local Methodist Church where she and her mother regularly attended before her mother's death. It didn't matter what she was doing, Mattie was always singing and sometimes would even preach between songs. And the songs she sang revealed her other passion, her love for Jesus. She enjoyed hymns the most and one of her favorites was "Take the World but Give Me Jesus" by Fanny J. Crosby. She often said, "Without Jesus, life would not be worth living."

Family was important to Mattie. Her children have been blessed by her cooking, sewing and needlepoint skills. As she was able, she worked to support them during their growing up years. Thelma, her oldest, remembers that her mother would work nights at the post office at Christmastime so she could get presents for the children. It wasn't until the kids were older and more on their own that she worked as a housekeeper at various hotels and finally, more permanently, at the Dixon State School. Her seven children (one for each

day of the week, she would say) have blessed her with many grandchildren and some great grandchildren. She would say that while she had lost track of the number, she knows she has enough of them!

Mattie also loved her church. She became a member of the Shiloh Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1949. She and the kids had moved from Memphis to Chicago where they lived with her older brother and his family for about a year. They then moved to a small home where they were on their own. As God would have it, their neighbor across the street was an elderly woman named Betsy. She was an Adventist colporteur/Bible worker, and it wasn't long before she sold a couple of children's Bible story books to Mattie and started Bible studies with her. You guessed it, a couple of years later, Mattie was baptized during meetings held by Elder Cleveland and was a faithful member for the rest of her life.

Early church life was a blessing; there were a lot of other mothers with children attending and those friendships were such an encouragement to Mattie. At that time, the Shiloh Church was a young church; elders from a larger church would come and preach, teach, visit and work with the kids on a weekly basis. Potlucks were such an important part of church because they provided time for fellowship and there was one every week. Thelma recalls that their diet changed and no longer included pork and other things. Also, for the first time they learned about Christian education. Two of the elders (who were brothers) that visited from the mother church, were strong supporters of Adventist education. Because of that passion, they sponsored many of the younger children, including some of Mattie's, in Adventist schools. This was not something they did for a year or two. Thelma recalls that sponsorships continued sometimes clear up to the ninth or tenth grade which was the case with Mattie's children.

"WITHOUT JESUS, LIFE WOULD NOT BE WORTH LIVING."

At age 50, Mattie lost her eyesight from glaucoma. Thelma remembers that she would sit next to her mother in church and say the words of the songs in her good ear so Mattie could sing with everyone else. It was at age 87 that Mattie developed dementia and just last fall, shy by four months of being a century old, Mattie went to sleep in Jesus and is waiting for His call when He returns to take His loved ones home.

The reason I am telling you about Mattie is because, for the last 35 years of her life, she supported the mission of the Lake Union Revolving Fund with some of her life savings. A gentleman who visited her in 1985 told her about the revolving fund and what a blessing it was to churches and schools. It was after that visit that she decided to be a part of the revolving fund family and deposited a small amount in the fund. This would be her "funeral fund," she told her daughter, Thelma. When Mattie died, it was enough to pay for her grave marker with a little left over! Knowing her mother's passion for the revolving fund mission, Thelma donated the remainder of Mattie's "funeral fund" to the revolving fund to honor her mother.

I have worked with revolving funds for over ten years and Mattie's is the first donation I have had the privilege of receiving. My heart has been touched by her generous spirit and it will always be a blessing when I think of her. I hope it is for you as well.

It reminds me of when Jesus told about the widow in Luke 21:1, 2. His comment was that she had given more than all of the others because she gave all she had. Mattie wasn't rich by worldly standards, but she shared willingly of what she had. From an early age, her life was one of sacrifice for the benefit of others. I think Mattie chose to make deposits in heaven's treasury. Am I doing the same? ■

Jon Corder is the Lake Union Stewardship director.



som
Education

BY MICHAEL HORTON

Illustrated by Courtney Saunders



Something better

for the Present & Future Crises

Three hundred eighty-five years ago, as the Revelation 13 prophecy of a power arising in a sparsely populated area of the New World began to be fulfilled, a small group from the 17,000 Puritan Congregationalists then settled from England in Massachusetts Bay Colony founded a college, and when Reverend John Harvard donated 320 books it was named for him, holding that name until today.

The year was 1636, and Harvard's main aim was to educate clergy. Its motto was *Veritas In Christi Gloriam*, a Latin phrase meaning "Truth for the Glory of Christ." 161 Nobel Laureates, 188 Billionaires, eight Presidents and an endowment of \$40 billion later, one can say the work has prospered even if it has left its Congregational Christian beginnings.

Some years later in 1701, ten ministers met and founded a college in Connecticut which after a donation of over 400 books would be named Yale, becoming America's third oldest college. It, too, has since prospered with an endowment of over \$30 billion, numerous Presidents and Supreme Court Justices among alumni, 61 Nobel Laureates, and more than 31 billionaires. Here, too,

COUNTLESS INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES HAVE BEEN WON THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF ADVENTIST TEACHERS, PRINCIPALS AND THE PASTORS, SCHOOL BOARDS AND CHURCHES WHO COMMITTED TO THE ENTERPRISE.

one would say it has prospered in its worldly influence and impact. Yet, could there be *something better* without which even the most elite education may be lacking, or at least could be improved?

In the crisis hour of January 6, 2021, as demonstrators-soon-to-become-rioters gathered outside, two Senators who previously espoused Federalism and States' Rights, one from Texas and one from Missouri, one from each of these elite schools, would stand in the Senate Chamber of the United States Capitol to challenge the duly reported and state-certified presidential electoral votes of two states. Even after nearly sixty court challenges, at a time when the nation was on high alert because of polarization, anxiety, strife and misinformation campaigns; even after the interruption of the certification process by a riot and violent attack upon the Congress, and numerous injuries to policemen, and the deaths of several individuals, these Senators would again bring their objections, demonstrating to the discerning mind that a

fancy education alone does not guarantee that one will act most wisely even in an historic crisis hour.

But nearby in the Capitol, there was a third gentleman who moved to give comfort and spiritual encouragement, prayer and support to those shaken by the unfolding riot, and he called for dialogue and peace. As he prayed after the riot's destruction and at last the certification of the election, he intoned, "These tragedies have reminded us that words matter, and the power of life and death is in the tongue." Raised in a home led by a working mother of a sacrificial mind committed to sending her eight children to Christian schools, Adventist schools, to the point that two or three times he would come home to find his family's furniture on the street because Mom had chosen to pay tuition rather than rent. Chaplain Barry Black speaks most affectionately of his education at Pine Forge Academy before he would go on to graduate Oakwood and Andrews universities and other institutions, completing two doctorates, as well achieving the rank of Rear Admiral in the U.S. Navy. Amidst the strife of the attack on Congress, Senate Chaplain Black stood rooted in a prophetic worldview of Christ as Lord of the Nations, offering a voice of calm amid the hostility and deadly chaos in the legislative chambers of our Democratic Republic.

It was a moment of awakening, a crisis, and without exaggeration, the character of Chaplain Black was a reflection of a worldview and moral conviction rooted in a faith of dependence that looks up to God alone, helping one to be an exemplary citizen and servant of the nation who acknowledges the Sovereignty of God while calling all to a higher standard, saying in his prayer that next morning, "We need to see in each other a common humanity that reflects Your image . . . use us to bring healing to our divided nation and world." He embodied calm in the crisis.

ADVENTIST EDUCATION AND REDEMPTION ARE ONE

To understand the necessity and spiritual power of Adventist education, we must go back to the beginning, to the Creation. In the Garden of Eden, Jehovah personally instituted education for humanity. Christ Himself was the face-to-face Instructor, and the school convened at the Tree of Life. The Creation itself and the Word of God

were the study, and faith was the means. It was a power so vital, formidable and unconquerable that it is written *the just shall live by His faith* (Hab. 2:4), and *Without faith it is impossible to please God* (Heb. 11:6). In that first University, the great lesson was to know God, and to learn the exercise of a faith that works by a love rooted in gratitude for the infinite love of God.

Yet looming in the shadows of Eden was another school which convened at the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. There the serpent (Satan) was the instructor, and the questioning and doubting of God's word ("reason") was the method. His pitch, in an attempt to attract and engage prospective students, was simple, "Has God said . . . ?" The history and development of these two schools is the story of the Great Controversy in education. It can be traced down through the ages, from the Heavenly school to the Edenic School, from Noah to Nimrod, to the world empires of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Greece, Rome and the Papal hegemony of the Dark Ages, to the Reformation and the reassertion of the preeminence of the Bible. Adventists are the heirs to the legacy of Bible-based education and are called to steward it until its consummation in the coming of the Lord and our graduation into the Higher School of which we have hitherto been an extension.

The educational issue, or "problem" as Adventist educational pioneer E.A. Sutherland called it, is central to the work and mission of the everlasting gospel. It embodies the teachings of the Bible as first taught by the prophets and patriarchs of Israel and revealed in sacred history. Its exhortations to teach meant first receiving God's truth in one's heart and then *...thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up* (Deuteronomy 6:7).

Today, through the collaboration of home, school and church, the Word of God and its author is acknowledged as the Source of Light and Living Water. The foundational principles, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, all thy mind, and all thy soul, and thy neighbor as thyself* (Deuteronomy 6), are echoed in the triumvirate of the ministries of parents, teachers and pastors, and amplified by the culture of a people of faith.

Education's mission is to facilitate the restoration of the "well-nigh obliterated image of God" in humanity, while also imbuing its students with individuality, "the ability to think and to do and not be mere reflectors of other men's thoughts" (*Education*, p. 13). Mobs evidence the collapse and refutation of individuality. Whether Nazi Germany, the use of lynchings to terrorize in America, or gang shootings in urban and rural neighborhoods that kill the innocent as well as gang members, or the high-tech, televised killing of George Floyd, it is clear that human dignity requires courage to follow God rather than man, often to break ranks with a flow of evil or wrong and stand alone. Indeed, our common humanity is affirmed in creation and redemption.

God has made of one blood all nations for to dwell on all the face of the earth . . . Further, He has determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their habitation . . . (Acts 17: 26). This means America has a unique role in last day events and that God Himself in His sovereignty and appointment of times and boundaries has ordained the outworking of His will in the caldron of America as He has brought together descendants of the Mayflower and the Middle Passage. Christian Adventist education acknowledges this challenge and equips one through fervent spirituality to stand through God's strength as did Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in Babylon.

ADVENTIST EDUCATION IS ALWAYS EVANGELISTIC

The stories of the evangelistic power of Adventist education must be told again, for it has had a far-reaching impact on the growth and development of Adventism and in service to the world. Countless individuals and families have been won through the ministry of Adventist teachers, principals and the pastors and school boards and churches who committed to the enterprise. Across the Lake Union, laymen have historically exerted strong influence in their tireless support of the education of our youth. Among them are Rodney Metcalf at Downers Grove, Mark Clare at Mt. Pleasant, Shannon Weiss at Cicero, Delores Godley at Chicago SDA.; Linda Strong at South Suburban; the late Ed Mattocks who served at the Flint School after beginning a career at age 26 as principal of DuPont

Park in Maryland; Carmelita Richardson at Capitol City in Indianapolis; Herb Harris at Glendale; and Chuck and Janelle Randall of the Paw Paw Church in Michigan; these are just representative of a much larger, loving army who have been engaged in education with a deep sense of God's calling to help those who follow the greatest Teacher who ever lived.

EVANGELISM AND EDUCATION FOR SERVICE

Today the Public Defender's Office of the District of Columbia, recognized and celebrated as a model service and one of the finest in the nation, is led by Harvard Law School graduate, Attorney Avis Buchanan. Her grade school education was at the DuPont Park Seventh-day Adventist School. There she was won by the love of Christ and Adventist educators, and the spirit of the Truth of His Word and, becoming a baptized Adventist, was followed by her mother, brother and father. After graduating Michigan State University as a National Achievement Scholar, she would go on to Harvard Law School, clerk for a federal judge, and begin a legal career that would lead her to become the director of the Public Defender's Office for over twenty years. Her brother, Herbert Buchanan, with a similar early education at DuPont Park, would go on to obtain graduate degrees from M.I.T. in Engineering, an MBA from Northwestern, and then to serve as a CEO at major hospitals including Howard University, Indiana University, and in other capacities, including in the Adventist Health Care systems. It is clear that Adventist K-12 education prepares students for wherever they choose to go, hopefully to one of our colleges or universities, but well-prepared should they be called to be a light in a secular university.

Church mission, at both the local and conference levels as well as the Union and Division levels, supports evangelism in its many phases and ministries. However, the evangelistic impact of the church school, especially K-12, is often underestimated. When the Apostle Paul addresses the matters of discipleship, church growth and mission, he praises the ascended Christ for the spiritual gifts of apostleship, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. This fivefold union of ministry, manifested by the hand or the power of God, is readily acknowledged, although we, too, often are reluctant to affirm the spiritual calling and

gifting of teachers. They work in the church body, especially with youth, fostering unity of the faith, the knowledge of Christ and spiritual maturity in Christ.

Our teachers give instruction in the various subjects of the curriculum but, much like Christ with His disciples, they also oversee an environment predicated upon nurturing spiritual relations and, as Elijah mentored Elisha, Paul Timothy, and Naomi Ruth, so they also lead their students as the Holy Spirit leads them, embodying the love of Christ, the love of learning and the love of their fellowman manifested in service. They model servant leadership; they win youth to Christ. Only 30 percent of Adventist youth from Adventist homes who are educated in public schools ever become baptized. Ninety percent of Adventist young people from Adventist homes who attend our schools become baptized members of the Adventist Church.

The business of education is God's business and, therefore, the church's business. It is both a science and an art, directed by Christ through the Holy Spirit, whereby educational professionals seek to "educate" the youth. Derived from a Latin word that means to "draw out, or lead out" what God has placed within. It is the recognition that every child is marvelously made, endowed with infinite possibilities that must be developed now, but will continue to be realized throughout eternity in the Higher School. Youth directors and pastors are to work in collaboration and support of this effort. During his tenure at Lake Union, Gary Sudds, now retired, saw the importance of affirming the needed partnership between educators and pastors and, with other colleagues, he developed *Partnering in Mission: Pastor & Teacher Resource Manual*.

THE PRESENT CRISIS

Changing demographics in the graying of the Adventist denomination and the resultant attrition in our churches has been a major factor in the decline of enrollment in our schools. Urban decline also has impacted many of our churches and schools. Gary, Indiana, with a current population of less than 75,000, is less than half of what it was in 1980, and far from the all-time high of 175,000 in 1970.

Similarly, the population of the City of Detroit, once 1.849 million in 1950, 1.514 in 1970, is currently about

670,000. Chicago has declined from a high population of 3.7 million in 1950 to 2.7 million today. Industrial decline and dispersal (the breakup of neighborhoods, and movement of people from inner city to suburbs, and even migration south) has left churches and schools without the incarnational presence they once had, which made them significant centers of neighborhood life, embracing the community, and also drawing students from the neighborhood. Our churches were even different at that time, not commuter churches but community churches.

The weakening of our schools has led further to a decline in the number of college students training for careers as K-12 educators in our church. Enrollment at colleges and universities show that majors in Education also have declined, probably largely because of career uncertainty and lack of assurance about employment prospects. We must muster the will to understand, especially in North America, the educational challenge at the center of our mission to the world.

THE REST OF THE STORY

Why is the restoration of the image and character of Christ in man the vital part of the mission of the gospel and Adventist education? It is because it is the spiritual core of the Three Angels' messages. It is centered in the everlasting gospel's call, *Fear God and give glory to Him for the hour of His judgment is come*. The glory to be given the Apostle Paul describes as he compares salvation to Creation: *God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness has shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ* (2 Cor. 4:6). Teachers and pastors, gospel workers, are all co-laborers with Christ our High Priest in this "heart work," this divine-human, terrestrial-cosmic ministry of reconciliation and restoration which embraces truths higher than the highest human thought can think as the Lord prepares us for what will be the consummation of the gospel with the flight and descent of the fourth angel which John describes in Revelation 18:1: *I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power, and the earth was lightened with His glory*.

The irony of our present crisis moment is that, while the church has grayed and youth are seemingly less engaged, and enrollment is declining in our schools, after

THE BUSINESS OF EDUCATION IS GOD'S BUSINESS AND, THEREFORE, THE CHURCH'S BUSINESS.

176 years of Adventists proclaiming the judgment hour message, it will be a younger generation which finally will be God's instruments in finishing the mission in the final crisis hour. Indeed, "The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is the revelation of His character of love" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 415). This is the aim of Adventist education, the *something better*, the "more excellent way" by which Paul introduces the *agape* love of I Corinthians 13.

"False religion may prevail, iniquity may abound, the love of many may wax cold, the cross of Calvary may be lost sight of, and darkness, like the pall of death, may spread over the world; the whole force of the popular current may be formed to overthrow the people of God; but in the hour of greatest peril the God of Elijah will raise up human instrumentalities to bear a message that will not be silenced" (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 186). The invasion of the misuse of media and digital technologies, television, artificial intelligence, alternate realities and conspiracy theories, forebodes a time of powerful delusion for those not anchored in the eternal realities set forth in the Word of God. This will be the work of Adventist education as teachers and schools join with pastors and churches in the gospel work of proclaiming the Three Angels' messages which will lighten the world with *Something Better* — the gift of the glory of His character in His people and all those who love His appearing. ■

Michael Horton is a graduate of Harvard University and the Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University. He is Lake Region Conference's Ministerial director.

2 BIG BOLD EDUCATION INITIATIVES



Sandra Mendez

THE COUNSELOR IS IN

Some schools may have a counselor but here's something unique to any school in the North American Division. **In Fall 2020, the Illinois Conference initiated a conference-wide school counselor project, led by Mindy Salyers.** Salyers has served as an educator and school counselor for 17 years, working for La Sierra University and Georgia-Cumberland and Minnesota conferences before moving to Hinsdale, Illinois, in 2019. We explored with her how this out-of-the-box experiment is progressing. —Debbie Michel

Q Welcome to our Union! Can you begin by talking about how it came about for Illinois to receive this grant for the school counselor role, the first we are aware for any conference?

A So, I think it's important for you to know that this school counselor "role" is technically not a role at all, but rather a project. We have termed the project "school counselor," as it's much easier for teachers, parents and students to understand the services I will provide. The framework and funding for my services is designed around the "Care and Climate Connectedness" proposal that is grant-funded through La Sierra's Center for Conflict Resolution and the Versacare Foundation. This project was built on the thinking that the COVID-19 pandemic would cause school disconnect and increase the need for student and teacher care. Although this hypothesis was developed in the summer 2020, it has certainly proven true, with a much greater than normal population of teachers, students and parents in social and emotional crises that need a Conference support person to walk beside them in these challenging times. Lori Aguilera, superintendent of Education, foresaw the need for additional mental health support during COVID-19 and seized

the opportunity to gain a school counselor for the Illinois Conference.

Q Perhaps you can define for us what a school counselor does. The term seems ambiguous and oftentimes we think of counselors in the high school setting. But you're catering to a broader age range. What do you do and how does your job differ from elementary to high school-aged populations?

A In general, a school counselor targets the social and emotional development and well-being of students, putting into place both prevention and intervention services that help support students and ensure their school success. With the growing understanding around mental health, research shows that students cannot perform well academically if they are not healthy emotionally and socially. In general, a school counselor works alongside the teachers, administrators and parents to provide whole school, classroom, small group and individual support that can help them work on developmentally appropriate social-emotional growth so they can be successful in school. There are an estimated half-dozen school counselors in NAD schools (all being in Adventist-mecca locations), but this is the only such position that is

▼ Mindy Salyers serves as the Illinois Conference school counselor. She's pictured here with her daughters.

Sandra Mendez



Conference-wide. This position provides services to all Illinois Conference schools, regardless of size.

Having worked in the elementary, middle school, high school and collegiate settings, my background allows me to tailor counseling resources to issues that are appropriate for student grade levels. In preschool and elementary, I target topics like tattling, bullying and mindfulness. Middle-schoolers often need help with study and test-taking skills, navigating social cliques, and developing a sense of self-identity. High school support might take the form of career exploration, college preparation and credit recovery. Because I love the variety of all three levels, it's fun for me to customize services to meet the needs of each and every student.

Specific to the Illinois Conference Care and Climate school counseling services, there is a wide variety of support provided. Through a mental health needs assessment, teachers identify specific areas for preventive classroom guidance lessons, targeted "Lunch and Learn" small groups, and at-risk individuals needing weekly one-on-one sessions. Referrals for these services also come from parents and students themselves. Thanks to technological innovation, I spend my days "Zooming" into a number of schools across the state, providing virtual support from my little Chicagoland office.

Q So, it sounds like the role of the counselor is to help with the nearly limitless variety of concerns that students, parents, teachers, administrators and the school community may have. Sounds like a vital role. Why is it then that we don't have more school counselors?

A Thankfully there is a growing denominational awareness that mental health support services are needed for our Adventist schools. However, funding is the primary challenge that stands in the way of each and every school having a mental health professional. It is only through the generosity of the Versacare Foundation and the support of La Sierra's Center for Conflict Resolution that the Illinois Conference has gained mental health support for its 429 students, 42 teachers, and

Thankfully there is a growing denominational awareness that mental health support services are needed for our Adventist schools.

constituent families.

Q As it turns out, you began during a pandemic. We hear news reports of students, especially those doing online learning, really struggling. What challenges are you seeing with students, parents and teachers?

A Illinois Conference schools have not been immune to the stress of COVID-19 and are seeing the mental health crises that was foretold by public school data.

Specific to students, over 10 percent of the conference's total enrollment have required intensive mental health support through the Care and Connectedness program. With so many students doing fully online or hybrid learning, this school year has shown a significant increase in students suffering from anxiety and depression. With this sudden and drastic uptick in student mental health crises, I am able to conduct risk assessments with students to determine at-risk individuals for self-injury or suicidal ideation and offer families support in referring for additional treatment programs.

Parents, too, are struggling in how to support their children during this time. In addition to a monthly *Kid Connection* parent newsletter that goes to all Adventist families of Illinois Conference schools, I am available for individual support as well. This often takes the form of parents collaborating with myself and their child's school to provide Special Education accommodations, linking families to community resources, and partnering with guardians to develop behavior intervention plans.

Finally, the heavy toll of providing synchronous and in-person learning is evident in our

educators. A large focus of the Care and Climate Connectedness project is to encourage teacher self-care for ongoing resiliency and mental wellness. A weekly *Teacher Tidbits* educator newsletter provides resources that work to prevent against compassion fatigue. The October Teacher Inservice focused entirely on not just being a survivor, but becoming a thriver. A monthly Take Heart and Teach book club is offered for all teachers, as well as a regular small-group Connection Circle for sharing and encouragement.

Q Like many parents, you, too, are juggling work and assisting your children with online learning. What tips do you have for parents on remaining sane at this time?

A Yes! It certainly has been challenging to support my first- and third-grade daughters with virtual learning, all the while trying to manage my professional role. I am incredibly grateful that this position and the blessing of technology allows me the ability to do both, although it may not be up to my prior one-track standards. I guess the biggest advice I have for parents is threefold:

First, as easy as it may be to let students “do their thing” online, it’s important to be present as much as possible. Students, whether

elementary, middle or high school, have the need for in-person adult support. This provides a sense of accountability and mutual responsibility. Students will do best if they know they have a partnership at home as they navigate this uncharted territory. For me, this can feel chaotic as I jump in and out of Zoom sessions, periodically checking on my girls’ schoolwork and tutoring them through difficult areas. No matter how busy, we are intentional to eat lunch together, playing boardgames or going on walks during P.E. and recess time, taking advantage of this unusual opportunity to be together.

Secondly, I try hard to have regular communication with my child’s teacher. Through texts and emails, I’m able to track their progress, as well as have a good understanding of missing assignments, upcoming tests, etc. In return, I try to spoil their teachers as much as I can, offering to create bulletin boards or dropping off a treat of gratitude.

Finally, my mental self-talk is to let myself off the hook of this being a “perfect school year” for my kids. We’re all navigating this for the first time and there is no “perfect.” My children *will* miss assignments, accidentally be offline at the wrong time, and have the internet go down during critical instruction. It’s not going to be perfect, but I have to let myself off the hook and just do the best I can.

I have a sign in our classroom/my office that says “. . .and they created a school they loved.” That’s really to me what the school counselor role *and* my mommyhood role is all about this year. Whether online, in-person, or a bit of both, I want to partner with the fabulous teachers and parents of the Illinois Conference to create a school that every child loves.

Thank you for taking the time to talk with us! May God grant you strength and wisdom during these challenging times for our students. ■



Sandra Mendez

GOING THE DISTANCE

NEW TECHNOLOGY-MEDIATED SCHOOL DELIVERS A CHOICE



▲ ASPIRE educator Julia Robinson serves as the lower grades teacher.

Angela Prichard noticed that her son, Noah, was unhappy in public school. He was bullied, insecure and reserved, and constantly sick from the stressful environment of his school. Living more than an hour-and-a-half from the nearest Adventist school, Angela was short on options for a suitable alternative and so she sought God's help.

She felt her prayers were answered when she came across information about the launch of a new technology-mediated elementary school with the acronym ASPIRE (Adventist School Preparing Instilling and Redeeming for Eternity). During its first year, Noah enrolled as an eighth-grade student.

"When Noah was accepted into ASPIRE, it totally changed his life," Angela explains. "He loves it and doesn't ever want to miss a day. I don't even have to wake him up! In and out of school, teachers, pastors and church members have noticed that he's more active and confident. He is more himself."

ASPIRE is a Grade 1-8 virtual school operated by Michigan Conference's Department of Education and is only available to Michigan members. For Jeremy Hall, Michigan Conference's superintendent of Education, part

Jerrod Robinson

•By Danni Thaw •

of the core mission of Adventist education is to find and nurture students like Noah and to reach as many young souls as possible for the Kingdom of Heaven.

Michigan has 33 schools and 180 churches and companies scattered across the conference's footprint, and yet, Hall explains, "Many of these schools are inaccessible to a large percentage of our constituent families, geographically or for other reasons." Running parallel to this challenge, he says, is "a significant decline in enrollment across our schools over the last 10 years."

AN UNEXPECTED SILVER LINING

Hall and his team began strategizing to address enrollment declines prior to COVID-19. During the development process, the pandemic struck and changed the school system — and the world — for the foreseeable future.

"We were forced to transition all of our schools to an online delivery platform. And so, in a short amount of time, all of the teachers in our conference had to pivot and adjust to virtual teaching — and they did a phenomenal job," explains Hall. "This global crisis, as terrible as it has been, still had a silver lining." This abrupt shift towards virtual learning meant launching a standalone online schooling platform like ASPIRE was attainable in a quicker timeframe than originally anticipated.

"We received so much support from the principals across the conference about this concept," recalls Hall. "They felt that we needed to do this, despite voicing some concerns about issues like prolonged screen time and age-appropriateness." At this time, ASPIRE does not cater to kindergarten-age students due to difficulties with their attention span and focus on a virtual platform.

The Conference administration and K-12 Board of Education have been supportive of this initiative. The Education Department is working with the Union and the North American Division (NAD) towards a path of accreditation and, currently, ASPIRE holds "Candidacy Status."

There are presently three similar online schools in the North American Division: two in Canada and one in Atlanta, Georgia. The North American Division leadership is recognizing that the pandemic has forced schools and conferences to reevaluate their options. "As we're coming out of COVID, we have to reimagine

Adventist education in the future," said Arnie Neilson, NAD Education director. "It may well include blended education."

Today education faces many challenges — primarily, educators are now far less able to predict the future due to the coronavirus. "At this point, the only constant is inconsistency," Hall says with a laugh. "So, it's important that we continually evolve and try our best to peek around the corners of life and ask the Lord to lend us the foresight necessary to help Adventist education exist until He returns. I see this platform as being a critical piece of that mission."

CHOOSING THE BEST OPTION FOR YOUR FAMILY

Hall emphasizes that ASPIRE is not meant to replace brick-and-mortar Adventist schools. "The relationships, physical touch and in-person interaction that students experience in the context of a classroom is something that cannot ever be replicated through a virtual platform," he says. "That is definitely one drawback of this kind of learning platform."

Rather than superseding face-to-face instruction, ASPIRE is one of multiple offerings from which families can choose to best meet their individual needs. Offering live instruction and instant feedback, ASPIRE creates the uniquely personal and interactive virtual education experience some parents and students seek.

Families also have the option of sending students to Griggs International Academy, a distance education system serving elementary and secondary students, owned and operated by Andrews University. Like



Courtesy Ben Zork

▲ Ben Zork serves as the ASPIRE school principal and upper grades teacher.



Angela Prichard

▲ Noah Prichard

GOD IS ALREADY WORKING THROUGH **ASPIRE** AS NOAH SHARED WITH HIS MOM AND PRINCIPAL THAT HE WANTS TO STUDY FOR BAPTISM AND JOIN THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH.

ASPIRE, Griggs provides high-quality Adventist education. However, ASPIRE provides an experience closer to in-person schooling, whereas Griggs can be likened to an asynchronous platform.

“Parents have approached us about enrolling their children in ASPIRE,” says Hall. “When they found out we offered live courses four days a week, they voiced that they needed something more flexible and self-paced. We were happy to point them towards our sister school, Griggs International Academy. Likewise, when families want a classroom-like experience from their homes, ASPIRE is the ideal choice.”

EVERY STUDENT HAS A FRONT ROW SEAT

Currently, ASPIRE has two dedicated, full-time teachers and 20 students. Ben Zork serves as the principal and upper grades teacher, and Julia Robinson serves as the lower grades teacher. With more than 35 years of combined teaching experience, Zork and Robinson have successfully implemented innovative, personable and interactive learning techniques for their students.

“The way I see it, every student has a front row seat in ASPIRE,” says Zork. “Sometimes in a classroom of 20 or more students, someone can disappear in the back where he or she may struggle to see and hear. With ASPIRE, those challenges are reduced, if not eliminated.”

Robinson acknowledges the need to pay careful attention to the amount of technology students interact with on a daily and weekly basis, and this factored in the decision to eliminate Friday classes. “We’ve tried to be very mindful and intentional with everything we do,” she says. Despite a four-day schedule, ASPIRE is able to meet the NAD educational standards and benchmarks, due to

the streamlined transitions between classes and other time efficiencies a platform like this affords.

To incorporate face-to-face interaction, plans are in the works to host “capstone weekends” once a quarter in a post-COVID world. During these three-day retreats, ASPIRE students and their families can gather together to further build school spirit and camaraderie in a face-to-face environment.

REACHING YOUNG PEOPLE FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

God is already working through ASPIRE as Noah shared with his mom and principal that he wants to study for baptism and join the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Currently, the school is coordinating with his local church to help bring that to fruition. With God’s blessing, ASPIRE delivers Adventist education to students like Noah that might not otherwise have it and helps educators continually adjust to the present times. ■

ASPIRE

If you are a Michigan Conference member and would more information, please contact Ben Zork at bzork@misda.org.

Griggs International Academy

If you have child in grades K-12 and would like more information, please contact LaRonda Forsey at laronda@andrews.edu.

Freelance writer Danni Thaw got her start in writing during her college years when she worked for the Integrated Marketing & Communication team at Andrews University.



Courtesy AMITA Health

▲ Nurse Jill Jennings also received a Daisy Award, a recognition for extraordinary nurses for making the difference in the lives of their patients.

Power of prayer helps nurse reach young overdose victim

Jill Jennings, R.N., joined the Heart & Vascular Clinic at AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center Bolingbrook in October 2019. When COVID-19 struck, she was asked to work in other areas, including the Emergency Department, where she was able to draw on her long experience as an ED nurse. That experience — and her faith in the power of prayer — helped her when 15-year-old Emily was brought in with a drug overdose.

“When Emily came in, I just knew that I could help her,” Jennings said. “A lot of times on my way to work, I ask God, ‘Show me who you want me to minister to today.’ That day I knew it was Emily. I sat down in a chair next to her bed and asked her, ‘Do you know Jesus?’ She said she did, but she didn’t have that in her life right now. I asked her if she wanted it, and she said she did.”

They talked and prayed together, and then Jennings gave the girl a devotional book in which she had written, “I cannot wait to see what God does in you and through you.” After Emily was released, her mother called Jennings and told her that Emily went to her room when they got home and began to read the book. She later checked into a rehab facility in Wisconsin.

A few months later, when she got back from rehab, Emily sent Jennings a letter that said, “Thank you for saving my life. You honestly changed my life for the better. When you first prayed with me, I knew in that moment you were an angel.”

Jennings acknowledges that it can be hard to reach patients like Emily. “In the ED, we get patients like her all the time — people who come back over and over. It can be frustrating,” she said, “but I always try to ask myself, ‘What if today is going to be the day that it clicks?’ With Emily, the timing was right. The seeds had been planted, and she was finally ready to listen. I try to be intentional about addressing that and planting those seeds with all of my patients.”

She believes strongly in the power of prayer. “On the first day of orientation at AMITA, they said we were going to talk about our Mission, extending the healing ministry of Jesus,” she said. “I loved this — it was very different from what I was used to. To be at an organization where we were encouraged to pray with our patients was very exciting for me. I felt like I was home.”

Praying with patients and reaching out to them spiritually is what sets a faith-based hospital system apart, she said, explaining, “This is what it’s about. This is our mission. We live in a hurting world, and if we don’t meet the spiritual needs of every patient that we encounter, we’re missing [an opportunity].”

You may watch the video of Nurse Jill at: <https://bit.ly/2LNc9dN>. ■

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

Grow Groups encourage discipleship and community



Courtesy Antoinette Napier

▲ Antoinette Napier's (left, middle) first Grow Group, in summer 2016, shared fruit baskets with members of the community.

Pioneer Memorial Church (PMC) Grow Groups are a small group ministry developed to help group members make new connections, share interests and receive spiritual support. The groups are available to PMC members, Andrews University students and those in the Berrien Springs community. This semester PMC launched 41 groups.

Grow Groups meet for 8 to 12 weeks and consist of 8 to 15 people. Each group is interest-based and includes a spiritual component, whether it be Bible study or prayer. Rodlie Ortiz, associate pastor at PMC who coordinates the Grow Groups program, says this set-up allows people from across the spectrum of faith to participate. "Someone that is not into God or church yet can feel comfortable going to a running group," he says. "By being around other Christians in the group, they will be exposed to God's presence and influence."

Each group also participates in a service project and a social event outside of their

regular meeting time. To encourage student involvement, Andrews University students are encouraged to participate as group leaders.

Antoinette Napier, working toward her M.A. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling, initially became involved in Grow Groups as a way to meet her academic program's service requirement. In 2016, she led her first group and then continued to lead, including groups on Healing from Broken Relationships, Discovering Me and, this semester, Attachment Style and God Struggles. She says a typical Grow Group session involves a presentation of the topic followed by group discussion. Participants share prayer requests, exchange stories and read books. The aim of these activities is to build up and encourage one another.

Antoinette has felt affirmed in her life purpose and has benefited from the sense of community which Grow Groups provided. "It creates support and we feel free to lean

on each other," she says. "It also strengthens us to extend support to others that may not be a part of our group because of the sense of security established."

Noelle Koliadko, sophomore Mathematics major, co-leads a Grow Group with her brother, Noah Koliadko, sophomore Engineering/Computer Engineering and Physics major. The group studies the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, line by line, and often creates diagrams to visualize the concepts they learn about. Occasionally, volunteers from the group will teach a portion of the chapter the group is studying, too. "Teaching has helped me identify myself as part of the Andrews community, as I was actively involved in some activities rather than just attending classes," says Noelle.

She adds, "Many of our friends we met the first week of school attended our Grow Group. We became a lot closer while studying the Bible together — I consider them to be some of my closest college friends."

With the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, Grow Groups utilized the online platform Zoom. While some groups have begun to meet again in person, they practice social distancing and use face coverings. "Making friends and sharing together on a topic you're passionate about is very important, especially during these times of COVID," says Rodlie Ortiz. "Community is indispensable. However, the primary goal is that of discipleship and helping someone grow in their walk with God." ■

Mariah McDonald, University Communication student writer, Andrews University



▲ Ben Martin, Pioneer Memorial Church Family and Discipleship pastor, says, "As far as nurturing the family, this has been a challenge. For some families, the pandemic was a time to bond. But for some, this has been a nightmare. So, to shift focus and do something like this, where our families could connect, is healthy."

Scavenger hunt allows Children's Sabbath School new opportunity to safely connect

What is a family to do for fun in single digit weather during a pandemic and still stay safe? Here's a proven idea from the Children's Sabbath School leaders at Pioneer Memorial Church on the campus of Andrews University which can be replicated in any community.

On Sabbath, Feb. 6, dozens of families with children between the ages of 4 and 12 lined up in the Pioneer parking lot awaiting their turn to experience a drive-thru scavenger hunt. When their time came, participants received their first clue via text. But these weren't just any clues. These were stories – thoughtfully written by Seminary student, Nashonie Chang – that taught about the lives and work of several of our Adventist pioneers. All of these pioneers have a building named after them on the campus of Andrews University, names such as White, Bell, Horn, Griggs, Sutherland. At the end of the story clue, participants drove to the building which bears the name of the pioneer and read a brief life sketch on the person.

Upon arrival at the building, Children's Sabbath school and other volunteers

greeted the families. At each building, the families were given items relating to Sabbath school, including a craft, apples, Sabbath school magazines, the beloved smooth stones in exchange for memory verses, and a Nathan Greene postcard at the finish. Participants also were able to take part in a little service activity at one of the stops. They were given a piece of paper with a person's name and contact information on it and were asked to contact the person – right then and there – to show them some love and give them a sense of the community that they may be missing due to the pandemic.

To add to the fun of the adventure, there was a prize drawing at the end. Three lucky families received either an Adventist Book Center or a Your Story Hour gift card.

This adventure was organized by Glynis Bradfield, one of the Pioneer Sabbath school superintendents. Bradfield, along with Ben Martin, the Family and Discipleship pastor at Pioneer, explain that research shows that the number one factor for church growth is how we treat our families. However, the challenges during these times are clear. "We've done a good job of getting our message out through online services or prayer service on Zoom," acknowledged Martin. "But as far as nurturing the family, this has been a challenge. For some families the pandemic was a time to bond. But for some,

this has been a nightmare. So, to shift focus and do something like this, where our families could connect, is healthy."

Many photos of smiling families holding up all of their treasures were shared in the Pioneer Children and Family Discipleship Facebook group page. And many comments shared the fun that they had and the interesting things that they learned. "We enjoyed learning so many new things about the history and heritage of this amazing Pioneer community we call home. We were especially inspired by the story of the Horn family's faith," posted the Press family.

"It is also interesting that ordinary people like you and me were guided by God to find this lovely place and now we are enjoying their dedication to God's work," the Mbaaiwa family wrote. The Mello family shared, "We loved hearing all about the



▲ Top Left: Mbaaiwa Family. Top Right: Press Family. Above: Osman Family.

heroes of our faith that have come before us! We're ready to be pioneers in 2021!" Summing it all up, the Maseko family stated, "We learned about friendship, adventure, joy and honesty in all we do for Jesus. We, too, can share Jesus, no matter how small."

Do note, you don't have to be on a university campus in order to enjoy a driving scavenger hunt. You can do this

with your church or school or any group. Just choose some local landmarks, parks or prominent buildings, and guide people to each one with clues that describe them. If you don't have the capability of texting the participants, you can type up the clues and email them out or give them as handouts at the starting point. Depending on the size of your group, you may want to stagger start times or take people on

different routes, so cars don't get backed up at any one location. Providing an opportunity for participants to share photos with each other adds to the sense of a shared experience. So, give it a shot and have fun exploring your area in a different way! ■

Diane Helbley, Pioneer Memorial Church member who participated in the event

New ministry launched to reach missing members

Seventh-day Adventists are often concerned for their children who are not walking with God. Or friends who move, but never transfer their membership. Or classmates who just never connected with the Seventh-day Adventist Church after graduating.

If a person who is not currently connected to the Seventh-day Adventist Church lives down the street, you may visit them and pray with them. The difficulty comes when a friend or family member lives in a different part of the state or even the country.

A new website ministry launched by Wisconsin Academy Church pastor, Jonathan Fetrick, is a solution to this problem. Shepherdsinitiative.com exists to connect people with God and His church.

The idea started while Fetrick was praying during his devotional time. "I became very convicted that we need a website that helps our churches connect with missing members who don't live close to their church anymore," he says. But how to make this conviction a reality? After a lot of prayer, he teamed up with Josue Peralta, a young adult from Milwaukee with a passion for God, to build the website, as well as a donor from a church he used to pastor in the Washington Conference. The Wisconsin Academy

Church also believes in this personal ministry that God has laid on his heart and has been very supportive.

In today's world, jobs, school, family and preferences indicate that, on average, a person will move 11.7 times during their life. An individual may be very connected to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but every time they move, they must re-engage with church. Fetrick notes that the gospel and connection with church is contextual. "A person may easily connect with people in one church, move to another place and not even know where to find the church. Because situations change, at one point in a person's life they may connect to church primarily because of friends and family while at other points in their life it may be for other reasons." Research indicates that a person needs five friends in church in order to feel like they are part of the group.

You are encouraged to check out the website and prayerfully consider three things:

First, consider partnering by entering names and information of people that you know. Once this information is received, a local pastor or elder at a Seventh-day Adventist Church close to where they have relocated will be contacted. "I will ask them to identify the person in their local church they think may be able to build a friendship with your friend or family member," explains Fetrick. "I will keep the name and information of your



friend or family member as confidential as possible while still building the connection. I will commit to praying at least weekly for your friend or family member."

Second, consider telling others in your church about the website so they can enter names.

Third, pray for the ministry. "I have no way of knowing whether one name will be entered or thousands of names," Fetrick says. "I am committed to treating each name entered as a valuable individual that God loves." ■

Wisconsin Conference, with Herald staff



▲ On Saturday, Jan. 9, 2021, a new board assumed responsibilities for the 2021-2022 year during a ceremony that was held via Zoom at the North Milwaukee Adventist Church.

Hispanic Youth ministry celebrates 20 years of service

What started as a small group of young people wanting to provide a quality revival experience for Hispanic young people in Wisconsin, has now grown into a full and vibrant ministry that brings many people, young and old, to Jesus.

Since starting in 2000, JAHWI, a Hispanic acronym for Jovenes Adventistas Hispanos de Wisconsin or Hispanic Adventist Youth of Wisconsin in English, has been a place for youth and young adults to engage in youth Sabbaths, yearly retreats at Camp Wakonda, sports days, homeless ministries and youth evangelistic meetings.

In 2020, the ministry, sponsored by the Wisconsin Youth Department, had major plans to celebrate their big milestone. As the pandemic impacted their plans, JAHWI leaders began hosting virtual services. Throughout the months, they organized a series featuring their youth as speakers on social media and hosted a virtual service for youth every Sabbath for three months, featuring guests from other countries. They also hosted an online week of prayer, evangelistic series and two celebrations in the park where they could meet socially distanced.

Arody (Asbel) Barahona, JAHWI president, says she sees a silver lining as a result of the pandemic pivot. During their recent ministry elections, many

youth signaled a desire to do more. "Our younger youth really stepped up and took leadership," says Barahona. "The teenagers are the ones doing the most."

Wisconsin Youth director, Eric Chavez, says: "We are so proud of the accomplishments that this group has made. We know that even through a pandemic they will continue to find ways to creatively celebrate and serve an amazing God."

NEW BOARD

On Saturday, Jan. 9, a new board assumed responsibilities for the 2021-2022 year during a ceremony that was held via Zoom at the North Milwaukee Adventist Church.

The new president, Geidy Gómez, of Beaver Dam Hispanic Church, expressed her desire and enthusiasm to work for the young Hispanics of Wisconsin and called on all young people to unite and reach other young people for Jesus.

Evelio Mirando, Wisconsin Hispanic Ministry coordinator, serves as a sponsor and says, "We look to the Lord for the favorable time to come so that the new leadership can take the Adventist youth of Wisconsin to the next level and in this way be ready for the second coming of Jesus." ■

Katie Fellows, Lake Union Communication assistant

Lake Union constituency session postponed

After examining the current situation as it relates to the COVID-19 pandemic, on Monday, Feb. 8, the Lake Union Conference Executive Committee voted to postpone the Lake Union Constituency meeting until the spring of 2022. It was initially planned for May 16, 2021.

Considering the situation both nationally and regionally, including the decision-making process of the General Conference Executive Committee to postpone its session scheduled to take place following the Lake Union Session, it was determined that there were too many unresolved issues. These include the general safety of delegates, insurance and liability concerns, along with other risks associated with moving forward with the event in the face of the pandemic.

Details provided to the Lake Union executive committee, some of which were from the General Conference executive committee meeting, included the following:

HEALTH

Peter Landless, director of Health Ministries for the global Adventist Church, shared concerns of moving forward with such a large gathering in light of current statistics. "For the good name of the Church, we do not want to be a super-spreader event," he said.

Within the Lake Union, hospital leadership have reported limited vaccines are available and, at the current rate of inoculation, it's unlikely the majority of our residents will be vaccinated before year's end.

The Center for Disease Control has reported that the virus is mutating. For example, in the U.K. a more transmissible variant of SARS-CoV-2 (known as 20I/501Y.V1, VOC 202012/01, or B.1.1.7) has



▲ Considering the situation both nationally and regionally, including the decision-making process of the General Conference Executive Committee to postpone its session scheduled to take place following the Lake Union Session, it was determined that there were too many unresolved issues.

emerged with an unusually large number of mutations. This variant has since been detected in numerous countries around the world, including the United States (U.S.) and Canada and, more specifically, in our region.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Tim Northrop, president of Adventist Risk Management, outlined various liability risks that could follow, noting that insurance is for things that are sudden and accidental. The Session would not fall in this category and, as such, has a higher legal exposure. Another risk is to the reputation of the Church should the meeting become a super-spreader event. “We have a duty to those who come to keep them safe.”

BYLAWS

The General Conference bylaws do not allow for a video conferencing option, according to the GC’s legal counsel, Karnik Doukmetzian. As such, the Lake Union Conference bylaws also do not allow for video conferencing of its session. New language for the Lake Union, developed by the Union’s Constitution and Bylaws Committee, will be introduced to accommodate virtual meetings.

NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

Counsel received from North American Division was that it would be best to postpone the session event.

HISTORY OF DELAYS

David Trim, director of the General Conference’s Office of Archives, Statistics and Research, put forth points in a newsletter that, in the face of truly exceptional circumstances — two world wars and the Great Depression, Seventh-day Adventist Church leaders did not shrink from making difficult decisions that were in the interest of the denomination as a whole. The grounds included prohibitive expense in a time of limited resources, the safety of delegates, the public image of the Church, and the capability of Divisions to be properly represented. All of these are factors as we look ahead to the sixty-first session.

“The COVID-19 pandemic is not absolutely unprecedented, but is utterly exceptional,” he wrote. “Yet, the challenges it poses are similar to those that moved previous generations of church leaders four times to postpone GC Sessions.”

As a result of the delayed Lake Union Session, now scheduled for May 15, 2022, the term for elected officers, directors and associate directors will be shortened from five years to four. ■

Lake Union administration



Jonathan Logan

▲ Lake Union treasurer Glynn Scott

Lake Union tithe hit record high in 2020

In an interview with Lake Union treasurer Glynn Scott, he describes how, in spite of the pandemic, faithful members gave \$77 million in tithe — the highest giving in history.

WHAT WERE YOUR THOUGHTS/ PROJECTIONS AS CHURCHES WERE FORCED TO CLOSED DUE TO THE PANDEMIC?

In March 2020 across the country, states began to issue stay-at-home orders as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. All four states within the Lake Union voted to follow stay-at-home orders. As a result, for the first two weeks of March, most of our churches held in-person meetings, while the last two weeks of March all of our churches were closed. Immediately, there was great concern across all levels of our church structure regarding tithes and offerings, and the year-to-date tithe report for March confirmed our concerns. The Lake Union tithe was negative (-4.6 percent), the North American Division (NAD) tithe was negative (-4.7 percent).

With the negative year-to-date tithe performance, leaders began to brace for the best-case scenario of a 20 percent

annual decrease for 2020 tithe and offerings. Church leaders at all levels immediately began implementing strategies to reduce expenses. Expense reduction measures included a travel moratorium, hiring freeze, furlough of workers and reduction in program expenses.

WHAT WAS THE RESPONSE AS WE MOVED THROUGH 2020, WITH CHURCHES CLOSED FOR IN-PERSON MEETINGS?

As a result of our churches discontinuing in-person services, pastoral teams had to pivot their thinking regarding the delivery of worship services. Consequently, online services were produced with creativity, allowing participant engagement by pastors and members directly from their homes. With this worship shift, our tithe experience from June through November was flat, ranging from a positive percentage low of 0.09 percent to 0.64 percent.

During this time span, only three of nine unions experienced a positive tithe flow. To assist the conferences in mission and ministry during these months of uncertainty, special stimulus appropriations from the Lake Union to the conferences were made on a pro-rata basis that totaled \$300 million. Only God could render such blessings upon His people who in turn were faithful in tithes and offerings to the local church.

HOW DID WE END 2020?

The month of December — across the NAD — is traditionally the month we receive the highest return of tithe by our members. This is due to multiple factors. One major factor would be members who own private businesses and calculate their annual income in December. With COVID-19, we had no idea how our members would be impacted financially and thereby be reflected in our December tithe remittance. We can only praise the great God that we serve. Lake Union

tithe for December was up by \$909,000 or 8.7 percent. December year-to-date was up \$972,000 or 1.28 percent. NAD's December year-to-date tithe was up \$18.4 million or 1.71 percent. LUC's \$77 million tithe total, along with the NAD's \$1.1 billion total, represent the highest annual giving in our history by our membership. For the year 2020, seven of the nine unions were in positive tithe territory.

WHAT FACTORS CONTRIBUTED TO OUR 2020 POSITIVE TITHE EXPERIENCE?

The NAD Stewardship Department is currently studying reasons for our 2020 exceptional tithe experience. The following are contributing factors to the positive tithe experience across the Lake Union:

- Online giving by local churches was 40 percent or less as of March 2020 but, by December 2020, 85 percent or more of our churches had signed on for online giving. This provided a greater demographic opportunity to contribute financially.
- Lake Union Conference administration committed to monthly stewardship articles in the *Herald* during 2020.
- Leadership across the Lake Union Conference focused on Stewardship, with promotion at the local church.
- Government stimulus checks issued to households and members returned tithe on funds received.

HOW WILL THE ADDITIONAL FUNDS BE USED?

The increase in funds at the local conference level will be used for creative evangelism and community engagement projects. Our entity executive committees are voting budget and programs during this first quarter of 2021 that will result in the highest and best outcomes for mission and ministry. At the Lake Union level, this increase in funding allows us to increase special appropriations to the

local conferences for programs at the conference and local church level.

WHAT LESSONS HAVE WE LEARNED FROM THIS PANDEMIC EXPERIENCE?

If we want individuals to give financially, we must:

- Provide multiple options/ platforms for them to contribute to the needs of the church; and
- Share how funds received are used for mission, ministry and the communities we serve.

God is in control and He watches over His Church. We can trust Him with all of our concerns and all of the perplexities that we face.

WHAT FINAL WORDS WOULD YOU GIVE TO OUR MEMBERS?

I want to express special thanks to our members for their faithfulness in giving, especially during a year that has been financially challenging for all. Malachi 3:11 (NKJV) states: *"And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, so that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field," says the Lord of hosts.* . . . This is God's promise to all who seek to prove His faithfulness to us.

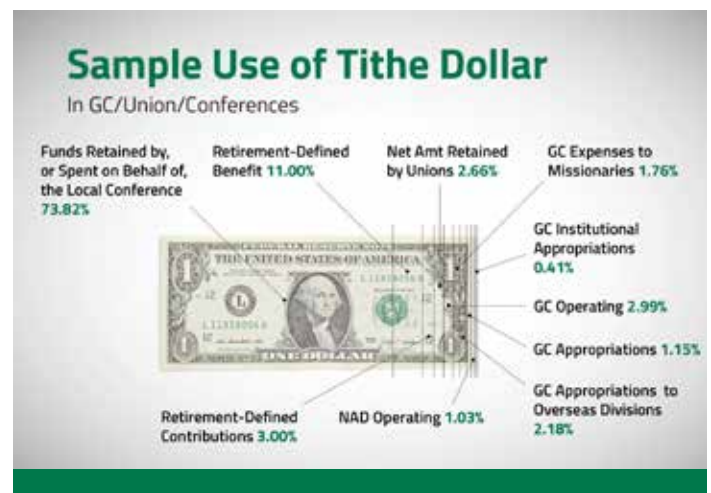
Of concern, however, is the December 2020 year-to-date NAD World Mission funds which were down 21 percent. These funds are used by World Divisions for special projects and appropriations. As you give during 2021, please continue to remember local church and World Mission funds. ■

How Tithe is Spent

We recently received a letter from one of our academy teachers who wanted information in order to explain to her students

the importance of tithing and how the funds are used in the local church. It's a question we often hear, so we thought

it would be useful to share our Treasury team's response, along with some other information as it relates to giving.



Question: What percentage of Adventists are paying tithe faithfully?

Answer: We do not know this percentage. Some suggest less than 50 percent are returning a faithful tithe. Notice the term "return" and not "pay." We do not know if people are returning a true faithful tithe unless we ask to see their check stubs, and we cannot do this.

Question: What percentage of young Adventists are paying tithe faithfully?

Answer: Each local church treasurer would have to provide this information

and we don't believe this is a question they are asking of their church treasurers.

Question: Most young people are likely to give online. What are the pros and cons of using this method?

Answer: Online giving is a tremendous tool and asset for the church. There are

typically three ways to give: credit card, debit card or ACH – (direct withdrawal from either a checking or savings account). There are associated fees for each type of transaction. It is preferable that we use ACH. See the chart below for more details. ■

Donation example	Fee	Actual Fee	Net Donation
\$1,000 Credit Card	2.05% of Total	\$20.50	\$979.50
\$1,000 Debit Card	0.60% of Total	\$6.00	\$994.00
\$1,000 ACH	\$0.17 per Transaction	\$0.17	\$999.83



Clergy and educator memorial medallions available

Memorial Medallions

The Seventh-day Adventist Church recognizes the sacrifices and dedication of its employees and seeks to demonstrate its appreciation in a variety of ways. One way the church expresses appreciation after the death of a pastor or educator is with a Seventh-day Adventist Clergy or Educator Memorial Medallion.

The Seventh-day Adventist Clergy and Educator Memorial Medallions honor the sacrificial service of the men and women who dedicated their lives of full-time gospel or educational ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Presentation of Memorial Medallions

The medallion should be presented in gratitude for the faithful worker's service.

The presentation should be made publicly at the funeral, memorial service or graveside committal.

The family may wish to keep the medallion in their home, or have the medallion affixed to the cemetery grave marker. The funeral home director may be able to assist the family in finding the right person to ensure the medallion is placed securely on the tombstone.

Suggested Ceremony

Ask all denominational employees to stand/raise their hands.

"The Seventh-day Adventist Church family is here to support you. On behalf of the _____ (example: Wisconsin Conference of Seventh-day Adventists), please accept this Seventh-day Adventist Clergy/Educator Memorial Medallion as our expression of gratitude for the faithful service of _____ (name) in ministry to our churches/schools. May the Lord comfort you and your family. Together we reaffirm our hope in the soon coming of Jesus and pray that God will keep us all faithful 'til He comes."

Qualifications

Individuals can purchase Memorial Medallions from Advent Source independent from the Lake Union qualifications. To qualify for a Memorial Medallion from the Lake Union Conference, the deceased must have:

1. Been a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in good and regular standing
2. Served in Seventh-day Adventist Education/Ministerial work
3. Served within the LUC footprint

When someone from Seventh-day Adventist Education or Ministerial work has died who meets the three qualifications listed above:

- The family of a current employee within the LUC footprint may receive a medallion from the Lake Union Conference without charge.
- Family, conferences, churches or schools may request a medallion for someone who has retired (or for another reason is not currently working). There will be a \$35 fee charged to the requesting entity.
- It is the responsibility of the conference, church, school and/or family to request a medallion.

Please contact Vicki Thompson with any questions or to initiate this process (269-473-8221, vicki.thompson@lakeunion.org).

The Memorial Medallion may be presented by a principal, pastor, conference officer, university leader or union representative. Who presents the medallion will depend on calendar availability, leadership position, and knowledge of the deceased worker. ■

Lake Union Conference



Lake Union Schools

Illinois

Alpine Christian Preschool
Rockford, IL
Day Star Preschool
Downers Grove, IL
Downers Grove Adventist School
Downers Grove, IL
Gurnee Christian School
Gurnee, IL
Gurnee Christian Preschool
Gurnee, IL
HAA Little Lambs Early Learning
Center, *Hinsdale, IL*
Hinsdale Adventist Academy
Hinsdale, IL
Marion Adventist Christian
School, *Marion, IL*
Metro-East Adventist Christian
School, *Caseyville, IL*
North Aurora SDA School
North Aurora, IL
North Shore Adventist School
Chicago, IL
Sheridan Adventist Elementary
School, *Sheridan, IL*
Thompsonville Christian Junior
Academy, *Thompsonville, IL*

Indiana

Aboite Christian School
Roanoke, IN
Adventist Christian Elementary
Bloomington, IN
Cicero Adventist Elementary
Cicero, IN
Cross Street Christian School
Anderson, IN
Door Prairie Christian Daycare
La Porte, IN
Indiana Academy, *Cicero, IN*
Indianapolis Junior Academy
Indianapolis, IN
Indianapolis Southside Christian
Academy, *Indianapolis, IN*

Northwest Adventist Christian
School, *Crown Point, IN*
Riverview Adventist Christian
Academy, *Evansville, IN*
South Bend Junior Academy
South Bend, IN

Lake Region

Capitol City Elementary School
Indianapolis, IN
Chicago SDA Elementary School
Chicago, IL
Fairhaven Elementary School
Flint, MI
Peterson-Warren Academy
Inkster, MI
South Suburban SDA Christian
School, *Park Forest, IL*

Michigan

A.S.P.I.R.E. *Michigan Conference*
Adelphian Junior Academy
Holly, MI
Andrews Academy
Berrien Springs, MI
Ann Arbor Elementary School
Ann Arbor, MI
Battle Creek Academy *Battle*
Creek, MI
Bluff View Christian School
Bessemer, MI
Cedar Lake Elementary
Cedar Lake, MI
Charlotte Adventist Christian
School, *Charlotte, MI*
Eau Claire SDA Elementary
Eau Claire, MI
Edenville SDA Elementary
Edenville, MI
First Flint SDA Elementary
Flint, MI
Gobles Junior Academy
Gobles, MI
Grand Rapids Adventist
Academy, *Grand Rapids, MI*
Grayling SDA School
Grayling, MI
Great Lakes Adventist Academy
Cedar Lake, MI
Greater Lansing Adventist School
Lansing, MI
Hastings SDA Elementary
Hastings, MI
Holland Adventist School
Holland, MI
Ionia SDA Elementary, *Ionia, MI*
Ithaca SDA Elementary
Ithaca, MI
Kalamazoo Junior Academy
Kalamazoo, MI
Marquette SDA School
Negaunee, MI
Metropolitan Junior Academy
Plymouth, MI
Mount Pleasant SDA Elementary
Mount Pleasant, MI
Niles Adventist School, *Niles, MI*
Northview SDA Christian School
Cadillac, MI
Oakwood Academy, *Taylor, MI*
Ruth Murdoch Elementary
School, *Berrien Springs, MI*
The Crayon Box
Berrien Springs, MI
Traverse City SDA Elementary
Traverse City, MI
Tri-City SDA School, *Saginaw, MI*
Troy Adventist Academy
Troy, MI
Troy Adventist Academy
Preschool, *Troy, MI*
Village Adventist Elementary
School, *Berrien Springs, MI*
Wilson Junior Academy
Wilson, MI

Wisconsin

Bethel Junior Academy
Arpin, WI
Green Bay Adventist Junior
Academy, *Green Bay, WI*
Hillside Christian School
Wausau, WI
Maranatha SDA Christian School
Lena, WI
Milwaukee SDA School
Milwaukee, WI
Milwaukee SDA School – South
Campus, *Milwaukee, WI*
Milwaukee SDA School –
Waukesha *New Berlin, WI*
Otter Creek Christian Academy
Altoona, WI
Petersen Elementary School
Columbus, WI
Three Angels Christian School
Monona, WI
Wisconsin Academy
Columbus, WI

The Seventh-day Adventist Church, in all of its church schools, admits students of any race to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at its schools, and makes no discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnic background, country of origin, or gender in the administration of education policies, applications for admission, scholarship or loan programs, and extracurricular programs.



Photos by Steve Atkins

Students gain deeper understanding of salvation through art

Andrews Academy Bible teacher Alvin Glassford and his students embarked last semester on a unique project using a form of art which revealed a deeper meaning of salvation. Kintsugi, or Kintsukuroi — poetically translates to mean “golden joinery” — is a traditional ceramic repair usually done by rejoining ceramic pieces with a camouflaged adhesive.

Pastor Glassford acquired a porcelain or fired clay item for each of his Friday morning Bible class students. He then used the lesson of Jesus representing the Rock of Salvation, in that when we fall on Him, self will be broken. (Many stay away from Christ for this reason alone.) With this in mind, students placed their Kintsugi projects in Ziploc bags and dropped them on a hard slab of concrete, threw them against a brick wall or smacked them on the school sidewalk. After smashing the item, students would then, piece by tiny piece, glue their object lessons back together. In the end, a touch of metallic powder highlighted a fusion of brokenness and grace.

Kintsugi art of fixing broken pottery is a centuries-old Japanese art technique that uses a special lacquer dusted with powdered platinum, silver or gold. Once completed, the conspicuous cracks of the ceramic pieces glint a golden color emphasizing the beautiful seams, creating a one-of-a-kind appearance to these “repaired” pottery pieces.

Kintsugi art often makes the repaired piece even more beautiful than the original, restoring it with a new look and giving it a second, more beautiful life. This unique art celebrates each artifact's unique history by emphasizing its fractures and breaks instead of hiding or disguising them.

Glassford made the connection of art and the Bible by illustrating that Jesus artfully crafts the broken pieces of our lives, resulting in a deeper beauty made possible by His divine grace on display in our many redemptions. *But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us* (2 Corinthians 4:7).

The goal of the lesson is that each piece will serve as an encouraging reminder to the students to place their broken pieces in the hands of our loving Redeemer and Friend. *You will also be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God* (Isaiah 62:3).

As part of the class assignment, students wrote reflection papers on how the Kintsugi project was a great metaphor to use when talking about one's life and the impact that God can have on it.

In her paper, Samantha Woolford-Hunt, a junior wrote: “One of the many powers that God has shown to us time and time again is His power to heal one's life and put our broken pieces back together again. In our day to day lives God has shown us that He was there in the beginning, He's there now, and He will be there in the future to pick you up and put you back together.”

Another junior, Clair Yang, penned: “When we are broken just like the pieces, He promises that He will give us strength so we can have courage to believe He will do all things for us. Even though Satan will stomp on us to be broken into pieces, God will put each of us together into His arms and protect us. When we are in God's hands, He will create a new world for us, where we will not be broken and be together away from sin.” ■

Steve Atkins, Biology and Earth Science teacher, Andrews Academy

▲ Piece by tiny piece, they then glued their object lessons back together. In the end a touch of golden or silver powder highlighted a fusion of brokenness and grace. Bible teacher Alvin Glassford hopes that each piece will serve as an encouraging reminder to place our broken pieces in the hands of our loving Redeemer and Friend.

Elementary-aged students trained as medical missionaries

At Cedar Lake Elementary School, Pastor EJ Wolf has been training fifth-through eighth-graders how to be medical missionaries.

This idea took root four years ago, when Wolf attended the Living Springs Retreat and trained with Barbara O'Neill. Wolf commented that prior to his attending the retreat, he felt sick and very weak. He had difficulty lifting his arms above his head and climbing stairs. Ten days later, after the Living Springs Retreat, he said he felt "twenty years younger."

Knowing firsthand the effectiveness of our health message, especially pertaining to natural remedies, Wolf went to the Cedar Lake school board and asked that training on natural remedies be part of the science curriculum. The plan was voted in but, unfortunately, because of COVID-19, he was unable to carry out his original plan.

COVID-19 didn't stop Wolf, however. He went to a specific teacher and asked if he could teach her class. The teacher allowed Wolf to try for two weeks.

The students loved it. They received hands-on experience and learned beneficial information they can use for the rest of their lives. They enjoyed the experience so much that Wolf was asked to continue on, even after the two weeks were finished.

While the children are enjoying the experience, they also are taking it very seriously. Wolf gave them worksheets with the science behind the remedies, so that when they share with others, they have confidence in why the remedies work.

Many of the natural remedies Wolf learned at Living Springs use common things found in the kitchen. The class did one week of poultices, such as poultices using potato, charcoal and onion. After

that, Wolf followed with a week of how to use herbs to treat the body. In addition, they trained on hydrotherapy, both hot and cold, and charcoal and turmeric masks.

They have learned safety measures and how to build up the immune system. Myles Fleetwood, an eighth-grader, said, "I want to help other people know how to boost their immune system by teaching them the benefits of super foods."

Sierra Gardener, also in eighth grade, commented, "Medical missionary work is important because you can help people get better and bring them to God... I will use this knowledge to help others later on in life... I can share God through medical work."

Wolf has been challenging his students to not keep this knowledge to themselves, encouraging them to be courageous. He spoke of Daniel, who is a perfect representative. It took courage to stand up and refuse to eat the king's food. "We want to train our kids to make a difference in our community," he says, "and we want to use the methods Jesus used."

Medical missionary work is how Jesus reached the majority of people. In most cases, before He spoke, He healed, and entire towns were left where there was not one sick person. As unusual as it seems, teaching others simple, natural remedies can lead them to Christ.

Wolf instilled this in his students. Seventh-grader Anna Wolf commented, "Medical missionary training has helped me to know how to help others when they are sick and share my love for Jesus at the same time."

Wolf and the class released a public YouTube video sharing what they learned. Each child had a role in the video, where they explained how to use natural remedies to treat the body.

"We talk a lot about the health message as the right arm of the gospel," Wolf explained, "but we don't do enough." Wolf hopes that other churches will begin

training their members, and young people, too, on how to use natural remedies to treat the body, using Christ's method to save souls. ■

Judy Klein, Michigan Conference Communication intern



Courtesy Cedar Lake Elementary School



▲ By teaching young people a few natural remedies, they are empowered and ready to labor for souls using the methods they have learned.



Karen Everett

▲ Fresh air and sunshine are more important than ever. The last Friday in January found temperatures warming above freezing as the sun shone through the clear blue Michigan winter sky.



Pam Knowlton

▲ The restrictions, due to the pandemic, have cancelled many off-campus events, but that does not mean all field trips have been cancelled.

Grand Rapids students learn power of prayer during a year like no other

While in-person education has not been allowed for many of our children at Grand Rapids Adventist Academy for almost a year, online education has been required and school life has changed in ways we couldn't have imagined. As teachers have looked at what is and is not working, they have discovered a few positive results from the online learning experience.

One of the positive experiences about online education has been that the students show more willingness to share their heartfelt prayer requests with their teachers and fellow class members. The students are understanding that corporate prayer makes a difference.

Second, some of the prayer requests during their class worship show heartaches the significant financial challenges families are facing. For example, some parents are now working fewer hours while others have lost their jobs completely. Some families that are helping extended family members placing financial strains on the students' families. These family difficulties are shared with their classmates as prayer requests during Zoom worship times. The students are learning from these trials that their hope is in the Lord.

And the Lord has provided help for some of these situations through anonymous and generous donations of food for families in need. There also has been unexpected financial help for tuition expenses in ways that has not happened in past years. These experiences illustrate the Lord has given the students and their families hope.

Children are watching their family members becoming ill and being hospitalized because of COVID. They watch the news, and the children are filled with fear,

doom and gloom. They are experiencing situations where their life is bad and then things just get worse, worse in completely unexpected ways. Our students are voicing these problems and their anxieties with their teachers and learning that their hope is in the Lord.

Many prayers have been requested for the healing of family, friends and the nation. And the Lord has placed a healing hand on many of our school's ill loved ones. The students are beginning to witness recoveries and positive answers to their prayers. As the teachers are able to work with their students, they are beginning to find peace of mind. And they are finding hope in the Lord.

Daily the students pray that they can return to school and not have to attend classes online anymore, but they know their teachers and parents do not have the final word on when they can have in-person learning. The students pray to be allowed to learn together with their friends and teachers again and they know their hope is in the Lord.

Prayers Answered for In-Person Instruction

Thankfully, in January, the prayer for in-class instruction was answered and everyone is back in the classroom. Teachers are appreciated in ways they have not experienced before. The students now appreciate how valuable it is to have their teacher working in the classroom with them. Now students pray there will be no more remote learning. ■

Judy L. Shull, Grand Rapids Adventist Academy school board chair

Indiana gets ready to reopen two schools

The Indiana Conference presently supports nine elementary schools and one boarding school. But plans are now being made to add two more one-room schools next school year.

The Richmond school was closed nearly 20 years ago. But a group of parents recently approached Pastor Blaine Fults with their desire to re-open it, and the church has moved into action to make it a reality.

The lower level of the two-story school building has been used as the church fellowship hall. The upper level, where Sabbath school classes have been held, is now being painted and made ready for the fall opening. The Richmond Church will be joined by the Connersville, Muncie and Richmond Hispanic churches as they work together to make Adventist education available to the children in their congregations.

Ninety miles away, another school is in the process of coming back to life. The Columbus school, previously known as the Lucille Lutz Seventh-day Adventist School, was closed in 2008. Ever since coming to the district, Pastor Thomas Clark and his wife, Angela, a teacher, have felt the need to re-establish the school.

Because the former Columbus school buildings needs much repair, the plan is to demolish it and reopen the school in another building on the campus. Joining the Columbus Church in this endeavor will be the Columbus Hispanic, North Vernon and Seymour churches.

How fortunate we are in this time of unrest and insecurity to have church schools which can provide a safe, positive environment for children while also meeting their spiritual and educational needs. ■

*Renee Coffee, Indiana Conference Education
superintendent*



Colleen Kelly



Colleen Kelly

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◀ The Columbus school, previously known as the Lucille Lutz Seventh-day Adventist School, was closed in 2008. Ever since coming to the district, Pastor Thomas Clark and his wife, Angela, a teacher, have felt the need to re-establish the school.

Please send us your Conference,
church and school news!
herald@lakeunion.org

news

ILLINOIS

- April 2-4:** ACF Retreat / Hi-C Retreat (Virtual)
April 10-17: "The Greatest Story" Conference-wide Evangelism Event
April 11: Adventurer Fun Day (Virtual)
April 23-24: Hispanic Couples Retreat (Virtual)
April 30-May 2: Pathfinder Spring Camporee, Camp Akita

INDIANA

- April 26-28:** Your Pathway to Health (Cancelled)
April 30-May 2: Pathfinder Fair, Timber Ridge Camp
May 14-16: Adventurer Family Weekend

LAKE REGION

- April 16:** LRC PARL/Conscience & Justice Council Program (Virtual)
April 17: Health Ministries "Take Charge of Your Health" (Virtual)

MICHIGAN

- April 23-25:** VBS Workshop
April 30-May 2: Marriage Commitment Retreat, Camp Au Sable

WISCONSIN

- April 1-3:** Wisconsin Academy Music Fest (Cancelled)
April 16-17: Wisconsin Academy Alumni Weekend — Rescheduled to Oct. 15-17
April 16-18: Women Empowerment Weekend (Virtual)
April 23-25: Hispanic Men's Retreat, Camp Wakonda
April 24: Hispanic Adventurers Clubs and Parent Day
April 30-May 2: Wisconsin Academy Academy Days

APRIL

CALENDAR OF OFFERING

- April 3** Local Church Budget
April 10 Hope Channel (GC)
April 17 Local Church Budget
April 24 Local Conference Advance

SPECIAL DAYS

FOCUS OF THE MONTH - STEWARDSHIP

- April 3** Missionary Magazines (Signs, Message, El Centinela)
April 10 Stewardship Sabbath
April 16-17 Pathfinder Bible Experience
April 17 Literature Evangelism Sabbath
April 24 Education Sabbath

Sabbath Sunset Calendar

	Apr. 2	Apr. 9	Apr. 16	Apr. 23	Apr. 30
Berrien Springs, Mich.	8:12	8:20	8:28	8:36	8:43
Chicago, Ill.	7:18	7:25	7:33	7:41	7:48
Detroit, Mich.	8:00	8:07	8:15	8:23	8:31
Indianapolis, Ind.	8:10	8:17	8:24	8:31	8:38
La Crosse, Wis.	7:34	7:42	7:50	7:59	8:07
Lansing, Mich.	8:06	8:14	8:22	8:30	8:38
Madison, Wis.	7:26	7:34	7:42	7:50	7:58
Springfield, Ill.	7:24	7:31	7:38	7:45	7:52

2021 ASI Lake Union First Virtual Spring Fellowship

Keynote Presenters

Friday, April 16, 2021 ~ 7:00pm ET

CHEF CHEW

Vegan Food Inventor/Restaurateur

Saturday, April 17, 2021 ~ 10:00am ET

MAGNA PORTERFIELD, PHD

Speaker, Counselor, Author

DR. DAVID DEROSE, MD, MPH, MAPMIN

President, CompassHealth Consulting, Inc.

Saturday, April 17, 2021 ~ 4:00pm ET

RICO HILL

Speaker/Director, Beehive International

WES YOUNGBERG, DRPH, MPH, CNS, FACLM

Clinical Nutritionist & Lifestyle Medicine Specialist



Faith
NOT
Fear

April 16-17, 2021



**PROJECT
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CHURCH**

The Lake Union and its Conferences are participating in a ground-breaking initiative to deter, detect, and hold accountable sexual and physical abuse that impacts the church.

Project Safe Church involves training pastors and church leaders to create a visible reporting mechanism, as well as the ability to connect victims with trained practitioners.

The program also involves training panels of impartial, investigative decision makers who can resolve various allegations, as well as make recommendations for resolution of disputes.

For more information, visit www.projectsafechurch.org

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

ANNIVERSARY



RANDALL and PEGGY EASTRIDGE celebrated their 50th anniversary on Dec. 5, 2020. They are members of the Jasper Church in Jasper, Ind. Randall and Peggy were married on Saturday, Dec. 5, 1970, in Livonia, Ind. Their family includes two sons, Tommy and Dexter; and five grandchildren.

OBITUARIES

BURKE, David Branson, age 84; born April 27, 1936, in St. Andrews, Jamaica, West Indies; died Nov. 27, 2020, in Marshfield, Wis. He was a member of the Marshfield Church in Marshfield. Survivors include his wife, Dagny (Sigurdsson) Burke; sons, Roy Burke, and Byron Burke; daughter, Lisa Burke-Haley; brother, Barkley Burke; half-brother, Irman Burke; and seven grandchildren. Memorial services were conducted by Pastor Marco Vigil; interment was in Livingston, N.Y.

CHRISTENSEN, Leo, age 83; born Jan. 15, 1938, in Hutchinson, Minn.; died Jan. 21, 2021, in Berrien Springs, Mich. He was a member of the Pioneer Memorial Church in Berrien Springs. Survivors include his sons, Bradley (Sonya) Christensen, and Gregory (Rebecca) Christensen; and four grandchildren.

CRUMLEY, Florence, age 96; born Sept. 30, 1924, in Portland, Ore.; died Dec. 13, 2020, in St.

Joseph, Mich. She was a member of the Pioneer Memorial Church in Berrien Springs, Mich.

DREW, Meda H. (Wellman), age 95; born May 24, 1925, in Newburgh, N.Y.; died Jan. 21, 2021, in Rockport, Ind. She was a member of the Tell City Church in Tell City, Ind. Survivors include her son, David (Julie) Drew; two grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. Funeral services were conducted by Pastor Walter Phillips; interment was in Hackleman Cemetery in Chrisney, Ind.

EDGAR, Philip T., age 94; born Aug. 10, 1926, in Royal Oak, Mich.; died Oct. 9, 2020, in South Bend, Ind. He was a member of the Lansing Church in Lansing, Mich. Survivors include his wife, Barbara (Hoar) Edgar; sons, Kevin (Julie) Edgar, and Keith (Joanne) Edgar; stepsons, John (Kelly) Arena, and Tim (Heather) Arena; and daughter, Karen (David) Fishell; seven grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; and two step-grandchildren. Memorial services will be conducted at a later date; private inurnment.

FORD, Larry, age 65; born June 17, 1955, in Columbus, Wis.; died Jan. 31, 2021, in Berrien Springs, Mich. He was a member of the Pioneer Memorial Church in Berrien Springs, Mich.

GUSTAFSON, Floyd D., age 85; born Sept. 19, 1935, in Muskegon, Mich.; died Jan. 31, 2021, in Olathe, Kan. He was a member of the Village Church in Berrien Springs, Mich. Survivors include his wife, Hilda L. (Pearson) Gustafson; daughter, Pamela S. Burton; six grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren. Funeral services were conducted by Douglas Else; interment was in College View Cemetery in Lincoln, Neb.

JOHNSON, Martha S., age 77; born Jan. 13, 1943, in Indianapolis, Ind.; died July 28, 2020, in Lansing, Mich. She was a member of the Lansing Church in Lansing. Survivors include her son, Terry (Carol) Johnson Jr.; daughter, Kim (Dave) Sherman; sister, Kathy Marshall; and five grandchildren. A private graveside service was conducted by Micky Nickless; interment was in Berrien Springs, Mich.

LARRAGOITY, Dea Veronica, age 47; born March 10, 1974; died Jan. 25, 2021, in Spring

Hill, Fla. She was a member of the North Shore Church in Chicago. Survivors include her father; Anlido Larragoity; mother, Marta Larragoity; and brothers, Ray (Ada) Larragoity and Sucre (Cecelia) Larragoity. Inurnment was in Pinecrest Cemetery in Spring Valley, Fla.

McCLURE, Ron C., age 61; born Feb. 7, 1959, in St. Charles, Mich.; died Jan. 16, 2021, in Bellaire, Mich. He was a member of the Traverse City Church in Traverse City, Mich. Survivors include his sisters, Marilyn McClure, and Brenda (McClure) Bartel.

NAFZIGER, June Joan (Nick), age 90; born June 25, 1930, in Mobridge, S.D.; died Nov. 19, 2020, in Benton Harbor, Mich. She was a member of the Hartford Church in Hartford, Mich. Survivors include her son, Dale; brothers, Marvin, and Eddie; sister, Catheryn; and one grandchild. Memorial services will be held later this summer; private inurnment.

Churches, schools, conferences, institutions and organizations may submit announcements to the *Lake Union Herald* through their local conference communication directors. An easy way to do this is to visit the *Lake Union Herald* website at <http://www.lakeunionherald.org> and submit the announcement online. Readers may verify dates and times of programs with the respective sources, as these events are subject to change. Submission eligibility guidelines are listed at <http://www.lakeunionherald.org>.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

April 16-18 — 2021 Wisconsin Women's Ministries Empowerment Virtual Conference, "Overcoming Obstacles and Triumphant in Christ," featuring Dr. Sandra Doran, Ed.D. To register and/or more information, contact Wisconsin Conference at 920-484-6555.

September 17-19 — Join Union Springs Academy in celebrating 100 years of ministry and service. All alumni, former faculty and staff are invited to celebrate God's goodness and leading at our centennial weekend. Visit our website for details and updates — union-springsacademy.org.

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REAL ESTATE

BERRIEN SPRINGS, MI GUESTHOUSE —

2-bedroom cozy cottage (1 queen + 2 twin beds). Fully furnished and equipped. Quiet location on Lake Chapin with gorgeous sunsets and wildlife. \$100/night; no children under 5 years old (3-night min.); 6 miles from Andrews Univ. Call Jackie at 574-532-9452.

COLLEGE DALE GUESTHOUSE — 1½-bedroom, fully equipped condo with kitchen and laundry, no steps, huge deck, secluded woodland setting. "Absolutely delightful," say guests. "Very clean." \$80/night for two (2 night minimum). Jolena King, 423-716-1298. See pictures at www.rogerkingrental.com.

EMPLOYMENT

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY is Seeking Assistant, Associate or Full Professor of Social Work for the MSW Program. Teaching areas include graduate-level human behavior, policy and human services. MSW degree and five years of experience required. PhD or equivalent is highly desirable. Background in clinical settings and online teaching is desirable. Other

responsibilities include academic advising and service to the Department, University and the surrounding community. Diverse applicants are encouraged to apply. https://www.andrews.edu/admres/jobs/show/faculty#job_5

IT IS WRITTEN is seeking a full-time Planned Giving Field Representative.

Candidates must be highly motivated, some work from home office, travel routinely to communicate with supporters, and represent the ministry at assigned events. NAD Trust Services certification preferred but not required. If interested, please email your resume to work@iiw.org.

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY, Department of Biology/Allied Health, beginning fall 2021. Prefer Biology PhD to teach upper and lower division courses and labs with heavy weighting on Anatomy and Physiology I and II. Please review full job description and requirements at www.southern.edu before applying. Send CV, statement of teaching philosophy, and three references to: Keith Snyder, Biology Search Committee Chair, Southern Adventist University, Box 370, Collegedale, TN 37315; 423-236-2929; fax: 423-236-1926; kasnyder@southern.edu.

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY is currently seeking teaching faculty in the following: **School of Education and Psychology, Biology/Allied Health Department, School of Computing, School of Visual Art and Design, School of Journalism and Communication.** For a full list of job openings, summaries and qualifications, please visit southern.edu/jobs.

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY is currently seeking qualified candidates for the following salaried staff positions: **Associate Director of Catering Services—Food Services; Mental Health Coordinator—Student Success Center, and Director of Adult Degree Completion—Graduate and Professional Studies.** For a full list of job

openings, summaries and qualifications, please visit southern.edu/jobs.

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks full-time teaching faculty in the School of Business in the areas of finance and economics for face-to-face classroom instruction. Qualified candidates will have an earned doctorate degree in Economics or Finance. Ideal candidates will be current and articulate regarding market trends, movements, and changes; active experience in securities investments; proficiency, creativity, and/or interest in the incorporation of finance-related technology in the classroom; commitment to student learning outside the classroom. Ideal candidates will be committed to guiding and nurturing advisees/students in their spiritual journey of discovering and pursuing God's calling. For a full list of job openings, summaries and qualifications, please visit southern.edu/jobs.

STALLANT HEALTH, a rural health clinic in Weimar, Calif., is accepting applications for an **Psychiatrist, Family Practice Physician and an NP or PA** to join the team. Interested individuals should contact Marva by email: marva@stallanthhealth.com.

MISCELLANEOUS

TRYING TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO EVANGELIZE DURING COVID? Consider sponsoring a Facebook lead generation ad campaign. Reach thousands. It's easy. You don't have to have a Facebook page..., like or do social media..., or even be computer literate. PSTC does all of the work for you!!! Contact us at 800-728-6872 or go to <https://www.projectstc.org/Facebook-Evangelism>.

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FREE PLANNED GIVING — Maranatha Volunteers International Foundation can help with your estate planning needs. Personal consultations, online wills, trusts, annuities, providing protection for you and loved ones at no cost to you. For more info, call 916-774-7700; email: estates@maranatha.org. Visit maranatha.org/plannedgiving.

MEET KAITLYN & ARIANA

Ever since meeting here at Great Lakes Adventist Academy, these two have become the best of friends. Together, they show God's love to their classmates by sharing cookies, songs, and their contagious smiles. When asked what they have cherished most about their time here at GLAA, they said they love the relationships they've built with staff and students. They know that even after they graduate, they will always be part of the **GLAA Family**.



At Great Lakes Adventist Academy, we strive to provide a nurturing environment that allows students to develop academically, socially, and spiritually where our students and faculty become family. Our high-quality curriculum, and loving, family atmosphere, allow them to learn, grow, and connect - with others and with their Friend and Savior, Jesus.

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GREAT LAKES ADVENTIST ACADEMY

Praying Like a Child

I was sitting at the breakfast table in 2013 when my son said the most beautiful prayer. At three years old, he started to thank God for everything on the table by name.



▲ Joshua Voigt

The prayer came from a genuine, thankful heart and made my “Thank you, Jesus, for this food. Amen” prayer seem pathetic. Over the years, I have experienced the beauty of prayer from children, both my own and others. Jesus summed it up, speaking to the disciples, *“Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven”* (Matt 19:14 NKJV).

So, what have I learned from children? Honestly, most of it is unlearning adult prayer. Children come to God with none of the pomp and pageantry we so often eloquently weave into our public prayers. If they want to talk to God for three minutes, they will; if they only need 29 seconds, they won’t take 30. There is no concept of how long a prayer should take and there are no filler-phrases to pad the prayer. It’s just an honest conversation with God. Children will say whatever is on their mind. Sometimes, overheard conversations between my wife and I later wind up in their prayers, even in public settings, and there is beauty in that. When they have a concern, they bring it straight to God.

“Childlike faith” is a saying for a reason. Children will pray for the smallest, most “insignificant” things and believe God will answer their prayers. I have found that most of the time, He does. My son is great at calling me to prayer when I have lost something that I need, and I usually find it soon after the prayer. In a similar fashion, children are unashamed and unafraid to make an enormous request of their Heavenly Father and, if I’m reading Scripture clearly, this pleases Him.

There are times when prayers are not answered right away, and for that you need a child’s persistent prayer. At our church school, we have been praying for

specific requests all year now, and each week the children bring up these requests with the same passion they did the week before. At home, we keep a prayer board behind our couch with requests on it, and my kids are always adding to it and remembering requests that we adults would consider “old.”

The bottom line is children pray like they talk to others. They expect to be answered and will keep praying until they are. While the traits above are common threads in many children, I have seen others unable to exercise their faith at all. Spiritual influences will help a child develop their love for God. The home needs to be a place of training, where evening worship and morning devotionals are habitual. Adventist education is another excellent tool to help develop children’s spiritual minds, to encourage their growth, not hinder it.

Most of us reading this article are well beyond childhood years, and have, in many cases, lost some of these lovely, childlike traits in our prayers. I challenge you to throw off some of the socially correct restraints we’ve placed upon ourselves. Forget about too small, too big, too short, too long. Be specific! Be honest! Believe in His goodness! He’ll hear you . . . whether you have your eyes open or not. ■

Joshua Voigt is Prayer Ministries coordinator for the Illinois Conference.

Broken But Not Shattered

Who am I? That is a good question. Two years ago, I would have given you a quick answer, an elevator pitch, as I was a confident, almost arrogant wretch, instead of the priest, father, husband and leader God called me to be.

Today, I am a broken man, divorced and lonely. Two years ago, I had most of the answers, like I used to have about child discipline before we had children. Today, I am not even sure I know the questions.

It is said that hurting people hurt people, and I know that I have yelled, screamed, ranted, and raved at my family, but I don't believe I have done anything else. However, I struggle with wondering, *"What is wrong with me?"* Am I a Jekyll and Hyde? I know that God in His mercy has allowed me to forget many of my negative experiences. Yet, I wonder if I have forgotten my actions? Has the trauma of my childhood caused such dissociation that I don't know who I really am? Am I this blood-thirsty dictator, hellbent on control, no matter the cost to my family that my beloved has portrayed to the court?

I don't ask these questions to justify my actions, but to understand so I can heal. Has the unresolved trauma of my mother's suicide, aggravated by the financial stress, caused a PTSD that turned me into a monster?

I clearly remember many of the negative experiences that have happened with my family. I remember the frustration from the lack of control I felt when they ignored my needs. I remember the guilt from yelling, the self-justification. I remember the pain of feeling like a slave. I remember the anger when they would take my words and twist them to change their meaning. I remember the feeling of relief when I was able to walk away without physically destroying my beloved, the night my world fell apart.

I did not physically abuse my family, yet scars remain from the words I have spoken and how I said them.

My story collides with Jesus, here in my brokenness. It crashes into His story because it is here in my brokenness that I have fully surrendered. Yes, at times, I still struggle with not taking it back. For years, I was good at getting on my knees, surrendering my will to God, but when the physical act of surrender was over and I got up, I would take back control of my will and try to do things my way.

At times, I struggle with the hurt that comes from the injustice I am experiencing, my pain and anger preventing me from experiencing the peace that comes with knowing that God has forgiven me. Yet, when I ask, He takes my hurt, my anger, and fills me with His peace.

Who am I? Who will I become? I am not sure — that story is still being written, but this I know:

1. *Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new* (2 Corinthians 5:17, KJV).

2. *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness* (1 John 1:9, KJV).

Who am I? I am not Carlton*, the failure. I am not Carlton*, the lonely, divorced abuser. I am Carlton*, a child of God who stands before the throne of judgment, robed in Christ's righteousness, for I have confessed my sins and received God's forgiveness. ■

*Anonymous. *Name changed to protect the author's family.*

I had to preach the Word

THIS IS WHAT I LEARNED

By Dwayne Duncombe II

WHEN I WAS TOLD I WAS GOING TO BE IN COUNTDOWN TO ETERNITY DURING COVID-19, I WAS HAPPY TO DO IT. This was mostly because I would be able to see some of my friends while recording it even though we had to be socially distant. Countdown to Eternity was a virtual, evangelistic series that was streamed via Facebook and YouTube. It was presented by students of the Lake Region Conference schools. Each participant was asked to share a presentation that had been pre-written by Dr. Tim Gardner. The series counted down from day ten to day one. Its purpose was to show what to expect in the last days and how to find shelter in Jesus in times of trouble. The messages also revealed what Heaven and the New Earth would be like.

Some of the presentations included “The Great Controversy,” “The Mark of the Beast” and “The Return of Christ.” My assignment was to preach for the final night, day one of the countdown (the tenth presentation). My topic was “The New Earth,” an overview and explanation of what the New Jerusalem and a brand-new planet would be like. This would be a new home for people who were faithful to Christ on Earth. My presentation described the beauty of the city, what resurrected bodies would be like and the type of things we will do when we get there. I also explained the things that would not be there like violence, death, suffering and tears.

► Dwayne Duncombe II

This experience had a big effect on me. Because it was prewritten, I learned some things I did not know before. I learned while I practiced my sermon, but I also listened to other sermons being recorded and learned from them, too. For instance, I did not know that there would be no large bodies of water in heaven. I learned that this had a special meaning for John while he was on the Island of Patmos. The sea separated him from people that he loved and cared about. So, a new heaven with no more sea was a symbol of no more separation. I thought about all the people who are separated from friends and family members because of COVID-19, and I hoped that this would comfort them.

Another thing I wanted people to learn from what I was saying was that there was something better to look forward to. I wanted to encourage them to give to their hearts to Jesus so they could go to Heaven and learn about Him forever. It also caused me to want to be there even more than before. Lastly, I was blessed by the final appeal to come to Jesus and share in His

promise. It says, “*and the spirit and the bride say come! And let him who hears say, come! And let him that is athirst, come! And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*” (Rev. 22:17). This is the new earth! ■

Dwayne Duncombe II is a sixth-grader at Peterson-Warren Academy.

Dwayne received a \$100 scholarship for this article. If you're a youth or young adult interested in submitting an article for consideration, please contact: herald@lakeunion.org



Eunice Duncombe

Emulating a Father's Love

By Danni Thaw



Anthony Isensee

▲ Ricardo Colindres

“JESUS CAME TO EARTH AND WAS A HEALER AND A COMFORT TO EVERYBODY,” says Ricardo Colindres, an 18-year-old student with a passion for helping and serving others. “As Christians, we have the privilege to know Jesus. I believe that He is the Key to life. We have a duty to share that with everybody; I enjoy sharing that with children in particular.”

When a Youth director approached Ricardo about working at Camp Wakonda in the summer, Ricardo did not hesitate. Camp Wakonda is a distinctively Christ-centered camp in Marquette County, Wis.; its mission is to show campers, through everything, a taste of the incredible love that God has for His people. Ricardo felt this mission aligned perfectly with his beliefs about the work Christians are called to do.

“I just knew right away working at Camp Wakonda was something I would enjoy getting involved in.” Although Camp Wakonda

was eventually cancelled last summer due to COVID-19, Ricardo didn’t let that stop him.

Since COVID-19 also prevented him from studying abroad for college, his pastor asked if he would like to get involved with the youth at church. “I saw that as opportunity to get more involved with the kids from my local church,” says Ricardo, who gladly took on the challenge.

Now, Ricardo has visited three schools — with four more on his list, meeting and interacting with dozens of students, ages six to 14. While visiting the children, Ricardo enjoys making tie dye shirts and slime with them. “My favorite part is seeing their smiles and knowing I’m making their days a little better,” admits Ricardo. “The kids really enjoy the Bible stories we tell them. I genuinely enjoy helping them and giving up my free time to do so.”

As a pastor’s kid, Ricardo fondly recalls the influence his dad has had and credits his father with cultivating an innate love for helping others. “My dad always puts God first — he made that really clear to us growing up. No matter what I do, that’s my ultimate goal. When I play soccer, work, hang out with friends, I put God first. In our home, it doesn’t matter what happens, we put Him first. That has been the key in guiding my decisions.”

Ricardo encourages other young people to be a positive influence on those around them. “I’ve seen so many kids who remember me from visits and sometimes seemingly minor interactions,” Ricardo explains. “It really shows me how much of an impact we can have on their lives. That’s powerful.” ■

Andrews University alum Danni Thaw is a freelance writer.

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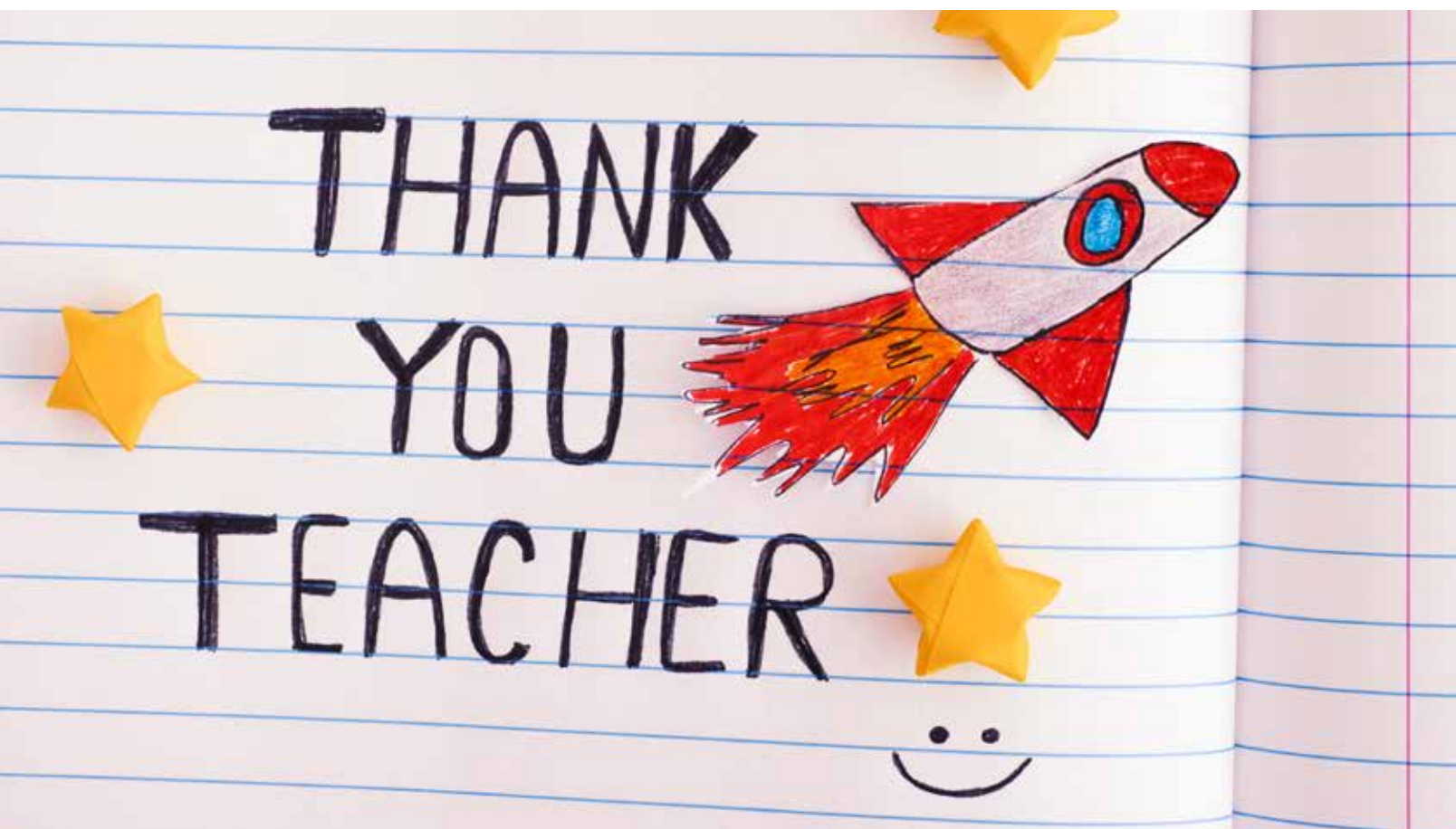
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 Indexed in the Seventh-day Adventist Periodical Index



We would like to thank you for faithfully serving despite the changes that have been necessitated by COVID-19. When the abrupt end to a physical school classroom occurred, you quickly adapted to virtual classrooms and modified lessons to support learning in the student's home.



Whether a teacher in an early childhood classroom, a one-room school, or an academy science class—each of you put in many extra hours to learn new technology and to create new learning materials and innovative approaches to serve your students. And you have done all this while juggling the effects of the pandemic on your family and personal lives.

We have a greater appreciation of you and an awareness for how hard you work. We are humbled and amazed at how our great God continues to lead our educators to this day! —*Lake Union Education Department*