

SERVING SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS IN THE LAKE UNION SINCE 1908

# HERALD

JUNE/JULY 2023



**MANY  
REASONS,  
ONE  
MISSION**  
EXTENDING THE HEALING  
MINISTRY OF CHRIST



**UChicago  
Medicine**

  
**Advent Health**





Why have I been thinking about loneliness lately? Perhaps it was triggered by a friendly call the Herald received from a retired school teacher. In speaking with her, we learned she's a 91-year-old widow who lives alone.

Or maybe it was the news report about the U.S. surgeon general's study concluding that the lack of social connection poses a significant risk for individual health and longevity. The statistics gave me pause: Loneliness and social isolation increase the risk for premature death by 26% and 29%, respectively. More broadly, lacking social connection can increase the risk for premature death as much as smoking up to 15 cigarettes a day. In addition, poor or insufficient social connection is associated with increased risk of disease, anxiety, depression, and dementia. The statistics only confirm what we can easily see happening all around us, if we take notice.

A close friend told of a routine visit to a medical facility. As she sat in the waiting room, it was an older gentleman's turn at the head of the line, but there was a problem. He was unable to complete the obligatory forms. He was stuck at the question that asks for an emergency contact. The receptionist's attempt to help with, "There *must* be someone" was met with the sad answer, "No, I have no one." Enough to point us to a popular yet simple chorus that topped the world's musical charts in a former time, "Ah, look at all the lonely people."

The world describes the problem and even suggests solutions. Today, apps are developed using the burgeoning artificial intelligence technology to assign virtual companions to the "lonely people." These virtual friends can text "good morning" and interact. The apps are new, but the world has always offered countless varieties of fix-its for the loneliness problem.

The alternative points to the people who follow the God who in Genesis 2:18 tells us He did not create people for them to be alone. How can we help stem the loneliness of people who are all around us? Why is there an epidemic of lonely people when the God of Genesis 2:18 has followers with lonely people in their schools, jobs, communities and homes? Some of us are lonely people ourselves. God is calling us to match outreach with reaching out and not to be content with simply joining in the world's chorus, "Ah, look at all the lonely people."

*Debbie*

Debbie Michel

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# FEATURES

14

## Community Needs Ignite Action from Health System

*By Elizabeth Camps*

20

## Many Reasons, One Mission

*By Julie Busch*

COVER PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATT RAINEY

# CONTENTS

### PERSPECTIVES

Guest Perspective	4
HIStory	8
Conexiones	9
Partnership with God	40
Ask the Lawyer	41

### EVANGELISM

Telling God's Stories	10
Sharing Our Hope	12
Testimony	42
My Testimony	43

### LIFESTYLE

Family Focus	6
Alive & Well	7

### CURRENT MATTERS

AdventHealth	24
Andrews University	25
News	26
Mileposts	34
Calendar of Events	36
Classifieds	38

TELLING THE STORIES OF WHAT GOD IS DOING IN THE LIVES OF HIS PEOPLE

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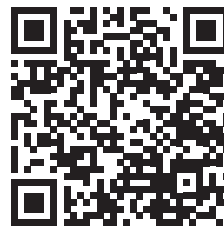
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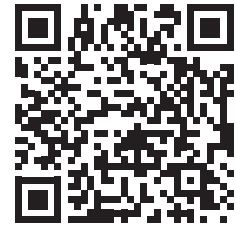
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# The Mission Never Changes

IN 1904, THE HINSDALE SANITARIUM OPENED ITS DOORS WITH THE GOAL OF PROVIDING PATIENTS WITH FRESH AIR, SUNSHINE, EXERCISE, PURE WATER, A WHOLESOME DIET, AND A MIND AT PEACE WITH GOD AND HUMANITY.



▲ THOR THORDARSON

When I reflect on this legacy, I can see how these fundamentals of care are still at the core of what we do. We treat the whole person – body, mind and spirit – and we want to teach our communities to be healthy and invite them to feel whole.

As medical advancements are made and technology evolves, we'll always be here to take care of our communities. Our faith-based hospitals in the Chicago suburbs of Hinsdale, La Grange, Bolingbrook and Glendale Heights have a long legacy of healing. While we've seen some changes in the last year, one thing will never change, and that's our mission of extending the healing ministry of Christ.

Earlier this year, AdventHealth began a new joint venture with UChicago Medicine, one of the nation's leading academic medical institutions. This new partnership allows us to combine world-class academic capabilities with the best of faith-based community health care, and to expand and develop more high-quality, multidisciplinary services. AdventHealth is managing the daily operations of the hospitals and carrying forward the mission, vision, values and culture, which remain the same.

Just like the vision of the Hinsdale Sanitarium, we want our hospitals to be centers for prevention and wellness. Food and nutrition are integral to healing, preventing, and reversing chronic diseases. This is why we're sharing this knowledge in our

communities and churches by holding cooking and nutrition classes, complete with demonstrations. You can learn more about this work, led by Dr. Jill Jennings, in this issue.

Our Breaking Bread program is also partnering with local churches to help us share the gospel and build relationships while offering a healthy, delicious meal so members can get to know AdventHealth and how we can serve them. Recently, at our local Seventh-day Adventist church in Bolingbrook, we provided a "haystacks" meal.

At each Breaking Bread event, the team from the hospital cafeteria prepares and provides the meal. As part of our commitment to whole-person care, we're taking a closer look at the food we serve in our hospitals. We're removing items such as candy and sugary beverages and replacing them with healthy snacks and grab-and-go items. We've added a vegetarian and vegan option at all meals and are providing labels with nutritional values so people can make informed choices.

I'm very passionate about eating healthy, and there's a reason why. Once, when I had my cholesterol checked, it was higher than the ideal levels for health. That was a wake-up call for me. I knew what I needed to do and so I immediately switched from a vegetarian diet to a whole food, plant-based diet. Within nine weeks, without any medications, my cholesterol dropped down to healthier levels.





“ Our Breaking Bread program is also partnering with local churches to help us share the gospel and build relationships while offering a healthy, delicious meal so members can get to know AdventHealth and how we can serve them. ”

Eating healthy doesn't have to be difficult or unattainable. We want to provide healthy, great-tasting food and present it well to our patients, like we would do for our own family. That's

how we want both patients and guests to feel. That's our mission. ■

**Thor Thordarson** is president and CEO of UChicago Medicine AdventHealth Great Lakes Region.



# Help Young Adults Manage Stress



▲ ALINA BALTAZAR

“I CAN’T SEEM TO CONNECT WITH PEOPLE. I’M AFRAID I’M GOING TO DO SOMETHING TO MAKE ME LOOK BAD.”  
 “WHAT IF I’M WASTING MY TIME DOING THIS DEGREE?”  
 “I DON’T KNOW IF I’M DOING A GOOD ENOUGH JOB.”  
 “I’M NOT GOOD ENOUGH BECAUSE OTHER PEOPLE HAVE MORE LIKES THAN ME ON SOCIAL MEDIA.”

These are some of the distressing thoughts that young adults have about various areas of their life. According to the Pew Research Center, 58% of young adults reported experiencing high levels of distress sometime between March 2020 to September 2022. They are experiencing a lot of doubts about their capabilities to face a more challenging world than many of us from older generations had to face. Like many adults, they worry about the economy and an uncertain future. Some groups have been experiencing more distress than others, particularly women, African American, Latino, Asian, and lower-income families, due to the impact of COVID-19 and inflation.

Stress is nothing new to humanity, we just have different things to stress about. That means we might need to take different approaches to help our young adults learn how to manage their stress better. Here are some tips that will not only help young adults, but anyone who is reading this.

1. **Breathe!** Seems like common sense, but when we are distressed our breathing pattern changes. So, for our bodies to feel less distressed, our breathing needs to slow down. Take long, deep breaths, four seconds in through the nose, then eight seconds out through the mouth, and repeat for at least a few minutes.
2. **Take time to rest.** Sabbath is a wonderful time to do this, but it can be done throughout the week. You are more likely to feel rested if you do something the opposite of what you do throughout the day/week.

3. **Get anchored with our Creator.** In the busyness of life, we forget who created it all. Try to spend at least 20 minutes focusing on the Lord. Notice His power and goodness and bring your attention away from your worries through Bible reading and prayer.

4. **Move!** When we are stressed and anxious, our muscles tighten which can then worsen our mood. Get your blood pumping any way that you enjoy that you can commit to doing daily.

5. **Support.** Our teens and young adults are more isolated so need more support from their families and other caring adults. We can remind them of how much they have accomplished and share what helped us when we faced similar challenges. Parents should avoid high expectations. When a young person is struggling, see how you can help instead of criticizing.

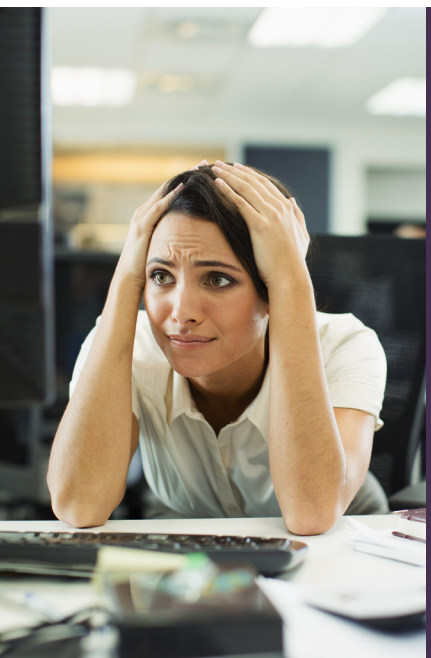
When we look at the Bible, two verses stand out to help us understand God’s approach to stress:

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let our requests be made known to God.” Philippians 4:6 NKJV

“And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?” Luke 12:25 NKJV

These verses remind us to, “Let go and let God.” ■

*Alina M. Baltazar, Ph.D., MSW, LMSW, CFLE is the director of the Master of Social Work program and co-associate director at the Institute for the Prevention of Addictions at Andrews University, and mom to three young adult sons.*





# Changing Bad Habits— for Good

HABITS ARE OUR FRIENDS—WHEN THEY’RE GOOD ONES. HABITS ARE ROUTINES THAT HELP US REPEAT SAFE AND EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS AND BUILD CONSISTENCY AND SECURITY INTO OUR LIVES.

But bad habits can become addictions. In the past, the term *addiction* was used only to refer to problems with substances such as drugs, alcohol or nicotine. But addictions can include many behaviors and activities including gambling, shopping, overwork, sex, internet abuse and food.

**Brain on a Binge.** A hallmark of addiction is continued self-destructive behavior despite adverse consequences. When an addiction develops, what is happening in the brain? For one thing, the pleasure circuits in the brain become “hijacked” by the addictive substance or behavior, producing intense cravings.

**The Tangled Roots of Addiction.** Addictions have many possible roots, including emotional, spiritual, physical, environmental and genetic sources. Addictions are strong—but the weapons available to win the war against addiction are even stronger. In any war it is important to have a plan in order to achieve a decided victory.

**The Learning Brain.** Can bad habits be broken? God has designed the human brain—even in adulthood—with a powerful capacity to reshape itself according to what it learns and to even grow new connections, or neurons. Psychiatrist John Ratey explains: “Experiences, thoughts, actions, and emotions actually change the structure of our brains. By viewing the brain as a muscle that can be weakened or strengthened, we can exercise our ability to determine who we become. Indeed, once we understand how the brain develops, we can train our brains for health, vibrancy, and longevity.”<sup>1</sup>

Good habits can become just as strong as bad ones! Creating good habits works the same way as creating bad habits: doing the same thing over and over to set a pattern in the brain.

**Freedom Keys.** Potent, powerful, and protective weapons are available to help you make and

maintain permanent change over time. They include:

- **Creating an Environment—Internally and Externally.** Pay attention to your internal environment—your thoughts. Cultivate thankfulness in place of negativity. What you make up your mind to be, you *will* be.
- **Creating a Lifestyle.** Positive lifestyle choices protect the brain and body, making it easier to cope with stress and enjoy new things to do in life. Daily exercise and eating plenty of nutritious foods builds mental strength and eases stress. Regular rest and plenty of water refresh the body and mind and prepare it for new challenges.
- **Creating Connections.** Get connected with friends who will encourage you in your new choices. Personal growth takes place as we interact with others. Connecting with church and community resources makes our world bigger than our circumstances. It creates opportunities for giving, receiving, and learning communication skills, and building meaningful experiences.

Connections can provide support and accountability that increase long-term success.

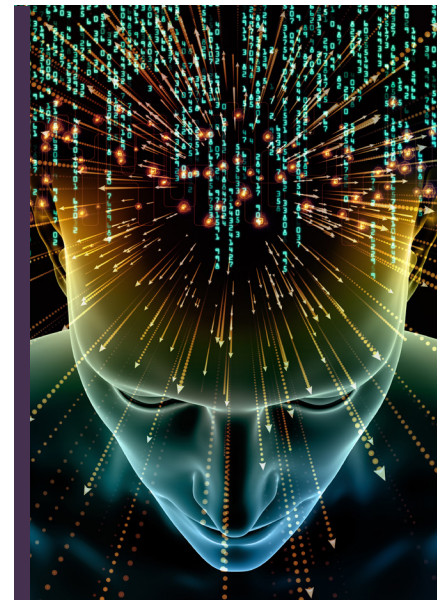
Only God can release us from the crushing grip of sin as well as its heart-breaking guilt. It’s the great exchange: we give Him our broken sinful heart and He performs the Divine transplant of a new heart. The weaker you know yourself to be, the more you need the saving grace of the Savior to restore what sin has broken and taken away. He is knocking at the door of every heart. His word is living. Prayer to Him will connect you—for good! ■

<sup>1</sup> Ratey J. *User’s Guide to the Brain* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 2002) p. 17

**Vicki Griffin** is Michigan Conference’s health director.



▲ VICKI GRIFFIN





# A Missionary to Beekeepers



▲ DENIS KAISER

ROY MARTIN POYSER, BORN IN 1939, HAD BEEN RAISED SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST IN AUSTRALIA BUT HE WAS NOT INTERESTED IN SPIRITUAL THINGS OR ATTENDING CHURCH. AT AGE 14, HE DROPPED OUT OF SCHOOL AND EVENTUALLY GOT INTO BEEKEEPING.

For the next 15 years, he put himself first and did not care about God. He drank alcohol and was hooked on nicotine. Before buying food, he would always buy cigarettes.<sup>1</sup>

At age 30, Roy had a dramatic experience that completely changed the course of his life. He needed to purchase a larger truck to support his growing business, yet when he arrived at the truck yard, it was closed. So, he got a room in a local pub, had a few drinks, and smoked heavily. A few months before the trip, he had heard a voice speaking to his heart, “Your body is the temple of God, and if you destroy that temple, I’ll have to destroy you.” Although he got to the point of wanting to stop smoking, he was unable to let go. When he got to his room in the pub, he found a Gideons Bible on his bed. Although he knew the Bible pretty well, he did not want to follow it. That evening, however, Roy, for some reason, started reading the Gospels’ description of Jesus. Surprisingly, he could understand

what he was reading and it melted his heart. He fell to his knees, began to cry, and said, “If you can bring people back from the dead, maybe you can help me too.” He got into bed and fell asleep. Usually, when he would first wake up, he needed a cigarette. But the next morning, the addiction was gone. As he walked out of the pub, he looked into the sky and thought, “There is someone up there. I’ve never met him but he answered my prayer.” This experience completely changed his life.

Soon after his conversion, both Roy and his wife, Vicki, were baptized into the Adventist church. Like many others who experience a dramatic conversion experience, he wondered whether he should become a pastor. Interestingly, his pastor told him, “Ministers can reach certain areas of society, but they’ll never be able to reach the beekeepers like you can. You have a unique mission field. So, unless God calls you to be a pastor, you should consider doing something else.” Roy returned to his beekeeping business and has been a missionary to the beekeepers ever since. He has been active in the church, active in outreach, and sharing his faith with many in the outback who are otherwise difficult to reach.



▲ Martin Poyser and his wife Vicki.

1. The account is based on Jared Martin, “A Savior in the Swamp: The Incredible Story of an Aussie Beekeeper” (research paper, Andrews University, 2020).

**Denis Kaiser** is an associate professor of church history at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University.



# La luz para el mundo

HABÍA RECIÉN COMENZADO A SER EL PASTOR DE MI PRIMERA IGLESIA CUANDO ME PREGUNTÉ DE QUÉ MANERA PODRÍA MI PEQUEÑA IGLESIA TRAER LAS BUENAS NUEVAS DE SALVACIÓN A LA CIUDAD DE HAMMOND, INDIANA.



▲ CARMELO MERCADO

Recuerdo que fui a caminar por el centro comercial (*mall*) y me dediqué a observar a la gente que pasaba mientras hacía sus diligencias. Me vino a la mente el momento cuando Cristo se encontró con la multitud que lo buscaba. La Biblia nos dice que tuvo compasión porque parecían como ovejas que no tenían pastor. Al recordar ese pasaje sentí que el Espíritu Santo me infundía compasión y pensé que era necesario hacer algo para compartir el Pan de Vida con los necesitados. Pude conversar con la persona encargada del centro comercial y le mencioné que la Iglesia Adventista ofrecía programas de salud y que podría ofrecer una clínica de salud dentro del centro comercial durante un fin de semana con el propósito de evaluar la salud de los interesados y así poder darles consejos prácticos. El dirigente del centro comercial aceptó mi propuesta y como resultado más de 100 personas visitaron nuestra clínica. También invitamos a estas personas a algunos programas de salud y algunas aceptaron tomar estudios bíblicos.

Han pasado ya muchos años desde que se llevó a cabo dicha clínica. No hay duda que ahora es aún más urgente que nunca que nuestras iglesias incluyan en sus planes no solo campañas de evangelismo sino también programas sobre salud.

Hace un tiempo asistí a una convención de salud en el estado de Kentucky y quedé impresionado por la variedad de clases y recursos que se encuentran disponibles para ayudar a las iglesias a ser un apoyo en la comunidad en asuntos de salud.

Por ejemplo, la Iglesia Adventista ofrece un curso de entrenamiento para laicos con el fin de que puedan llevar a cabo un programa sobre cómo vencer las adicciones. Además ofrece entrenamientos acerca de cómo vencer la depresión y cómo controlar y hasta eliminar

la diabetes con el uso de remedios naturales. Ofrece también adiestramiento sobre cómo llevar a cabo una feria de salud para la comunidad con un costo mínimo. Por supuesto, una parte de los entrenamientos incluye instrucción acerca de cómo guiar a las personas para que también consideren cuidar su salud espiritual.

Es importante notar que Cristo no solo predicó el evangelio sino que también dedicó mucho tiempo para sanar a los enfermos. Además, podemos notar que los apóstoles hicieron lo mismo—siguieron el ejemplo de su Maestro. La Iglesia Adventista difiere de otras denominaciones porque ha sido bendecida con un mensaje de sanidad total que incluye la sanidad de la mente, el cuerpo y el espíritu. Es mi deseo animar a los hermanos y pastores de nuestras iglesias a que sigan el ejemplo de nuestro Señor y ofrezcan una variedad de iniciativas de salud. No tengo duda alguna de que el hacer esto traerá a muchas personas a los pies de Jesús. ■

Carmelo Mercado es el vicepresidente de la Unión del Lago



◀ Feria de salud presentada en el mes de abril en la ciudad de Lexington, Kentucky



# Educator Brings Healthy Eating Message to Hospitals, Community

JILL JENNINGS HAS A GOAL – TO BRING THE MESSAGE OF HEALTHY EATING AND LIFESTYLE CHOICES TO PATIENTS AND THE COMMUNITY. IT'S A CHALLENGE THAT JENNINGS, DIRECTOR OF CLINICAL PROGRAMS FOR UCHICAGO MEDICINE ADVENTHEALTH, IS HAPPY TO ACCEPT, AND ONE FOR WHICH SHE IS UNIQUELY PREPARED.

After working for more than 15 years as an emergency department nurse, Jennings became very ill. She visited a variety of doctors without finding relief, and then a friend suggested she see a naturopathic doctor. That decision changed her life.

"I'd seen many doctors, had every test and had no answers," she said. "Visiting the naturopathic doctor completely opened my eyes to the world of natural medicine and lifestyle medicine, and it got me well. I thought: *This is the kind of medicine I want to do for the rest of my life.* And maybe I had to go through what I went through for God to get me where He wanted me to be."

So, at age 40, with four children at home, she went back to school and earned her doctorate degree in naturopathic medicine. She opened a private practice, but when COVID-19 hit, she was forced to close her practice and return to nursing at AdventHealth. She began talking to her co-workers about her experiences, and when the Great Lakes Region executives at AdventHealth learned about her interest in lifestyle and nutrition they started having great conversations.

She discovered her passion was a good fit with the Seventh-day Adventist commitment to healthy living and to treating the whole person. She was

happy to find such a compatible partner for her interests, and she was excited to learn about the Adventist faith.

"They taught me so much about the Seventh-day Adventist faith and how lifestyle is so central to their beliefs," she said. "I didn't have to convince them that lifestyle medicine was a good idea – that's who they are."

Together they continued to discuss the need for more efforts around teaching people how to stay healthy and prevent illness. "We really do great sick care, but what do we do about prevention?" Jennings said.

Then at the end of 2020, Jennings was diagnosed with breast cancer. "It rocked my world," she reflected.

As she underwent treatment, she committed even further to integrative medicine and lifestyle changes. She adopted a whole-food, plant-based diet, which she believes was critical to supporting her through the rigorous cancer treatments and returning her to health.

Her experience with using nutrition and lifestyle as part of her cancer battle in turn fueled her passion for her work as well. She began to look for ways to spread that message both within and outside of the hospital.





Jennings began collaborating with others in the AdventHealth system, starting discussions on how to improve the food given to patients in the hospital and work toward emphasizing more whole-food, plant-based options. At the same time, she began to offer lifestyle and nutrition classes to the general public.

These classes include a nutrition education segment and a cooking demonstration where participants learn how to cook healthy food and taste-test the recipes. “I really want to hold their hand and walk with them,” Jennings said. So far, the classes have focused on nutrition and weight loss, heart health, cancer prevention, diabetes, brain health and women’s health, among other topics.

She also has expanded beyond the hospital walls. She offers classes in local elementary schools, senior centers and park districts, and she recently held a talk and demonstration at the food pantry pickup site at UChicago Medicine AdventHealth Hinsdale.

The Integration team, led by Mark Bondarenko, executive director of Mission Integration for UChicago Medicine AdventHealth, also launched a new program called Breaking Bread. The team visits local churches in the community and provides a plant-based lunch after the church service. Hospital team members join in fellowship with the church members, and Jennings is available to answer any questions about nutrition and a healthy lifestyle.

“This is the core of our message – treating the whole person. This is serving people and teaching prevention: We want you to be healthy, and we want to teach you how to do that,” she said.

“It is really being the hands and feet of Jesus and serving people not just when they’re sick. Certainly, we want to help them recover when they’re sick. But this is all about treating the whole person all the time.” ■

---

**Julie Busch** is associate vice president, marketing and communications at UChicago Medicine AdventHealth.

Dave Pfeleiderer





# The Silent Preacher

BY ALLEN DYBDAHL

ONE FRIDAY, MY SUPERVISOR INFORMED ME THAT I WAS BEING LET GO FROM A GOOD RETAIL JOB I'D WORKED FOR ABOUT SEVEN YEARS. "I KNOW WHAT GOD WANTS ME TO DO NEXT," I SAID, HANDING HIM A COPY OF "STEPS TO CHRIST."

For some time, I had been giving religious books and tracts to my coworkers. A literature evangelist friend had introduced me to his work, and I accompanied him whenever I could. I liked this work, but as I already had a good full-time job, I didn't give it much more thought.

The day after I lost my job was a Sabbath. I decided to attend a different church that day. When I walked in, I discovered to my surprise that they were having a literature evangelism rally. I listened intently to all the recounted experiences, committed myself to God's work, and have never looked back.

For the next 17 years, I worked as a literature evangelist in Baton Rouge, Little Rock, Oklahoma City, Indianapolis, and finally in Berrien Springs, where I was publishing director and president of Home Health Education Service for the Lake Union. I did door-to-door sales, preached in local churches, and trained literature evangelists.

My new vocation brought many amazing experiences. One that particularly stands out occurred in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. While driving to an address on one of my contact cards, I passed a yard with a house trailer. Suddenly, I felt impressed to turn around and visit that home. Uninvited, I knocked on the door. A man answered. I explained that I was calling on Christians in the area to share religious books about Jesus. "I'm not a Christian," the man admitted, and invited me in.

As we chatted and were getting acquainted, the man explained that he was a prison guard, and that his wife had just left him to be with another man. "A voice told me you would be coming," he continued, "and that you would be bringing books that would help me teach my children about Jesus." I

knew then, without a doubt, that the Holy Spirit had brought us together.

I showed the man my accordion folder which gave an overview of the books I was selling. "Do you have anything else?" he asked repeatedly. "Show me everything," he insisted. Within a few minutes, he ordered and paid for the 10-volume set of children's Bible story books, the Bible reference library, and a family Bible.

Recalling such encounters brings to mind these words of Ellen White: "The redeemed will meet and recognize those whose attention they have directed to the uplifted Savior . . . 'I was a sinner,' it will be said, 'without God and without hope in the world, and you came to me, and drew my attention to the precious Savior as my only hope.' What rejoicing there will be as these redeemed ones meet and greet those who have had a burden in their behalf" (Testimonies, vol. 6, p. 310-12).

Though I have spent most of my working years selling religious books, I now give them away. A health crisis ushered in this change. Over a three-year period, I noticed I was becoming increasingly short of breath. It got to the point where I was having trouble eating and even swallowing liquids. At first, the doctors thought I had a lung disease, but when I experienced a crisis in July 2021 and could barely breathe, I had an emergency tracheotomy.

Subsequently, a cancerous tumor was discovered that was affecting my vocal cords and esophagus. I spent 55 days in two hospitals, undergoing three surgeries to remove the tumor and my voice box, and to reconstruct my esophagus. Several grafts and follow-up procedures were required to remove scar tissue that was causing my esophagus to close. Despite being fed artificially through a tube,



I lost 50 pounds. The removal of my voice box also meant that I lost the ability to speak. I can only utter a word or two in the softest whisper. Sometimes my wife can understand me. Sometimes not.

Whenever I feel discouraged, I turn to Scripture. Psalm 91 promises, “Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; / I will set him on high, because he has known My name. / He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; / I will be with him in trouble; / I will deliver him and honor him” (v. 14-15). Philippians 4:19 also sustains me: “And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

God’s word and my faith in Jesus were my guides throughout my years as a literature evangelist. While that work, or any work requiring the use of my voice, is not currently an option, God still is able to use me. My wife sometimes calls me “The Silent Preacher.” I realize that we all have calamities, but amazing blessings can come out of them. I have met so many people through my earlier work. Now I am meeting more through my ongoing medical needs. I have a prayer list of over 2,000 names, and I pray for them daily, including every physician, nurse and medical practitioner who has helped me. I have given away over 400 books and tracts to my caregivers and others, including repair people who come to my house, and people who answer “For Sale” notices my wife and I post as we are down-sizing. Some of these people ask to stay in touch, and I do.

I rejoice that I can continue to serve a God who is less concerned with our capabilities, and more about our availability to work for Him (Review and Herald, June 7, 1903). That partnership, I believe, is open to everyone. I hope and pray that when I have healed enough for speech therapy, I will be able to learn how to speak again. But whatever happens, I want to use every opportunity God gives me to share the Good News of Jesus wherever and however I can. ■

**Allen and Cheryl Dybdahl** are members of the Village Seventh-day Adventist Church in Berrien Springs, Michigan, where they happily have resumed serving together as church greeters.







# Community Needs *Ignite Action* FROM HEALTH SYSTEM

## GREAT LAKES REGION HOSPITALS SHARE THEIR PASSION FOR MISSION

### **A MISSION TO FEED THE HUNGRY**

Lack of access to nutritious food has become a growing concern for thousands of residents in Will County, Illinois, where an estimated 62,000 individuals are food insecure, according to Feeding America's Map the Meal Gap annual study. The pandemic has only made matters worse, highlighting the need for community support and resources to combat hunger.

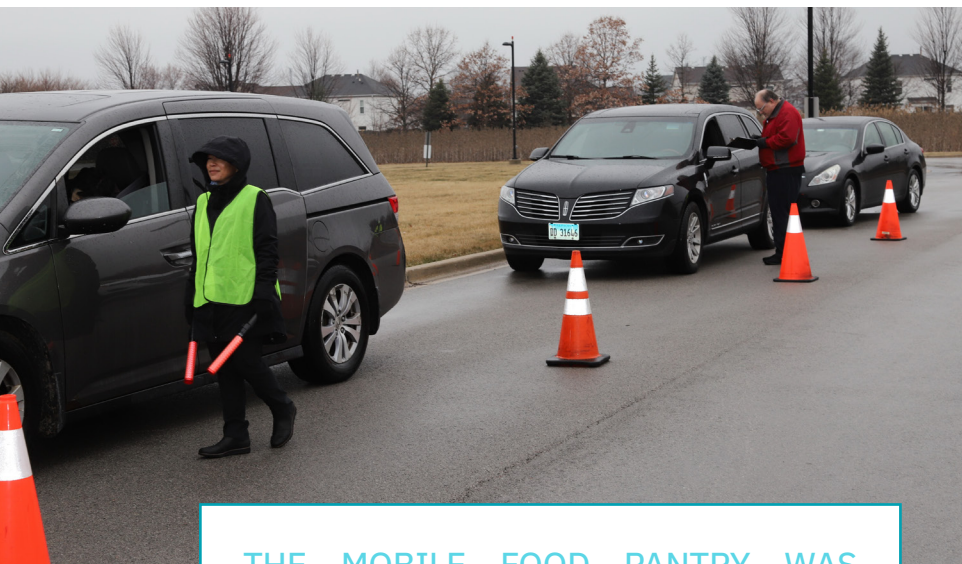
Food insecurity, which is a lack of access to sufficient food to live a healthy and active life, can lead to many harmful social and health outcomes.

It is often driven by unemployment, poverty, and sudden and unexpected decrease or loss of income.

In response, UChicago Medicine AdventHealth Bolingbrook, located in Will County, coordinates a mobile food pantry once a quarter. "People are super appreciative," said Steve Klaus, manager of volunteer services for UChicago Medicine AdventHealth Bolingbrook and UChicago Medicine AdventHealth GlenOaks. "They really need this and, in some cases, they can't afford to have quality nutritious food for them and their families."

BY ELIZABETH CAMPS





THE MOBILE FOOD PANTRY WAS BORNE OUT OF A STRONG FOCUS ON COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH AT UCHICAGO MEDICINE ADVENTHEALTH BOLINGBROOK. THAT FOCUS IS DEEPLY ROOTED IN THE CONNECTION TEAM MEMBERS HAVE TO LIVING OUT ADVENTHEALTH'S MISSION OF EXTENDING THE HEALING MINISTRY OF CHRIST.

Klaus and the hospital volunteers have organized the distribution so that members of the community can easily come and get what they need. "We have a whole bunch of volunteers from our hospital leadership, volunteers of the hospital and some of the local high school students ready" to give out bags of food," said Klaus.

Klaus' 30-year teaching career allowed him to engage the local high schools and create a pool of student volunteers who can learn about AdventHealth and experience the positive impact of volunteering.

Partnering with the Northern Illinois Food Bank, AdventHealth collects a wide variety of quality food. While the selection varies each time, there is always protein, vegetables, fruits and dry foods. "In November 2022, we received prepackaged

Thanksgiving holiday meals [from the food bank], which were widely distributed."

The mobile food pantry was borne out of a strong focus on community engagement and outreach at UChicago Medicine AdventHealth Bolingbrook. That focus is deeply rooted in the connection team members have to living out AdventHealth's mission of extending the healing ministry of Christ. It goes beyond caring for the physical needs of individuals; the community also sees the hospital as a resource. "The leadership at AdventHealth is really giving of their time and talents," said Klaus, remarking that approximately 90% of the food pantry volunteers are members of the hospital leadership. "We have a good time out there. It's great to have the rewarding feeling and experience of helping people and providing them with things they may need."

While plans are not finalized, there is a desire to expand the mobile food pantry to provide greater access and more food variety to the community. "We want to support our communities in the best way we can," said Klaus. "There may be some logistical challenges, but we will work our way through that."

#### **A MISSION TO HELP IN EVERY STAGE OF LIFE**

At UChicago Medicine AdventHealth GlenOaks, getting connected and engaged with the community is a major priority, particularly with the presence of different faith communities in the area. In an effort to establish key connections, Renante Gomez, chaplain manager at the hospital, started contacting local faith leaders. "We let them know we wanted to partner with them to figure out how we can best serve the community," said Gomez. "We wanted to create a partnership with the interfaith community."

Speaking with faith leaders, Gomez learned that much of what they were already doing was a great resource for them – including the Ministerial Forum, a space for local faith leaders to come together for training, talks and resource sharing. During those moments, they identified the need to learn more about end-of-life palliative care so they could better support families dealing with it. "Sometimes people may have someone in their family circle who is a candidate for palliative care, and they may not know what to do or how to help them," said Gomez.

Gomez contacted James McGrath, a physician at UChicago Medicine AdventHealth with expertise in palliative care, to speak to the group and provide guidance on the best way to minister to those in palliative care and to have the conversations regarding the care of their loved ones.

Gomez has started to see the positive impact in the community, sharing how leaders of all faiths

have started attending the forums. “During a recent meeting, the mayor of Glendale Heights came to support us as well and stayed for the whole meeting,” said Gomez. “I think it’s building bridges to connect with our local leaders. Not only religious leaders but the leaders in the city, so we can partner with them and let them know that our hospital is here to serve them.”

“I THINK IT’S BUILDING BRIDGES TO CONNECT WITH OUR LOCAL LEADERS. NOT ONLY RELIGIOUS LEADERS BUT THE LEADERS IN THE CITY, SO WE CAN PARTNER WITH THEM AND LET THEM KNOW THAT OUR HOSPITAL IS HERE TO SERVE THEM.”



#### A MISSION TO HELP THE BROKEN-HEARTED

Losing a loved one is an experience that few can truly understand. The loss is a particular kind of grief with no linear path to healing, and a journey that is unique to every person. And while there is no singular “right” way to navigate it, receiving support and finding healthy ways to express that grief can be an enormous help to many.

At UChicago Medicine AdventHealth La Grange, a monthly grief support group was created to do just that. “We started this group because we felt that it was really needed, especially during the pandemic,” said Maria Maestre, chaplain at UChicago Medicine AdventHealth La Grange. “Too many people lost loved ones. It was terrible.”

The grief support group is always open to the





“I’VE LOST A LOVED ONE,” MAESTRE SHARES, TALKING ABOUT THE LOSS OF HER HUSBAND. “I UNDERSTAND THE PROCESS OF GRIEVING BECAUSE I EXPERIENCED THAT SAME PROCESS. I SUFFERED JUST LIKE THEM, BUT I AM GROWING AND WITH THE BLESSING OF GOD, I’M ABLE TO HELP OTHERS GROW IN THEIR RECOVERY AND REMEMBER THE LEGACY OF THEIR LOVED ONES.”

community, to patients and to team members who would like to attend. “Sometimes we have five in attendance, sometimes we have one – but they know I am always there for them,” said Maestre.

In each group session, participants openly share what’s on their minds. Every session is different, and Maestre understands each participant will have different needs and will be at a different stage in their recovery journey.

“I’ve lost a loved one,” Maestre shares, talking about the loss of her husband. “I understand the process of grieving because I experienced that same process. I suffered just like them, but I am growing and with the blessing of God, I’m able to help others grow in their recovery and remember the

legacy of their loved ones.”

Crafts are also part of the healing process. Sometimes these crafts help them express their

grief. Other times, the crafts can take on a symbolic meaning. “In the springtime, we organize a craft involving a small planter and some flower seeds,” said Maestre, sharing how they try to emphasize the symbolism of every spring as a new beginning. “We’re able to draw a symbolic connection between a craft and any feelings that may arise as they decorate the planter. And it’s something they can take home with them as a reminder as well.”

Maestre and her chaplaincy team strive to be a support and a resource for the community to help them and meet them where they are with whatever is needed and however they can help.

#### A MISSION TO ANSWER THE CALL

When disaster strikes or a crisis occurs, AdventHealth team members band together to help those in need. Sometimes, this response starts when one team member makes the decision to answer the call. That’s how it happened with Dr. Ben Yerlioglu.

While Yerlioglu has been a team member at UChicago Medicine AdventHealth Hinsdale for the last five years, he is also the president of the Turkish American Medical Professionals association (TUMED) – a non-profit organization that focuses on supporting the Turkish community in the U.S. through mentoring and developing Turkish American students in medicine, providing health care education and other activities.

When a catastrophic earthquake rocked southeast Turkey in February 2023 and caused death and devastation for hundreds of thousands of people, Yerlioglu jumped into action. With his hospital colleagues, TUMED members, local churches and others from the community, they gathered medical supplies, clothes, blankets, tents and donations. “Everyone was so devoted to the cause, and I really appreciated all the support,” said Yerlioglu. “Most of what we have collected has already been sent, but we still have five or six more boxes to send with donations.”

Yerlioglu worked with the Turkish Consulate and other reputable organizations to ensure the donations and financial contributions were distributed to those most in need following the earthquake. “Turkish Airlines even took the packages for free,” he shared.

The experience inspired Yerlioglu, seeing the commitment from his colleagues and the community to come together and make a difference during a time of crisis. He hopes that if another crisis occurs, they will all come together to help once again.

### A MISSION TO BUILD STRENGTH FROM UNITY

*“I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one—I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.” John 17: 22-23 NIV.*

Early in his ministry, Jesus spoke on the importance of coming together for a greater purpose. Healing the sick and bringing hope to a world in need would require much effort. Knowing this, He prayed that His disciples would be unified, so that His love and healing words would draw others to Him.

Five decades ago, leaders from the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Southern Union, along with hospital executives throughout the region, were inspired to unite individual hospitals to strengthen the impact of mission in their communities.

On Feb. 15, 1973, leaders gathered in the assembly room of what was then Florida Hospital in Orlando (now AdventHealth Orlando) and created a new corporation: Southern Adventist Health and Hospital Systems Inc. Together, the new system — which included hospitals that had already been present in various communities throughout the Southern Union territory for decades — would continue the rich legacy of health and healing that started with the pioneers of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. No longer nine separate entities, the unified group would seek to touch more lives and extend care more effectively in the future.

Half a century later, this strategic vision has been realized through the tremendous work carried out in more than 50 hospitals throughout the AdventHealth system and hundreds of primary care facilities. Each hospital continues to push forward to find new and innovative ways to care for its communities.

Today, AdventHealth serves more than 6.7 million patients each year in nine states — Florida,

Georgia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Illinois, Wisconsin, Colorado, Texas and Kansas — as well as our international health partnerships in 14 locations to date. Over the decades, its humble beginnings gave way to a team of more than 80,000 dedicated individuals providing Christ-like, compassionate, whole-person care each day. While much has changed in five decades, AdventHealth’s mission remains a key element of what makes AdventHealth unique.

Driven by this mission, AdventHealth continues to leave a legacy of high-quality, holistic care that is recognized by patients, families and external organizations alike. Recently, AdventHealth was recognized by national hospital rating agencies for its high-quality care. The Emerald Award, given by The Leapfrog Group to just one organization in the U.S, recognized AdventHealth for Outstanding Achievement by a Health Care System. In addition, U.S. News and World Report ranked AdventHealth facilities across the country as some of the best in their respective communities.

What started as a dream half a century ago to create healthier communities has become a unifying force for good, bringing hope and Christ-centered care to millions of people. Today, AdventHealth remains on mission: focused on serving communities through excellent care, addressing their needs and bringing whole-person healing to people.

### STAYING UNITED ON MISSION

AdventHealth’s mission and the work it takes to carry it out is at the heart of the organization — each day and in every interaction. This mission, fueled by love, care and compassion, is lived out through team members who look at the organization’s mission and say “yes, this is what I want to do every day.”

AdventHealth team members demonstrate the heartbeat of the organization through their actions, going beyond medical needs and providing care, so that everyone — whether a team member, a client, a patient or a member of the community (locally or globally) — feels whole.

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**Elizabeth Camps** is senior communications specialist at AdventHealth.



# MANY REASONS, One Mission

**THREE INDIVIDUALS SHARE THE UNIQUE “WHY” BEHIND WHAT BROUGHT THEM ALL TO ADVENTHEALTH**

**O**ne of the most important things that separates a faith-based health care system from other systems is just that – faith. At UChicago Medicine AdventHealth, team members feel connected to the organization’s mission of extending the healing ministry of Christ. They sense the presence of God in their work, and that lifts them up and gives them a greater purpose. And through their God-given gifts, they each bring something unique to the table as they live out AdventHealth’s mission in their individual roles.

**BY JULIE BUSCH**



# Esther Jarrette

## A HALF CENTURY OF SERVICE

On May 22, Esther Jarrette, a lifetime member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, celebrated 50 years of service with AdventHealth's Great Lakes Region. She is currently the project coordinator for Mission and Ministry, under the leadership of Mark Bondarenko, executive director of Mission Integration for the UChicago Medicine AdventHealth. In addition, her husband, Michael, has been a team member at UChicago Medicine AdventHealth Hinsdale for 35 years.

Jarrette came from Trinidad & Tobago, where her father, E. F. de Gannes, was a Seventh-day Adventist minister and publishing director for the South Caribbean Conference. "My choosing to live a life in service to God and to be attuned to following the promptings of the Holy Spirit in all aspects of life can be attributed to the foundation laid and example set by my father," she said. "Daddy was unwavering in his commitment to his family and to doing the Lord's work."

After earning an associate degree in Trinidad, Jarrette came to Berrien Springs,

Michigan, where she earned her bachelor's and master's degrees from Andrews University. She had planned to return to Trinidad after completing her undergraduate studies, she said, "but God intervened with a phone call from the employment director at the hospital, offering me a job as a secretary in the pathology department." At the time, UChicago Medicine AdventHealth Hinsdale was called Adventist Hinsdale Hospital.

God continued to guide her career within the health system, Jarrette said. Early in her employment, her visa was about to expire, and her application for a work permit had been rejected three times. The employment director at Hinsdale called her into his office, where they knelt together and prayed for a solution.

"Less than a month later, I received my work permit," she said. "To me, that experience was a sign from God that He had a plan for me here at Hinsdale."

She held other positions within the system, including 26 years as executive assistant to six vice presidents of finance for AdventHealth in

the Great Lakes Region. In 2004, the region's then-President & CEO Ernie Sadau told her about an open position in Mission and Ministry. "I told him I knew nothing about that department and that moving from finance into that role sounded terrifying," Jarrette said. But she took the job, and it has given her a greater opportunity to serve the system and its mission.

Esther and Michael, who met in Trinidad, married in 1987 and have two grown sons, Rommel and Larnelle. The couple enjoys nature, travel, time with family and friends, and good food.

Jarrette sees her long career as a way in which to live out God's plan for her, and she believes that she has been blessed to be able to follow that plan for five decades.

"Throughout my life's work experiences, God has presented me with opportunities that I would have never found on my own," she said. "I love that in our work we can embrace opportunities that give us the privilege of extending the healing ministry of Christ."



# Diana Pearce

## ADDRESSING BURNOUT IN NEW NURSES



Diana Pearce is coordinator of the New Graduate RN Residency Program for UChicago Medicine AdventHealth Hinsdale, and for her final project in her Doctor of Nursing practice at Northern Illinois University, she wanted to do something that focused on those new nurses.

“I considered different clinical ideas, but none of them really worked for me because my passion is with the new graduate nurses,” Pearce said. “So, I prayed, and God told me, ‘No, you have to do something about the nurses and why they are feeling so burned out.’” Burnout has always been a problem in health care, but the pandemic made the problem worse and even affected nurses who are relatively new to the job.

As Pearce looked at ways to design her project, she was increasingly drawn to her own faith. “I really just went back to who we are as a faith-based organization that can support people through all their different emotions, and physical and behavioral feelings,” she said.

She recalled the AdventHealth concept of

CREATION Life, a Bible-based plan for building a life based on Choice, Rest, Environment, Activity, Trust, Interpersonal relationships, Outlook and Nutrition. She chose to focus on Outlook. “Studies have shown that a positive outlook can increase your blood flow and help you fight off illnesses better, and it has been proven to help prevent burnout,” she said.

In designing her project, she looked for “a valid and reliable intervention that could increase positive outlook.” She landed on the “three good things” idea, which asks people to reflect daily on three good things that are going on in their lives. “Studies show that if people do that for as few as seven days, it becomes a habit and it might decrease their burnout,” Pearce said.

Pearce started with a group of 19 nurses. She gave each of them a questionnaire that measures the level of burnout based on three criteria: emotional exhaustion, feeling disconnected with others and feeling a lack of personal accomplishment. She asked the participants to think of three good things every day for 15 days,

at which time she asked them to retake the questionnaire.

The results among the 10 nurses who completed the study showed a decrease in emotional exhaustion. “They were able to take their feelings of the day-to-day stresses and put those aside to focus on the good things that were happening as well,” she said. “These nurses and their bosses are telling me that the nurses are feeling more positive and engaged, which has positively impacted their work.”

Pearce feels strongly that her faith influenced her work with this study and that it influences her work with the new grads.

“I would not have come to this project at all if it were not for my faith in God,” she said. “There are always challenges in hospital-based nursing. But if we remember to go back to God and put our challenges in Him, then it gets easier.”



# Michael Kindom

## YOUNG CHAPLAIN FOUND CHALLENGES, A HOME AT HOSPITAL

When Michael Kindom, hospital chaplain manager at UChicago Medicine AdventHealth Hinsdale, graduated from seminary at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan, he was uncertain how he wanted to practice his vocation. He was looking for pastoral work, but a visit with an old friend set his life on a different course.

His friend, who was a retired chaplain, suggested that Kindom consider chaplaincy work instead. He decided to explore it, and his friend put him in touch with a senior chaplain at Adventist Health in Glendale, California. He started his chaplaincy training at Los Angeles County Hospital.

“It was challenging, but it was meaningful and valuable work,” Kindom said. “I never looked back.”

After he completed his year of chaplaincy training, he was hired as a chaplain at a small hospice in Los Angeles. He worked there from 2018 to 2020. “That was the first time I was really around the actual moments of death, and I think it was very valuable preparation for the pandemic,” he said.

In October 2019, about a week after he and his wife had a baby girl, he received a call from

Hinsdale asking if he would consider a job as a chaplain there. He was interested, and the hiring process was very quick. By January, he and his family were on a plane from sunny California to Chicago, Illinois.

“The decision was fast, the move was fast, and we had to adjust very quickly,” Kindom said.

And his adjustments were just beginning. A few months after he started, the COVID-19 pandemic hit. His wife and daughter were isolating in their home, and they had virtually no contact with anyone. He was going to work every day, dealing with sickness and death and at the same time worried about bringing the disease home to his family.

Like many people in healthcare, he was exhausted, stressed and unsure what to do in the situation. Patients were dying, and everyone was worried about what was happening.

“During that time, I really asked myself: What about the mission has changed? And the answer was: Nothing,” he said. “For all of history, chaplains have ministered to people through all kinds of sicknesses and other challenges. I had to look back on the legacy of chaplaincy and gain strength from that.”

Kindom also gained strength from knowing he was part of a health care organization that reflected his own beliefs.

“Working at an Adventist, faith-based hospital has promoted and fostered my expression of my faith. It has helped me to express my faith more freely in all its various facets,” he said. “I truly believe that it has empowered me to be more pastoral than I probably could otherwise be.”

He has also realized that being a chaplain is about more than simply having faith. It is about being there for people in their times of need.

“My favorite Bible verse is Matthew 25:40: ‘I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.’” Kindom said. The pandemic was a time of great service to God’s people. But even as the pandemic has eased, Kindom still finds inspiration in that verse.

“Chaplaincy is a ministry of presence,” he said.

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**Julie Busch** is associate vice president, marketing and communications at UChicago Medicine AdventHealth.



# Upgraded Cancer Infusion Center Has New Site



**INFUSION THERAPY CAN BE A DIFFICULT PART OF A PATIENT'S JOURNEY IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CANCER AND OTHER DISEASES. A NEW LOCATION OF THE UCHICAGO MEDICINE ADVENTHEALTH BOLINGBROOK CANCER INFUSION CENTER IS DESIGNED TO IMPROVE THE PATIENTS' EXPERIENCE AS THEY ENGAGE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CANCER.**

The hospital relocated the center in February to a medical office building adjacent to the hospital to provide a more convenient and enhanced experience for patients. A special ribbon-cutting dedication was held Feb. 9 at the new facility, which opened its doors for patients on Feb. 13.

The relocated center has easy access and ample parking to make it more convenient for patients. It also has several design changes implemented to improve the experience of patients who receive treatment there.

"Our beautiful new facility was designed with the patient in mind. We've created an environment of tranquility," said Christine M. Gonzalez, clinical manager of the Cancer Infusion Center. "We understand that the journey our patients are navigating can be challenging, so our goal is to make them feel cared for and at peace."

The updates and improvements in the new infusion center were intentionally patient-focused. The center now features a warm, inviting atmosphere with floor-to-ceiling windows and spacious views of the outdoors to provide relaxing views for patients undergoing treatment. There are five exam rooms, one procedure room and 13 infusion bays, each equipped with a comfortable recliner and television in a semi-private setting. Snacks and beverages are provided to patients from the nutrition area. The on-site infusion pharmacy offers exclusive support to patients. Patients also have access to oncology supportive

services, including nurse navigation, nutrition counseling and pastoral care.

Early reviews for the new location have been very positive, with patients commenting on how beautiful the new space is, with all the natural light coming through. Patients are enjoying the updates, which makes it feel like their own private suite.

Team members who work with patients in the new center also appreciate their new environment and the way it supports and enhances their work with patients. It helps to

further the health system's deep commitment to providing care for the whole person and to heal their body as well as their mind and spirit.

"While the new center is beautiful in exterior, what makes it a true healing environment is our team members' dedication and compassion for our patients," said Eun Lee, regional director of oncology and pharmacy infusion. "We hope to expand our wholistic service to the members of the community in their journey to wholeness."

Gonzalez agreed, adding, "It's our honor to serve our community and extend Christ's healing ministry to those in this environment." ■

*Julie Busch is associate vice president, marketing and communications at UChicago Medicine AdventHealth.*



▲ (Left to right) Thor Thordarson, president and CEO, UChicago Medicine AdventHealth in the Great Lakes Region; Sun Lee-Such, regional vice president of ancillary and oncology services, UChicago Medicine AdventHealth in the Great Lakes Region; Herb Buchanan, president and CEO, UChicago Medicine AdventHealth Bolingbrook; Mary Alexander-Basta, mayor of The Village of Bolingbrook, attend the grand opening of the new cancer infusion site on Feb. 9, 2023.

# Andreasen Center for Wellness: Serving the Community Creatively

FOR MANY IN THE BERRIEN SPRINGS COMMUNITY, ANDREWS UNIVERSITY MIGHT AS WELL BE MILES AWAY. IT'S NEATLY TUCKED TO ONE SIDE OF TOWN, AND SOME RESIDENTS GO THEIR WHOLE LIVES WITHOUT EVER SETTING FOOT ON CAMPUS, BUT DOES THIS MATTER?

While most Adventist colleges and universities are named for their location, Andrews University proudly carries on the memory of J.N. Andrews, the denomination's first official missionary to serve outside North America. His legacy is honored each year when student missionaries from Andrews head far and wide to serve, and as future Andrews graduates prepare for their worldwide endeavors. But with this outward focus, it is sometimes easy to forget the needs of the local community. This is why the Andreasen Center for Wellness plays such a vital role in furthering Andrews' mission of sharing Jesus.

When it opened in fall 2019, the Andreasen Center became the premier fitness facility in the area. Members enjoy laps in the saltwater pool, relaxing in the steam bath, sunlit walks on the indoor track, developing community in a group fitness class, and so much more. Friendships are formed, discipline is developed and personal health is improved, in line with the Adventist health message. But that's not all.

The Andreasen Center provides a bridge to over 1,200 members who are not students or employees of Andrews University,

enabling the campus to serve the community creatively. In April alone, members had the opportunity to attend a free self-defense class, and new and soon-to-be moms enjoyed a special brunch while learning how to improve nutrition for themselves and their growing families.

In addition, the Andreasen Center helps reveal other unique campus features to the community. Recently, a long-time resident of Berrien Springs explained how the Andreasen Center let her discover the beauty of Andrews' grounds for the first time. "I love walking around Andrews now," she gushed. "I had no idea this was all here!" The center hosted a 5K fun run in conjunction with a local festival, replicating this resident's experience for many others.

While the Andreasen Center draws people in, its staff also loves going out to meet neighbors where they are. Andreasen Center team members give away free memberships at various community events and fundraisers, serve in the Chamber of Commerce and local Rotary Club, and try to provide meaningful services where needed. For example, the Senior Winter Walking Pass allows those 65 and up to use the



Peter Tumangday

▲ The Andreasen Center for Wellness

Andreasen Center's indoor track for free during the winter months.

Rachel Keele, director of University Wellness and manager of the Andreasen Center for Wellness, says, "Whenever someone asks me about my favorite part of the job, I tell them with confidence that it's serving my community. And when the stresses of work weigh me down, I think of Matthew 5:16, 'Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in Heaven.'" ■

Rachel Keele is director of University Wellness, manager of the Andreasen Center for Wellness.

**Let your light  
shine before  
others, that  
they may see  
your good deeds  
and glorify  
your Father  
in Heaven.**

Matthew 5:16





# Peterson-Warren Academy Receives \$100,000 Donation

**A LAKE REGION CONFERENCE SCHOOL IN INKSTER, MICHIGAN, WAS THE GRATEFUL RECIPIENT OF A GENEROUS DONATION. THE ESTATE OF ELODIA JONES, A LONG-TIME SUPPORTER OF ADVENTIST CHRISTIAN EDUCATION, BEQUEATHED \$100,000 TO PETERSON-WARREN ACADEMY.**

Being a careful steward of God’s blessings, Jones, a former member of Bethel Church in Lansing, Michigan, defined how the money is to be used: for library enhancements, improvements to the parking lot, and computer lab enhancements.

PWA principal Lynnette Jefferson was ecstatic to hear the news of this generous gift. “God continues to bless PWA right when we need it,” she said. The funds came just as they were looking at options for upgrading their computer lab. “Our daily virtual collaboration with other schools in the conference for team teaching, as well as our virtual

Spanish class, necessitates a good, strong computer lab as well as solid internet connections. These funds will help ensure that we have all of that and then some.” She added, “We serve a mighty God who continues to take care of His children.”

### Faithful Steward

Elodia Jones, who died in May 2020, has a long history of supporting and supervising schools. She was born the third of 13 children on a small farm in Kansas, according to Michael Terrell, building chair of the PWA school board, quoting family sources. Later,



▲ Elodia Jones is pictured in 2018 at her 90th birthday party with Michael Terrell, building chairman of Peterson-Warren Academy.

her family moved to a 40-acre farm in Holton, Michigan, where she was carefully nurtured in Christian principles.

Armed with a bachelor’s degree in business administration and a master’s degree in counseling from Eastern Michigan University, her obituary stated that she worked as an education consultant at the Michigan Department of Education. She supervised over 311 schools for the state of Michigan and ended her career in private practice education consulting.

After retirement, Jones went on to invest in real estate by purchasing, renovating and selling properties, and traveling all over the world. She visited over five continents and she left her mark in many places by conducting extensive missionary work. This would include building dormitories, libraries, and distributing food, clothing, toiletries, and medical supplies she had collected in the U.S.

Therefore, it is no surprise that one who gave freely in service and finances would so generously bless a school in her local conference. ■



▲ On Oct. 31, 2022, Elodia Jones’ sister, Barbara Wilson of the Ypsilanti Church, presented the check to Peterson-Warren Academy Principal Lynette Jefferson. Pictured left to right: Lake Region President Garth Gabriel, Peterson-Warren building chair Michael Terrell, Principal Jefferson, Lake Region Education Superintendent Deidre Garnett, Elodia Jones’ daughter Elodia Mai Perry, Wilson, and one of the trustees of Jones’ estate and close friend of Jones, Gregory Hampton.

Jacqueline Blake

**Jacqueline Blake** is the education leader for the Sharon Inkster Church and an independent educational consultant in Michigan.



Arisha Arvat

▲ Carlene Rodgers and her family traveled from North Carolina to participate in the mission trip to help reach people in Detroit with the three angels' messages.



Faith LaCelle

▲ During the mission trip, a daily children's program helped accommodate the younger volunteers, who also spent time going door-to-door.

# Massive "Great Controversy" Distribution in Michigan Leads to More Than 430 Bible Study Requests

**DURING A FOUR-DAY STREAMS OF LIGHT INTERNATIONAL (SOLI) MISSION TRIP IN THE DETROIT METRO AREA, PARTNERING CHURCH ENTITIES AND VOLUNTEERS WITNESSED THE REMARKABLE.**

More than 100 volunteers went door-to-door to distribute 29,000 copies of "The Great Controversy," "Thrive" magazine, and invitational flyers to the Detroit neighborhoods surrounding five churches from April 11-15. The door-to-door effort involving the Warren, Troy, Cherry Hill, Detroit Northwest and Farmington churches resulted in more than 430 Bible study contacts.

"I was greatly impacted by how many people are out there desperately in need for God's people to go out and reach them," said Erik Shankles, a volunteer from Tennessee, on Sabbath morning during the program live-streamed from the SOLI Facebook and YouTube channels. "We should not put our

lamp under a basket. We need to get out there among the people."

Streams of Light International, organizer of the mission trip and a supporting ministry of the Adventist Church, has the goal of placing a copy of "The Great Controversy" in every home in North America by 2026.

The mission trip came about after SOLI presented a proposal to the Michigan Conference to work together on a large-scale literature evangelism project. The proposal included plans for both a localized mission trip in the Detroit area and also conference-wide participation from churches around the state to go door-to-door in their communities on Sabbath, April 15. Giancarlo

de Miranda, lead pastor of the Warren church, learned of the proposed project and brought it to the church board, who then voted to host the mission trip at their church.

"It is a privilege to host Streams of Light and to partner with them in this mission project," Miranda told participants during their first morning devotional time together. "We're thrilled that you're here to help us to place the three angels' messages in people's homes."

Through the distribution of "The Great Controversy" door-to-door, participating members received training and experience, and Warren community members received books, opportunity for prayer and Bible studies, and an invitation to the church's upcoming relationship seminar—all of which help advance their mission to grow disciples, share hope, and serve their community.

Men, women, and children of all ages traveled from across the U.S. and Canada to join the mission trip. A daily children's program helped accommodate the younger volunteers, who also spent time going door to door.

SOLI's director of evangelism, Johnny Henderson, shares how in the first two days, SOLI set goals for Bible study contacts. Wednesday's goal was 35, and volunteers returned with 37. Thursday's goal was 50, and volunteers returned with 119. On Friday, no limit was set, and volunteers returned with 91. On Sabbath, again no limit was set,



Arisha Arvat

▲ Jesús Bravo, van driver and Streams of Light International team member, looks at a map with one of his teams of volunteers as they prepare to go door-to-door.



and 191 Bible study contacts were collected. In total, volunteers collected more than 430 Bible-study contacts in just four days.

“What a joy to see so many of our members and friends from other states working side-by-side ministering to our Detroit communities,” said Jim Micheff, president of the Michigan Conference, who joined the panel discussion on Sabbath morning at the Warren church as well as the afternoon

outreach. “What an inspiration and blessing Streams of Light was to our conference as they partnered with us to organize and direct this wonderful Detroit mission trip!”

Learn more about the work of Streams of Light International at [www.streamsoflight.net](http://www.streamsoflight.net). ■

Faith LaCelle is a freelance writer.



▲ Giancarlo de Miranda, lead pastor of the Warren church (left), and Jorge Neketela, pastor of the Farmington and Cherry Hill churches, assist with loading the vans with boxes of books on Thursday morning of the Streams of Light International Michigan Mission Trip.



# Camps Akita and Au Sable on List of America’s Best Summer Camps

**TWO CAMPS IN THE LAKE UNION WERE NAMED TO NEWSWEEK MAGAZINE’S LIST OF THE BEST SUMMER CAMPS IN THE U.S. CAMP AKITA, OPERATED BY ILLINOIS CONFERENCE, AND CAMP AU SABLE, RUN BY MICHIGAN CONFERENCE, WERE AMONG THE 500 CAMPS SELECTED AS TOP SUMMER CAMPS IN 2023 BASED ON SOCIAL MEDIA REVIEWS AND A COMPREHENSIVE SURVEY OF 15,000 PARENTS.**

Newsweek partnered with Plant-A Insights Group to help parents navigate the daunting task of vetting and selecting among the 12,000 summer camps across the U.S.

Illinois President John Gryns says he is excited for the team, which includes former youth director Michael Campos, his assistant Stacey DePluzer, and camp director Roger Henderson.

“I am most proud of their balanced, heartfelt, mission-minded, child-friendly pursuit of the mission to bring Jesus into every facet of the camp. And they do so with such sustained passion and creativity. They are truly Jesus with shorts and sweat and love with those children and the families. I see their energy and relentless nature and they never stop. I can trust them because I trust the God they serve, and I trust their heart.”

Camp Au Sable’s director and manager, Ken Micheff, responded that he praises God for any good thing. Last summer, 264 campers indicated a desire to give their hearts to Jesus. “This is what we’re about—providing an opportunity for retreats and people giving their hearts to God. We want people to know that God loves you and what a journey that can be if you’re on that journey with Him.”

Three other Adventist camps made the list: MiVoden Camp and Retreat Center in Idaho, Lone Star Camp in Texas, and Sunset Lake Camp in Washington state. ■

Debbie Michel is the Lake Union Herald editor and Lake Union Conference communication director.



▲ The Ukrainian Seventh-day Adventist Church of Chicago met for their first formal worship service.

# In Chicago, Ukrainian Refugees Find Hope

**AT 5 A.M. ON FEB. 24, 2022, VITALII HANULICH AWOKE IN HIS HOMETOWN OF BUCHA, UKRAINE, TO MISSILE EXPLOSIONS AND HIS PHONE VIBRATING WITH INCOMING MESSAGES FROM FRIENDS AND FAMILY. THAT WAS WHEN HE KNEW THE WAR HAD BEGUN.**

That day will go down in history as the day Russia invaded Ukraine, creating a critical boiling point in an already destructive conflict that had been escalating since 2014. As a result, Europe faced the largest refugee crisis since World War II.

Nearly 80,000 Ukrainian refugees have found asylum in Chicagoland, marking the beginning of a new chapter in their lives. Among that number are dedicated Seventh-day Adventists like Hanulich, eager to find active community and peaceful refuge in one of Chicago's Adventist churches.

The Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church has been a mainstay in Park Ridge, Illinois, for many years, providing a space of worship and fellowship. The refugee crisis within Chicago has become a new mission field, doubling the church's attendance and prompting a new and exciting offshoot to develop.

The congregants, many of whom are Ukrainian, rejoiced at the opportunity to extend aid to the families and individuals in need of support and community. Members took in families, offered the use of their cars, and aided in employment. According to Pastor Russ Drumi, "Members have helped cosign for apartments; I've personally co-signed for quite a few apartments. [Congregants] have placed their names on accounts for electricity, water and car bills. You see, the refugees had to leave everything, their businesses, their homes; they have no credit history."

## Help from outside the church

Carolyn Schneider, who attends Lombard Seventh-day Adventist Church and is an active member of her local Rotary Club, heard about the influx of refugees attending the church from a Lake Union Herald broadcast

and reached out to Pastor Drumi. Within weeks, she had donated 150 pounds of dried beans to the church and connected with other members of her Rotary Club.

Though the club is a non-political organization, thus preventing organizational donations to the church, individual members were quick to contribute, partnering with Exodus World Services to create Welcome to America kits consisting of kitchenware, toothpaste, toothbrushes, toolkits and other necessities.

This is only a small portion of the aid extended by Schneider, who is adamant about following Christ's example of practical outreach through the Rotary Club and other organizations. This outreach is more than simple acts of kindness; it is an active investment in those whose lives have been forever altered by war. Such Christian discipleship has cushioned the transition of Ukrainian citizens to refugees to new members.

Far from passive recipients, the refugees were quick to step into the fold, becoming active participants. To date, 70 to 80 refugees have joined the church with two new families arriving nearly every week.

Hanulich was one of the refugees who was ready and willing to contribute. He is currently one of the pastors of the church and an ADRA project manager with the United Nations, helping with the monthly distribution of nearly nine million pounds of food to Ukraine. He also plans to make use of his psychology degree, partnering with other







▲ Illinois Conference President John Gry (second from right) meets with Pastor Russ Drumi (right), Vitalii Hanulich (third from left), and other members of the Ukrainian Seventh-day Adventist Church.



▲ The Adventurer Club of the Ukrainian Seventh-day Adventist Church includes many refugee families and their children.

members to offer group therapy for those suffering from PTSD.

The new members have stepped up as music leaders, developing Pathfinder groups, Bible studies, Friday union meetings, picnics, potlucks, and numerous events for all to enjoy. The result has been a thriving church that has grown beyond its initial origins.

### New church name and a new church plant

Such active engagement was found on the other side of hesitation. The hesitation stemmed from the church's former name, Hope Russian Seventh-day Adventist Church. The original name reminded refugees of their homeland's aggressor. For individuals fleeing a traumatic war, any association with Russia

was a triggering experience, causing initial weariness. As a result, the church was renamed Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church.

This shift highlights a core factor in the decision to plant a new church. The reason for a new church is founded in language. Though all are Ukrainian citizens, many of the refugees are a mixture of different nationalities, some who speak Russian as their first language, some who have only ever spoken Ukrainian, and others who have a combined understanding of both. The result is a linguistic barrier the church must navigate. According to Drumi, "it's still very personal and sensitive, but the divide is linguistic, not spiritual."

Services now are a mixture of both Russian and Ukrainian. The goal of the new church

plant is to be an independent extension of the Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church, allowing for services and events to be held in Ukrainian. The Illinois Conference has supported the church plant both spiritually and financially, providing funding as well as aiding in the search for a new church property to rent and a part-time pastor.

Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church is a community made up of Ukrainian refugees. However, the most recent wave has created two classifications. The first group of refugees is Ukrainians who came to the U.S. in previous decades and have had years to assimilate. The newer group of refugees have fled war and the devastation of their homeland, losing family, friends, and community in the destruction.

Though the circumstances of their relocation are different, both groups are faithful believers ready to commit to their church. Pastors Drumi and Hanulich are eager to confirm that the soon-to-be two churches will remain a unified community, continuing their partnership in church events and fervent outreach to new refugees.

The purpose of the new church plant is to provide options for refugees who are eager to be incorporated into a church community that speaks their first language, fostering a deeper sense of belonging and allowing those leaving a war-torn homeland to find a port in a storm. "Many of us lost everything in the Motherland, but received huge support from other countries like the U.S.A. or European countries like Poland, Germany, etc.," Hanulich said. "It is also one of the main achievements – uniting many nations around good things, it gives us a second chance for a new start, a chance to get our own small personal victories."

In the end, no matter their native tongue, both churches will continue to be fluent in the language of heaven. ■

Nicole Dominguez is a Chicago-based freelance writer.

# Pathfinder Teams Make the Lake Union Proud

**SIXTEEN LAKE UNION PATHFINDERS TESTED THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF THE BOOK OF JOHN AT THE NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION PATHFINDER BIBLE EXPERIENCE FINALS HELD IN TAMPA, FLORIDA, ON APRIL 22. TWELVE TEAMS FROM ILLINOIS, INDIANA, LAKE REGION AND MICHIGAN RECEIVED FIRST PLACE, AND THE REMAINDER WERE A CLOSE SECOND.**

The PBE season started with area testing and teams scoring 90% or higher of the highest score at their testing site make 1st place and are invited to go on to the next level, which are

Conference, Union, and ultimately Division. At the union level, 33 teams of Pathfinders memorized and reflected on Bible chapters, as well as the Bible Commentary. Each team is composed of six members.

Lake Union Club Ministries Coordinator Craig Harris remarked that he's always proud of the way the Lake Union pathfinders represent the union. "From our union camporees, the international camporees and Pathfinder Bible Experience events, I've noticed that our Lake Union Pathfinders truly demonstrate the last part of the pathfinder pledge: I will be a Servant of God and a friend to man."

Herald correspondent Eric Herve Jean-Baptiste was in Tampa and captured the excitement of our Pathfinders. Those social media stories were streamed on Friday night and throughout Saturday. He said, "I can't fully describe how great it is to see young Pathfinders lives changed forever because they choose to study and memorize God's Word." ■

Below are the conference clubs and their rankings:

## Illinois

Fairmont City Cahokians – 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Fox Valley Maranatha (Team B) – 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Hinsdale Fil-Am Challengers (Faith Fighters) – 2<sup>nd</sup>

## Indiana

Angola Hawks – 1<sup>st</sup>  
Indianapolis Central Hispanic Falcons – 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Cicero Cherokees (The Scribes) - 1<sup>st</sup>

## Lake Region

Shiloh Trailblazers – 1<sup>st</sup>

## Michigan

Ann Arbor Anchors (Bread of Life) – 1<sup>st</sup>  
Ann Arbor Anchors (Living Water) – 1<sup>st</sup>  
East Lansing University and Lansing Spanish E.L.L.S. – 1<sup>st</sup>  
Eau Claire Critters – 1<sup>st</sup>  
Lansing Capitals (The Nazarenes) – 1<sup>st</sup>  
Lansing Capitals (The Good Samaritans) – 1<sup>st</sup>  
Stevensville Challengers (Baaa) – 1<sup>st</sup>  
Stevensville Challengers (Sheep Gate) – 1<sup>st</sup>  
Stevensville Challengers (Sheepfold) – 1<sup>st</sup>

► **Top to bottom:** One of the Stevensville Clubs receive their first place certificate; Shiloh Club pose for a selfie with Lake Region Pathfinder Director Eric Herve Jean-Baptiste; Stevensville members celebrate; East Lansing University and Lansing Spanish E.L.L.S. pause for a photo opportunity.





# Spring ASI Meetings Spotlight Mental Health

ASI LAKE UNION SPRING FELLOWSHIP WAS HELD APRIL 28-29 AT TINLEY PARK CONVENTION CENTER, ILLINOIS WITH KEYNOTE SPEAKER DR. NEIL NEDLEY, SEMINAR PRESENTER MAYDIS SKEETE, AND OTHERS FOCUSING ON THE THEME, "SHARPEN THE WEDGE: THRIVING IN A POST-PANDEMIC WORLD, GUILT-FREE SELF CARE, AND MORE."

More than \$15,000 was raised over the weekend for three major ministries: Advocates for Southeast Asians and the Persecuted (ASAP) ministry obtained \$6,000 to help Karen refugees in Wisconsin; FARM STEW, whose mission is to improve the health and well-being of poor families and vulnerable people by equipping them with practical life skills, received \$5,000 toward Bible workers in Zambia; and Weimar Institute, founded to impart a knowledge of God to its students, secured \$4,000 to replace ten windows in a facility on its campus.

ASI, Adventist-laymen's Services & Industries, is a membership-based organization of Seventh-day Adventist laypeople who are enthusiastic about actively participating in the church's worldwide mission: to spread the gospel of Christ to the world. This unique and diverse group of members ranges from business owners to individual professionals to supporting ministries.

## New ASI Lake Union leadership introduced

This year also marked a turn of leadership. The newly elected officers to serve for the term 2023 – 2025 are:

**President:** Gianluca Bacchiocchi is an international finance attorney and a partner with Latham & Watkins LLP based out of the New York office.

**General Vice President:** Lisa Isensee is a commissioned pastor, who has pastored, and church planted for many years. Isensee currently serves as the Mission Advancement Officer for ASAP Ministries.

### Vice President of Communication:

Debbie Young is an oncological nurse navigator based in Ypsilanti, Michigan. She and her husband founded a media ministry called Quiet Moment Radio.

**Vice President of Evangelism:** Michael Clendenning is a full-time residential and commercial real estate broker and member of the REMAX International Hall of Fame.

**Vice President of Finance:** Tom Morrissy is a long-time financial advisor, and railroad trainman. In addition, Morrissy is an elder and Sabbath school teacher at the Downers Grove church in Illinois.

**Vice President of Membership:** Trudi Starlin works with fourth-generation family electrical contractor business and is an advocate for refugees.

**Executive Secretary:** Carmelo Mercado is the general vice president for the Lake Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

"It's been an amazing year. I hope everyone leaves here not thinking the same about health. Our goal is to be as attractive as our message. That is the reason for the theme this year," said newly elected ASI Lake Union President Gianluca Bacchiocchi as he thanked guest speaker Dr. Neil Nedley for the health messages shared over the weekend.

In addition, ASI Lake Union had a unique initiative to attract young families by setting aside a designated space for children's programming. This segment was organized by newly elected General Vice President Pastor Lisa Isensee, who shared that they had a successful meeting with 16 children who joined the program. In addition, the children shared a spot in the Saturday evening program, where they performed a puppet show that talked about getting involved in missions. When asked what Isensee looks forward to for the future of ASI Lake Union, she enthusiastically replied, "I want to see more young families at ASI Lake Union. I want to see a new generation of young people who love and serve the Lord." ■

To see more photos, visit <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjABQ2M> or scan the QR code below.

Felicia Tonga is the Lake Union assistant director of communication.



▲ The new ASI Lake Union leadership is Gianluca Bacchiocchi, president; Tom Morrissy, vice president of finance; Lisa Isensee, general vice president; Debbie Young, vice president of communication; Michael Clendenning, vice president of evangelism. Not pictured, Trudi Starlin, vice president of membership, and Carmelo Mercado, executive secretary.

# National Geographic Explorer Returns from Research in Brazil

**DANIEL GONZALEZ-SOCOLOSKE, PROFESSOR OF BIOLOGY AT ANDREWS UNIVERSITY, RECENTLY COMPLETED AN EXTENDED RESEARCH TRIP TO THE AMAZON BASIN OF BRAZIL, WHERE HE STUDIED ALTERNATIVE DETECTION TECHNIQUES FOR AMAZONIAN MANATEES.**



Courtesy of Daniel Gonzalez-Socoloske

▲ Daniel Gonzalez-Socoloske recovers a manatee skull with the aid of local hunters in the Amanã Sustainable Development Reserve, state of Amazonas, Brazil.

Gonzalez-Socoloske, who specializes in mammal ecology and conservation, spent five months at several locations along the Amazon, analyzing species interactions and participating in preservation efforts.

“I’m specifically interested in how species are adapted to the various environments that they live in and how they modify those adaptations when there are human induced changes to those environments,” he said. “One of the principal aspects of understanding species ecology is to know where they are and how many there are. Some of these basic questions are really challenging with certain species. Manatees can be very cryptic, particularly Amazonian manatees, where their habitat is almost entirely dark water. This makes studying them really, really difficult.”

In 2020, Gonzalez-Socoloske—was awarded a Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program award for his research project, “Can sonar technology aid in the detection and monitoring of the Vulnerable Amazonian manatee?” In 2022, he became a National Geographic Scholar, receiving a grant to fund the updated project, “Surveying Sirenians with Sonar: Using modern technology and traditional knowledge to count Amazonian manatees.” He said, “It was a huge honor. They’re both related to my sabbatical period,

where I was able to go to Brazil and spend an extended period of time working on this specific project.”

He traveled to the research location in May 2022, where he met and collaborated with several other researchers, including Miriam Marmontel, specialist in Brazilian aquatic mammals; Gordon Hastie, principal research fellow at the University of St. Andrews, Scotland; and Jason Gulley, geologist at South Florida University and professional freelance photographer. Over the span of his stay, he also incorporated local hunters onto the team as an alternative manatee detection form.

In past research projects, Gonzalez-Socoloske has experimented with side-scan sonar for manatee detection, but this new project utilized a new kind of device: multi-beam sonar. “It’s much more expensive, more

technical, but allows us to detect movement. Now we’re seeing a video rather than a still image, which changes the game entirely,” he notes. “I was able to capture the first recordings of Amazonian manatees swimming in their natural environment. We’re really excited about that journey.”

The advanced technology operates at frequencies well above the hearing range of the animals, keeping them safe, and opens up the possibility of studying interactions between the manatees and their environments.

With this new strategy, Gonzalez-Socoloske and his team can manually detect manatees in both semi-captive and purely wild habitats. The next step of their project involves creating an algorithm that can register manatee signatures, so that the collected data can be analyzed through an auto-detection feature.

The algorithm will be based on an existing program created at the University of St. Andrews that is currently used to identify seals. Once that has been completed, Gonzalez-Socoloske explained, “to scale this up, the idea is to have multiples of the sonar setup in key locations where we know animals are coming through at a particular time in their life cycle. We can take advantage of that to try to count them.”

Species protection efforts rely on the creation of a standardized quantification system—something that does not yet exist for the Amazonian manatee. Gonzalez-Socoloske said, “We can’t protect something when we cannot ultimately say that their numbers are decreasing or stable or increasing.” The findings from this project are the first stage in creating a standard system and setting up official measures for their protection. “It’s a huge step forward in terms of the conservation of the species,” he says, “because it will start giving us a clearer picture of how many there are. It provides managers with a tool to address populational changes in real time.”■

Isabella Koh is a University Communication student writer.



# MILEPOSTS

## BIRTHDAY



**Elizabeth (Mangold) Nicolade** celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on Aug. 30, 2022, in her home in Chicago. Elizabeth has been a member of the North Shore Adventist Church for 24 years. In 1969, Elizabeth was hired by Illinois Bell and worked there until 1989, well past retirement age. Elizabeth faithfully attended Sabbath School classes and services that she enjoyed so much until a couple of years ago when her memory began to fail. She has four children: Myriam Nicolade, Daisy (Malcolm Tyau) Nicolade, David (Maryla) Nicolade, and James Nicolade, who is her caregiver in Chicago. Elizabeth also is blessed with two grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

## OBITUARIES

**BEREAN, Mary J. (Stephens)**, age 93; born May 9, 1929, in Cedar Lake, Mich.; died March 27, 2023, in Yorkville, Ill. She was a member of the Muskegon Adventist Church in Muskegon, Mich. Survivors include her son, Stephen Corke; daughters, Doreen Corke, Cynthia (Corke) Wolfer, and Sharon (Corke) Gradziel; eight grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; one step-grandchild; and five step-great grandchildren. A graveside service was conducted by Pastor Ernst Wolf, and interment was in Vinewood Cemetery in Edmore, Mich.

**BUELL, Homer "Dexter" D.**, age 93; born April 24, 1928, in Notus, Idaho; died April 2, 2022, in Holland, Mich. He was a member of the Holland Adventist Church in Holland, Mich. He was survived by his wife, Catherine "Cathy" Buell; sons, Harold (Anita) Buell, Lloyd (Londa) Buell, David (Day) Buell, and Brent (Sue) Buell; daughters, Jeannie (Trent) Logan; and Kate Buell; brothers, Bill Buell, Duane Buell, Kent Buell; 16 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; and two great-great-grandchildren. A memorial inurnment was conducted by Pastor Joel Nephew on May 13, 2022, and private inurnment at Fort Custer National Cemetery in Augusta, Mich.

**ESH, Carol Jean (Wilson)**, age 81; born April 13, 1941, in Alexandria, Ind.; died Feb. 1, 2023, in Bloomingdale, Mich. She was a member of the Gobles Adventist Church in Gobles, Mich. She is survived by her daughters, Melissa (Jay) Brand and Lisa (Michael) Strohauser; sisters, Ann Anderson and Fran Owens; two grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. A funeral service was conducted by Pastor Bruce Moore on Feb. 9, 2023, and private inurnment in Michigan. Cards of sympathy may be sent to Michelle Brand, P.O. Box 248, South Haven, MI 49090

**JOOS, Roza (Erdei)**, age 83; born Oct. 25, 1940, in Budapest, Hungary; died March 31, 2023, in Chicago. She was a member of the North Shore Adventist Church in Chicago. A funeral service was conducted by Pastor Jonathan Burnett on April 5, 2023, and interment at Montrose Cemetery in Chicago.

**KIDDER, Dorothy L.**, age 95; born June 19, 1927, in South Bend, Ind.; died March 20, 2023, in Niles, Mich. She was a member of the Buchanan Adventist Church in Buchanan, Mich. She is survived by her sister, Marilyn (Kidder) Christensen. Inurnment

at the Rose Hill Cemetery Columbarium in Berrien Springs, Mich.

**KMETYKO, Joseph**, age 95; born May 3, 1927, in Chicago; died May 29, 2022, in Chicago. He was a member of the North Shore Adventist Church in Chicago. A private inurnment was held at the Chicagoland Cremation Options of Schiller Park, Ill.

**PETRUZZELLI-GAL, Mary L.**, age 83; born Sept. 2, 1939, in Gary, Ind.; died March 10, 2023, in Carmel, Ind. She was a member of the Cicero Adventist Church in Cicero, Ind. She is survived by her son, Mark Petruzelli; daughter, Deanna Petruzelli; brother, James Muldoon; sister, Patti Roman; and five grandchildren. A funeral interment was conducted by Elder Jeff Sajdak on March 20, 2023, and private interment at Marion National Cemetery in Marion, Ind.

**SEYMOUR, Daniel L.**, age 69; born Oct. 16, 1952, in Grand Rapids, Mich.; died April 9, 2022, in Holland, Mich. He was a member of the Holland Adventist Church in Holland, Mich. He is survived by his wife, Maureen Seymour; daughters, Robin Seymour, Lauren Seymour and Ellen Seymour; brother, Tom (Sally) Seymour; and sisters,

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 [www.lakeunionherald.org](http://www.lakeunionherald.org). Conference addresses and phone numbers are listed in the masthead on the inside back cover.

Barb (Al) Hass, Nancy Simard, Karen Seymour and Mary Jane (Don) Fraker. A memorial inurnment was conducted by Pastor Craig Harris on April 23, 2022, and a private inurnment at Restlawn Memorial Gardens in Holland, Mich.

**STUBBS, Kenneth “Ken,”** age 75; born April 8, 1947, in Wilmington, Ill.; died Aug. 5, 2022, in Holland, Mich. He was a member of the Holland Adventist Church in Holland, Mich. He is survived by his wife, Sharon Stubbs; stepson, James (Paula) Hubbell; step-daughters, Teresa Hubbell and Lisa (Steve) Jaworski; 10 step-grandchildren; and eight step-great-grandchildren. A memorial inurnment was conducted by Pastor Sean Reed on Aug. 21, 2022, and an inurnment service in Michigan.

**WILSON, Muriel (Hopkins),** age 73; born Oct. 23, 1949, in Benton Harbor, Mich.; died March 12, 2023, in Noblesville, Ind. She was a member of the Cicero Adventist Church in Cicero, Ind. She is survived by her husband, James Wilson; daughters, Katrina Wright-Rayhill, Cherry Bayley and Lisa Barnwell; brothers, Jim Hopkins and Mike Hopkins; sisters, Holly Roy and Linda Vanveldhuizen; and four grandchildren. A memorial inurnment was conducted by Pastor Ron Clark on March 26, 2023, and private service in Michigan.



**ADVENTIST HISTORICAL MATERIALS NEEDED:**  
Are there historical items in your home? The Center for Adventist Research preserves letters, diaries, manuscripts, photos, audio-visual materials, and artifacts. To donate, email [car@andrews.edu](mailto:car@andrews.edu) or call 269-471-3209.



2023 ADVENTIST CONFERENCE ON FAMILY RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

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**WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE?**

Family Ministries leaders from local churches, conferences, union conferences and divisions, other professionals who work with families, seminary students, graduate students, pastors and lay persons who have an interest in improving their own marriages and families are invited to participate.

Andrews University Adventist Family Ministries



## CALENDAR OF OFFERINGS

**JUNE**

- 3 Local Church Budget
- 10 Women's Ministry (NAD)
- 17 Local Church Budget
- 24 Local Conference Advance

**JULY**

- 1 Local Church Budget
- 8 World Budget (GC)
- 15 Local Church Budget
- 22 Local Conference Advance
- 29 Local Church Budget



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# June/July

## ANDREWS UNIVERSITY

### GENERAL EVENTS

- June 12-16: *Explore Andrews Summer Camps*
- June 12-23: *Social Survival Camp*
- June 12-Aug. 18: *Andrews University Summer Camp/The Crayon Box Children's Learning Center*
- July 10: *Mission: Invent 2023, Exhibition and Awards Ceremony*
- July 24-26: *Leadership Conference and Roundtable 2023*
- July 30-Aug. 18: *2023 Early College Experience*

## ILLINOIS

- June 18: *Beginning of Summer Camp, Camp Akita*
- July 4: *Office Closed - Independence Day*
- July 25-29: *Illinois Family Camp Meeting, Camp Akita*
- July 23-26: *Pastors' Retreat*
- July 29: *Hispanic Ministries Elders' Retreat*

## INDIANA

- June 12-17: *Camp Meeting, Indiana Academy*

## LAKE REGION

- May 31 - June 6: *Youth & Young Adult (YAYA) Devotion, Virtual*
- June 4: *Young Adult Paint Night*
- June 16-24: *Camp Meeting, Camp Wagner*
- June 18: *Adventurer Fun Day*
- July 1 - 7: *Youth & Young Adult (YAYA) Devotion, Virtual*
- July 16-30: *Junior Camp, Camp Wagner*
- July 22: *Better Health for You, Virtual*
- July 29-30: *LRC Olympics, Camp Wagner*

## MICHIGAN

- May 5-7: *Marriage Commitment Retreat, Camp Au Sable*
- May 26-28: *GLAA Graduation Weekend*
- May 26-28: *Hispanic Camp Meeting, Camp Au Sable*

## WISCONSIN

- May 19-21: *Wisconsin Academy Graduation Weekend*

## LAKE UNION

- June 2-4: *Conectate, Berrien Springs, Michigan*

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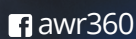
visit: [awr.org/apps](http://awr.org/apps)



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# CLASSIFIEDS

## EMPLOYMENT

**Union College, Lincoln, NE is accepting applications for Computer Science and Mathematics Professor.** The individual in this role will teach upper division programming classes and lower division math classes. A Ph.D. in computer science or mathematics is preferred, master's required. Please direct inquiries to Bruce Forbes at [Bruce.Forbes@ucollege.edu](mailto:Bruce.Forbes@ucollege.edu) or apply online at [ucollege.edu/employment](http://ucollege.edu/employment).

**Union College is accepting applications for International Rescue and Relief Expedition Coordinator/Faculty.** This individual will work on campus during the fall semester and plan the semester abroad as well as help out in various classes or initiatives. Coordinator will lead out in the spring semester abroad accompanying students and coordinating class instructions, planning, and logistics. See job description and instructions for application at [ucollege.edu/employment](http://ucollege.edu/employment).

**Southern Adventist University seeks qualified candidates for the following staff** Salaried positions— Marketing & University Relations Director, Online Campus Teaching Technology Specialist, and Food Service Director. For details visit [Southern.edu/jobs](http://Southern.edu/jobs)

**SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks qualified candidates for the following staff Hourly positions**—Cafeteria Floater, Cafeteria Worker, Cook Coordinator, Deli Floater, Procurement & Merchandising Assistant Village Market, The Garden Eatery Assistant Manager, Housing Technician, HVAC Master Technician, Painting Technician, S.A.L.T. Outreach Coordinator for School of Religion, Office Manager for School of Education and Psychology, Vision Trips Coordinator for Office of Ministry and Missions, Circulation Manager for McKee Library, Campus Kitchen PM Shift Supervisor, Alarm Technician, Electrician Master Technician. For details visit [Southern.edu/jobs](http://Southern.edu/jobs)

**Southern Adventist University seeks a full-time program director** to launch a new Doctor of Physical Therapy degree program. The ideal candidate will be proficient in managing the CAPTE accreditation process, new program development, and teaching graduate physical therapy courses as well as clinical practice. In addition, the successful candidate will be committed to mentoring advisees, nurturing student learning both in and out of the classroom, and discipling students in Jesus Christ. For a full job description and desired qualifications, please visit [www.southern.edu/jobs](http://www.southern.edu/jobs)

**Southern Adventist University seeks a full-time Engineer teaching faculty member for Physics and Engineering Department** in the areas of mechanical, electrical, and computer engineering. The ideal candidate will be proficient in developing and teaching undergraduate engineering courses, including both lecture and laboratory components. Master's degree in mechanical, electrical, or computer engineering or related area required. Doctorate preferred. Prior higher education teaching experience and/or relevant industry experience preferred. For a full job description and desired qualifications, please visit [www.southern.edu/jobs](http://www.southern.edu/jobs)

**Southern Adventist University seeks a full-time faculty in the area of Counseling for School of Education/Psychology.** A doctoral degree in counselor education from a CACREP-accredited program is required. Doctoral degrees in clinical or counseling psychology from APA-accredited program could be considered if applicant has been employed as full-time faculty member in a counselor education program for a minimum of one full academic

year before July 1, 2013. For a full job description and desired qualifications, please visit [www.southern.edu/jobs](http://www.southern.edu/jobs)

**Southern Adventist University seeks a full-time teaching faculty member with pediatric expertise** to join a cohesive, mission-focused team for the School of Nursing. Teaching responsibilities include undergraduate pre-licensure child health and simulation. Requisite qualities include pediatric RN experience, flexibility, and commitment to Adventist nursing education. Teaching experience and an earned doctorate are preferred. For a full job description and desired qualifications, please visit [www.southern.edu/jobs](http://www.southern.edu/jobs)

**Southern Adventist University seeks a full-time teaching faculty member for the School of Religion.** The position would involve assisting in the Institute of Archaeology, including with its publications. Applicants should have a Ph.D. (or have made significant progress in a Ph.D. program) in the areas of archaeology and biblical studies and should be prepared to teach courses in archaeology, biblical studies, and biblical Hebrew.

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

For a full job description, please visit [www.southern.edu/jobs](http://www.southern.edu/jobs)

## EVENTS

**The Adventist Medical Evangelism Network (AMEN) is inviting all medical professionals to attend a talk by Dr. Brian Schwartz** on how healthcare workers and pastors can work together to use medical ministry as the entering wedge for the gospel message. The talk will be held during the Michigan Camp Meeting on June 17, 2023, at 3 p.m. in the Great Lakes Adventist Academy Administration Building Chapel. For more info, or to obtain the link to view the livestream event, email [clinics@amensda.org](mailto:clinics@amensda.org)

## SERVICES

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

**TEACH Services Helping Authors:** Publish your book, including editing, design, marketing, and worldwide distribution. Visit [www.TEACHServices.com](http://www.TEACHServices.com) to submit your manuscript for a free evaluation, or call 800-367-1844. Shop for new/used Adventist books at [www.TEACHServices.com](http://www.TEACHServices.com) or at your local ABC.

**Psalms Peace:** “Sing unto Him, sing Psalms unto Him, talk ye of all His wondrous works.” (1 Chronicles 16:9) “Let us do everything in our power to make music in our homes, that God may come in.” (CG524) Learn the ancient Psalms word for word...(KJV); [psalmspeace.com](http://psalmspeace.com), 517-703-4088. “Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me.”

**EARTH BURGER:** Adventist owned plant-based fast food restaurant Earth Burger is now franchising. Sabbath closure is approved. All territories are currently available. For inquiries, visit [www.earthburger.com/franchise/](http://www.earthburger.com/franchise/).

**FREE APP** Discover stellar faith-building, Bible-based and Christ-centered radio programs for all ages. LifeTalk Radio streams all music at [LifeTalkMusic.net](http://LifeTalkMusic.net) and awesome kids programs at [LifeTalkKids.net](http://LifeTalkKids.net) or listen to talk radio at: [LifeTalk.net](http://LifeTalk.net). Download our handy FREE APP from: [LifeTalk.net](http://LifeTalk.net)

**Neighbor To Neighbor, Adventist Community Service Center is looking for an Adventist Administrator.** Must be caring, flexible and have great communication skills with management and public relations experience. Must have an associate or bachelor degree. Duties include management of the thrift store, volunteers and facilities supervision. Fulltime position with benefits. If interested, have questions or want to submit a resume contact: [info@n2helps.com](mailto:info@n2helps.com)

**Thanks to those who reached out about the incorrect sunset calendar times. We have made the correction.**



**PROJECT SAFE 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.

For more information, visit [www.projectsafechurch.org](http://www.projectsafechurch.org)



**Please send us your Conference, church and school news!**

[herald@lakeunion.org](mailto:herald@lakeunion.org)

**news**

# Sabbath Sunset Calendar

	June 2	June 9	June 16	June 23	June 30	July 7	July 14	July 21	July 28
Berrien Springs, Mich.	8:15	8:20	8:23	8:25	8:25	8:24	8:21	8:16	8:10
Chicago, Ill.	8:20	8:25	8:28	8:30	8:30	8:29	8:26	8:21	8:15
Detroit, Mich.	9:04	9:08	9:12	9:13	9:14	9:13	9:09	9:04	8:58
Indianapolis, Ind.	9:08	9:12	9:15	9:17	9:17	9:16	9:13	9:09	9:0
La Crosse, Wis.	8:41	8:46	8:50	8:52	8:52	8:50	8:47	8:41	8:35
Lansing, Mich.	9:11	9:16	9:19	9:21	9:21	9:20	9:16	9:11	9:05
Madison, Wis.	8:31	8:36	8:40	8:42	8:42	8:40	8:37	8:32	8:25
Springfield, Ill.	9:22	9:26	9:29	9:31	9:31	9:30	9:27	9:23	9:17



# Make No Mistake



▲ RICHARD A. MOORE

WHICH WOULD YOU RATHER HAVE OR GIVE AWAY: \$92,000 OR \$100,000? THIS IS NOT A TRICK QUESTION.

Unfortunately, it is a reality that many people face when it comes to the distribution of assets after a loved one dies. In the state of Michigan, if a person dies and has a \$100,000 investment account but no beneficiary, the funds will have to go through a process known as probate. The cost of probate in Michigan can be up to 8% of the assets, or \$8,000.

Probate can be a very tedious and troubling experience. Lawyers and judges get involved, family members may get into furious arguments, and it can be very time consuming. Having designated beneficiaries or an easily authenticated will that outlines what to do with assets can help families avoid this experience.

Recently I learned of someone who had a large sum of money spread out over many banks. None of the accounts had a beneficiary and the owner did not have a will. If this person were to suddenly die, the court system in the states where the bank accounts exist would have to step in and decide what to do with the money. The court system does not go through this process for free. The court may decide to distribute funds to four children equally, regardless of their individual status. Does this sound right? Is this something you want your family to experience?

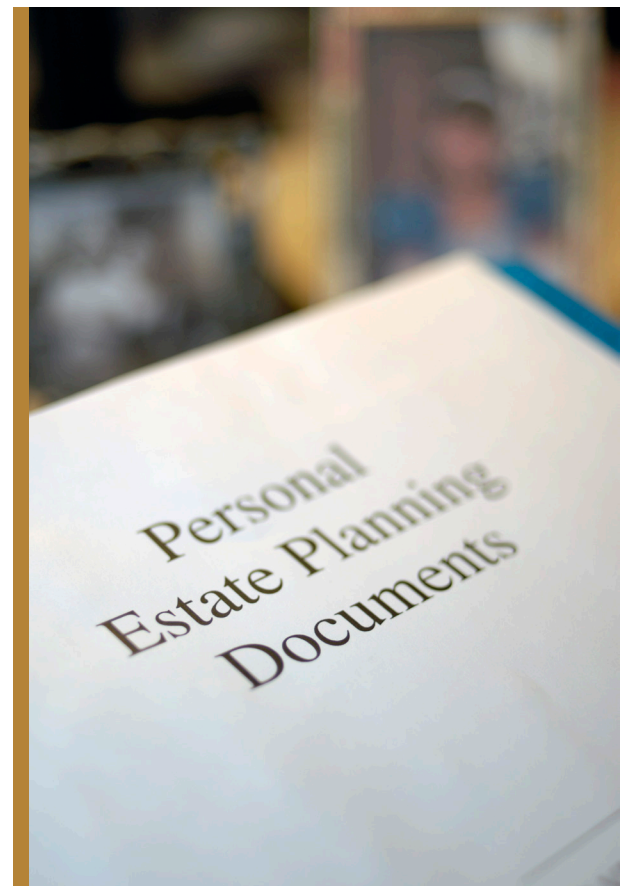
Romans 13:1 says we should pay our fair share of taxes and fees and respect the government in which we live, however we don't want to pay more than we must. With this in mind, a person who dies without beneficiaries, a will, or a trust, will maximize what the government receives. Wouldn't you rather have your assets distributed to your loved ones and your church at your death, instead of

having the government figure it out and possibly exclude your church as a recipient?

If you have not already done so, I appeal to you to contact the companies that handle your money and designate a beneficiary to make sure probate can be avoided. The Planned Giving and Trust Services Department at your local conference will be happy to help you fill out the necessary legal documents, such as wills or trusts, at no cost to you!

So, which would you rather have or give away: \$92,000 or \$100,000? As for me and my house, we choose \$100,000. ■

*Richard A. Moore is an associate treasurer for the Lake Union Conference.*



# Facing Workplace Issues

**Editor's note:** Our office frequently receives questions on legal matters of concern to our members. This new column is intended as general information on some of the frequently asked questions, and does not take the place of legal advice.

## MY EMPLOYER IS NOW REQUIRING ME TO WORK ON SATURDAYS OR LOSE MY JOB. WHAT CAN I DO?

In this country, one of the religious freedom challenges that Seventh-day Adventists often encounter concerns workplace accommodations for Sabbath observance. Fortunately, your union Public Affairs and Religious Liberty department is available to assist you if you experience Sabbath accommodation issues. And there are laws designed to protect your rights as an employee.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 provides certain protections so that employees can observe their sincerely held religious beliefs. Title VII requires that employers with 15 or more employees reasonably accommodate an employee's sincerely held religious belief unless an accommodation would pose an undue hardship to the employer.

Examples of religious accommodations that have been provided by employers include making exceptions to work dress codes for employees who, as part of their religious practice, either refrain from wearing certain items (such as women in some faith traditions only wearing skirts) or desire to wear religious articles while on the job (such as a religious head covering). Another area where accommodations are often sought and granted deal with changes to work schedules for religious observance through flexible scheduling, voluntary shift substitutions or job reassignments.

However, Title VII does not require an employer to make an accommodation if doing so would pose an undue hardship to the employer. An undue burden has been defined as anything that would impose more than a minimal burden for the employer. Employers have been excused from having to provide an accommodation when they've shown that the accommodation would be costly, compromise

workplace safety, decrease workplace efficiency, or infringe on the rights of other employees. Unfortunately, this broad interpretation of undue hardship has been particularly harmful for religious minorities seeking accommodations, including Seventh-day Adventist employees, because the burden on the employer is set at such a low bar.

The definition of undue hardship though is likely to change in the coming weeks because of the recent Supreme Court case, *Groff v. Dejoy*. In this case, a postal worker was forced to choose between keeping his job and observing his religious day of rest. Many believe that the court is likely to revise its definition of what qualifies as an undue hardship as part of its decision, and hope that a higher standard of what constitutes undue hardship, such as one that imposes a "significant difficulty or expense," will be adopted moving forward.

If you are facing workplace issues because of Sabbath observance, you should reach out to your pastor or your union PARL department who will be able to assist you.

For more information about Title VII's religious accommodations or services PARL provides to help with accommodation requests visit:

[www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/what-you-should-know-workplace-religious-accommodation](http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/what-you-should-know-workplace-religious-accommodation)

[www.lakeunion.org/directory/departments/public-affairs-and-religious-liberty](http://www.lakeunion.org/directory/departments/public-affairs-and-religious-liberty)

[www.religiousliberty.info](http://www.religiousliberty.info) ■

**Jennifer Gray Woods** is the Lake Union's general counsel, as well as its Public Affairs and Religious Liberty director.



▲ JENNIFER GRAY WOODS





# New Job Brings Greater Connection to God

ELMER CAPIÑA ENJOYED HIS JOB AS A PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT, ESPECIALLY WORKING ALONGSIDE HIS ATTENDING PHYSICIANS TO CARE FOR PATIENTS EVERY DAY. BUT SOMETHING SEEMED TO BE MISSING.

When he received an offer to be a clinical service line director at UChicago Medicine AdventHealth Hinsdale and La Grange, he found the missing piece.

“For some reason, this position spoke to me,” he said. But for a while, he struggled with whether to listen. He discussed his decision with his employers, and he told them he appreciated all he had learned in that job and how it had helped prepare him for the next challenge. They encouraged him to do what he felt would be best for him.

Then Capiña appealed to a higher power. “I started praying about it and trying to determine what God had in mind for me,” he said. “And I felt compelled to do the job.”

What Capiña found most compelling was a sense of mission. “Working in a hospital system where mission is at the center spoke to me,” he said. “I really felt that it was calling me over.”

He answered the call in June 2022, accepting a position as director of clinical service line development. In this role, he helps select, develop and grow service lines for the hospital to pursue. His efforts so far have included expanding robotic surgery capabilities, starting a bariatric surgery program and increasing awareness of and access to multispecialty clinics. “We are looking for opportunities to extend the reach we have for patients,” he said.

While he misses the daily interaction with patients and learning more about the science of medicine, he has embraced the challenges and

opportunities of his new position. “The job is still evolving every day,” he said. “It’s definitely a challenge from a personal and spiritual standpoint. And it has made me feel the need to be more connected to God.”

As he has settled into the job, he increasingly has been able to turn his life over to God.

“I realized there are a lot of things that are out of my control, and I have to trust that God has a plan,” Capiña said.

His position at UChicago Medicine AdventHealth is part of that plan, he says. “This job came at the right time in my life, and it is a perfect blend of mission and work,” he said. “When your job aligns with your beliefs and your values, you are in the right job for you.” ■

**Julie Busch** is associate vice president, marketing and communications at UChicago Medicine AdventHealth.



# Search for Meaning After a Tragedy

I WAS WORKING ALMOST 2,000 MILES AWAY FROM MY HOMETOWN WHEN I RECEIVED THE NEWS: MY HOMETOWN PASTOR WAS TRAGICALLY KILLED IN AN ACCIDENT.

He was in the prime of his life, a godly leader, a loving father of two and a dedicated husband. All I could think of was “Why, God? Why did You let this happen?”

I’m sure everyone has asked that question at least once or twice. We all face so much loss and suffering in our lives and it begs the question, “Why?”

The search for meaning after a tragedy is a common way we cope. If we could just know that the losses we face will bring about some greater good or higher purpose, it would all be worth it. Without a doubt, God brings triumph out of tragedy. However, many times our pleas to understand our pain return empty. Sometimes the tragedy is nothing more than just that: a tragedy.

Pain, agony and suffering are casualties of a long-running celestial battle that rages between a love-filled God and a hate-filled enemy. We have all been victims to Satan’s no-holds-barred tactics that destroy at any cost. However, God’s commitment to loving us fully and completely limits His ability to intervene in the ways we think an all-powerful God should. It is important to understand God is not “all powerful” in the sense that He can do anything and everything. Although He can, He has also made certain choices out of love for humanity to limit His ability to intervene. When sin entered our world, God had to find a solution within love’s rules of engagement. I can imagine Him wishing He could just banish sin far from the planet and the people He loves so much. But love’s

more difficult path will bring eternal results. Jesus stepped into the path that led Him to suffer the anguish and humility of life on earth and the death on the cross. Our *all-powerful* God only had one path to permanently defeat the forces of evil. And that was death on the cross. Reflect on that for a moment.

After three days of grieving, the disciples received the answer to their question: “Why, God, did You let this happen?” Jesus was resurrected and their mourning turned to joyful worship of a victorious God. But for many of us, the pain of “why” lingers for weeks, months, years or decades without answer.

I’ve found comfort and hope in these words as I consider the death of Pastor Mike. Now, I offer them to you.

I know that one day you will stroll down the Heavenly streets of gold with Jesus’ powerful arm wrapped around your shoulder, and He will answer your deepest questions about all the losses in your life. Do you believe His answers will bring you peace? If so, is it possible, at this moment, for you to stop asking why and only trust? May God be your source of comfort, strength and faith until that day when all is made right. ■

*Chaplain Daniel Morea ministers at UChicago Medicine AdventHealth Bolingbrook and serves as a USAF Reserve Chaplain. He graduated from the Seventh-day Adventist Seminary at Andrews University in August 2020. His wife and two daughters are the joy of his life.*

**May God be your source of comfort, strength and faith until that day when all is made right.**







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