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THE EARLY YEARS
OF CHILDHOOD
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“Oh, I just love the teachers’ stories!” said the excited voice on the phone. It was Doris Ferris calling to let us know how much she enjoyed the April 2023 issue devoted to educators telling us why they were motivated to teach despite mounting challenges and frustrations.

Doris went on to explain that she and her late husband Winston were teachers in Michigan and Illinois for some time. We also discovered she was 91 and lived close to our Berrien Springs office. How close? Three minutes close.

So, off we went a few days later to pay this delightful lady a visit. She regaled us with stories of her and her husband’s time teaching. Her eyes twinkled as she spoke of former students now church leaders or playing other important roles in society. Oh, the joys of teaching — seeing your investment pay off in tangible ways!

Doris is in her twilight years, but I wondered, are we doing enough to let our teachers know how much we appreciate them while they’re still in the classroom?

We could show teachers we care by sending them notes of encouragement, speaking kind words about them around our children, or volunteering to speak to a class about career paths. Another way is by becoming a teacher. Teaching is a collaborative profession, so if you can bring energy and wisdom from a previous career into the classroom, you can make a difference for both students and your new colleagues. Fair warning, this isn’t for everyone. However, as we heard from Doris, it is a rewarding choice. ■

P.S. Since penning this editorial, we received word Doris passed away peacefully on Feb. 3, 2024, just shy of her 92nd birthday.

Debbie

◀ Doris Ferris flanked by Lake Union Assistant Communication Director Felicia Tonga and Herald Editor Debbie Michel



Karen Jimenez Findley, a Mexican author and illustrator residing in Michigan, draws inspiration from nature, childlike wonder, and the embrace of God’s love. From children’s books to murals utilizing a blend of digital and traditional techniques, she brings her visions to life.



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COVER ILLUSTRATION BY
KAREN JIMENEZ FINDLEY

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

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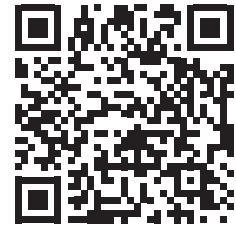
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Start Smart From the Beginning

SOME YEARS BACK, DECADES AGO, WHILE STROLLING ON THE CAMPUS OF ANDREWS UNIVERSITY, I SPOTTED WHAT APPEARED TO BE A TRACK MEET NEAR MEIER HALL. AS I DREW CLOSER, I WAS JOLTED BY THE BLAST OF A START SIGNAL, AND IN A FLASH EIGHT MEN SPRIED DOWN THE TRACK.



▲ RUTH HORTON

The excitement of seeing an unanticipated track race on this balmy Sunday could not be easily contained. No sooner had the race begun, when one of the competitors bolted from the middle of the pack, exploding ahead in a flash, leaving even the second closest competitor in a distant second spot.

I later learned that this sprinter had been a state and national track and field champion! In the ensuing decades, I've reflected on that 100-meter dash. What did it take to win so decisively? What kind of experiences punctuated the beginning from the crouch start position, to the start phase with acceleration, to maximal speed, to deceleration? What mental re-wirings transpired at the pit stops and restarts? And too, what does it really take to make it to the finish line ... so distinctly ahead of the pack?

The race of life, and I would add, our journeys toward excellence in education, are often not that flash dash, but are punctuated with dots and bends, peaks and false starts, pauses and restarts. Along the curvy paths of attending to students' cognitive load in the face of mental health strains while building support and connections, providing equitable learning spaces, attending to the short- and long-term development of our youngest students, and keeping abreast with ever expanding philosophical re-awakenings from the "Science of

Reading" to forays into Artificial Intelligence usage and related classroom policies, we maintain our focus on "the most noble work given to human beings — building [champions] soldiers for the Lord Jesus Christ." (E. White, "Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students," page 166)

On that track, the **Journey to Excellence** with children from early childhood through grade 12, a shared trust is ours, to introduce and reflect Jesus through a distinctly Seventh-day Adventist education, punctuated along spiritual, intellectual, mental, social and physical pathways converging to develop whole, balanced students.

What an honor and privilege is ours — to minister to and teach our children and youth! We know well that the family is designed to be the first school and we humbly, yet confidently carry forward the baton that has been carefully passed to us on this dash.

In seeking to **Inspire, Transform and Empower**, our early childhood through grade 12 education system provides a carefully crafted, biblically guided, developmentally appropriate, and research-informed program of studies.

As you delve into this issue of the Herald, which highlights the early childhood education program here in our union, I encourage you to look closely at the confirmation we have from Ellen White of

The race is not to the swift, but for those who endure to the end (Ecclesiastes 9:11)

providing care and developmentally appropriate learning environments for younger children, thereby supporting parents today, particularly mothers who have to return to work to support their families.

Read about the development and recent growth of early childhood program offerings, the attention to programing for our younger students, training for early childhood education teachers and directors, our Lake Union Conference Early Childhood Advisory, recently developed and impactful resources for our educators, staff and students, and more. And, too, see how God rewards the called.

The race is not to the swift, but for those who endure to the end (Ecclesiastes 9:11), so we, together with our students, run with patience the race set before us (Hebrews 12:1). I invite you to journey with Lake Union educators, students, parents, constituents, pastors and leaders, on this upwardly advancing path.

And, oh! I've been married to this lightning-rod former track and field athlete for some decades now. ■

Ruth Horton, EdD, is Education director for the Lake Union Conference and has been married to Michael Horton, DMin, pastor of the Chicago Heights Emmanuel Church, for 36 years. Together they have three adult sons and two adult daughters.



Filling the Missing Part of a Child's Village



▲ MELISSA PONCE-RODAS

WHEN WE STUDY HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, WE REALIZE THAT CHILDREN'S FIRST TEACHERS ARE OFTEN INFORMAL ONES — FAMILY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS WHO GUIDE AND DIRECT THEM.

Having a large network of support makes it more likely that we can raise healthy, well-rounded children. The African proverb “it takes a village to raise a child” has been shown true time and time again.

This approach works well until we find a child whose village does not have all the resources or experiences they need to navigate a new challenge. Personally, I was a first-generation college graduate, and the first to obtain advanced degrees. When I was in high school, thinking college might be my next step, there was no one in my village to guide me. We were in uncharted territory. So where could I turn for help? Typically, we think of mentors as the people who guide us when we need help. But I would like to propose that there are some people who go above and beyond mentoring. I've had many mentors in my educational career, but the ones who did the heavy lifting I consider my academic goals—a sort of kinsman redeemer.

The word “goel” is based on the Hebrew word *ga'al*, in connection with the Hebrew law, and refers to “a person who as the nearest relative of another, is placed under certain obligations to him” (classic.net.bible.org). We see a common example in the story of Ruth and Boaz (see Ruth 3). In education, we often see teachers who feed their students, who help pay their fees, and even buy them clothes or supplies. We have even seen teachers adopt students. These actions are not mentoring, they are, in my perspective, those of an academic *goel* — an academic kinsman who redeems.

This edition of the Lake Union Herald focuses on Adventist Christian education. While I did not attend Adventist schools growing up, I have had the opportunity to teach at Andrews for the past 13 years. What I've been able to witness is just how many academic *goels* I have the privilege of working with. I have seen our professors take our students home, feed them, guide them, even help pay bills for them. I've spoken with students who have told me amazing stories of academic *goels* throughout their Christian education. Why would teachers do this? To be the missing part of a child's village. To be a kinsman and to redeem. These amazing Adventist educators, who work at all levels of education, are truly fulfilling Hebrews 13:16 because they “do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.” May all we do please our God. ■

Melissa Ponce-Rodas is an assistant professor of psychology at Andrews University. She and her husband Segundo have twin boys, Samuel and Jonathan. Her research and advocacy revolve around the intersections of religion and domestic violence.



Raising Emotionally Intelligent Children

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EI) IS AN INDIVIDUAL'S ABILITY TO PERCEIVE EMOTIONS IN THEMSELVES AND OTHERS, UNDERSTAND WHAT THOSE EMOTIONS MEAN, AND MANAGE THEIR EMOTIONS ACCORDINGLY (ROBBINS & JUDGE, 2017).

EI is an emerging topic that has been used interchangeably with the term emotional competence. Emotional competence in young children — expression of useful emotions, knowledge of emotions of self and others, and regulation of their own and others' emotional expressiveness and experience when necessary — contributes to their social and pre-academic adjustment, throughout their lifespan (Denham et al., 2022).

EI is critical to early childhood development as children begin to understand their own emotions. Early development of EI can not only help children learn to better manage their emotions early on in life but can also help them with impulse control and development of positive interpersonal relationships. Children who have higher emotional intelligence have less problems with attention, are more engaged in school, and display more empathy towards others (Tominey et al., 2017). This results in more academic and personal success throughout life.

Modeling and direct instruction can be effective tools in helping children learn how to manage their emotions. Steps that parents can take to help their children's emotional intelligence is to learn how to be emotionally competent themselves by being aware of their own feelings and sensitive to the emotions of their children. Parents should model emotional intelligence, especially in challenging situations. Parents should listen and give full attention to the emotional expression of their child, validating their feelings. Parents should help their child become aware of their feelings and develop language that describes their emotional expression (i.e., sad, angry, hurt, etc.). Parents should help

their child understand that while having emotions is normal and healthy, not all behaviors are acceptable. For instance, letting the child know that they can be angry but behaviors such as yelling, hitting and throwing things, etc., are not appropriate.

Another strategy that parents and teachers can use to help children develop emotional intelligence is the **RULER** method. Help children **Recognize** how they are feeling and **Understand** what led them to feel the way they do. Help children find words that **Label** or describe how they are feeling. Help children **Express** their feelings in ways that are appropriate for the time and place. Help children **Regulate** their emotions in the short and long term. For instance, if the child is feeling angry, how can you help them shift their emotions so they don't remain fixed in a negative emotion.

The greatest method to help children develop emotional intelligence is by helping them to place less focus on themselves and understand their true identity in Christ. Furthermore, children should be taught how to bring their emotions under the subjection of the will of God. Teach children from an early age that "Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city." Proverbs 16:32 ESV ■

Christina Wells is a physician and serves as health ministries director for Lake Region Conference.



▲ CHRISTINA WELLS



The Way of Life and the Way to Life



▲ DENIS KAISER

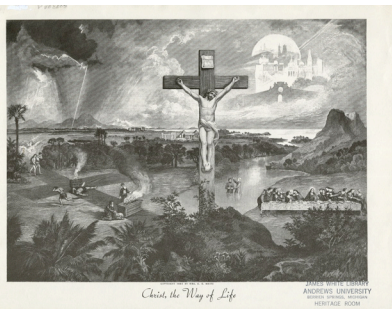
DURING JANUARY–FEBRUARY 1881, JAMES WHITE MET WITH THE ACCLAIMED LANDSCAPE PAINTER THOMAS MORAN (1837–1926) “WHO [WAS] SAID TO BE THE BEST ARTIST IN THE WORLD,”¹ AND HE ALSO HAD A CHANCE TO SEE THE ENGRAVER’S WORK, WHICH TURNED OUT “VERY FINE” AND “MUCH BETTER THAN ... FIRST EXPECTED.”²

Drawn by Moran and engraved by William Wellstood (1819–1900),¹ the new lithograph was printed in August 1883. It presented Christ on the cross absorbing the Tree of Life and the Ten Commandments, seen in the 1873 and 1876 lithographs, presenting Him as the law hanging on the cross as the Tree of Life. Ellen G. White renamed the lithograph fittingly “Christ the Way of Life” to leave no doubt that salvation came through Him rather than by certain religious practices.

Since the lithograph did not directly refer to the distinctive Adventist teachings, such as the seventh-day Sabbath, the state of the dead, the pre-Advent investigative judgment, and Christ’s high-priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary since 1844, some Adventists wondered, “What connection has ‘The Way of Life’ with present truth,” and should church members even buy a copy of it? S.N. Haskell responded to that question by stating that it helped “greatly in impressing the mind with divine things.” The Haskell family had two copies of the lithograph in their home, one on the wall at the foot of their bed and one in the sitting-room so that he and his wife may behold “the cross of Christ” right away when they open their eyes in the morning, and to engage with visitors about its relevance. He remarked that “every family of Seventh-day Adventists would have this picture hung upon the walls of their [homes]” if they were to “realize the refining and elevating

influence [that] such pictures have upon the mind.”² Methodist, Baptist and Christian pastors from Santa Rosa, California, praised the lithograph and its key as a wonderful combination of exceptional art and profound biblical truth.³

Sometimes Adventists may still perceive our distinctive doctrines as playing a more important role than those beliefs we hold in common with other Christians. Other Christians may also perceive Adventists as people who are more concerned with their unique beliefs than with the Christ of the cross. It appears that Haskell and a few other Adventists in the early 1880s noticed that the cross of Christ is central to all other doctrines, infusing our beliefs with vitality and our spiritual life with living power. Adventists, after all, yearn for the Second Advent of the crucified and risen Christ. ■



¹ James White to W. C. White, Jan. 19, 1881; James White to Ellen G. White, Feb. 4, 1881.
² James White to Ellen G. White, Feb. 7, 1881, JWCF, EGWE.
³ “Now Ready: The New Steel-Place Engraving Entitled Christ the Way of Life,” *Review and Herald*, Oct. 30, 1883, 687.
⁴ S. N. Haskell, “The Way of Life,” *Signs of the Times*, Jan. 17, 1884, 43.
⁵ “Testimonials for the ‘Way of Life,’” *Signs of the Times*, Aug. 21, 1884, 510.

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

Bienvenidos a Esperanza TV

RECUERDO MUY BIEN LA PRIMERA VEZ QUE ENCONTRÉ UN PROGRAMA DE TELEVISIÓN ADVENTISTA. POCO DESPUÉS DE MI BAUTISMO EN LA IGLESIA ADVENTISTA, AL REVISAR LOS DISTINTOS CANALES DE TELEVISIÓN, DESCUBRÍ A UN ORADOR QUE HABLABA ACERCA DE LOS BENEFICIOS DE GUARDAR UN DÍA DE REPOSO CADA SEMANA.

Explicó la base bíblica de este concepto. Fue una gran sorpresa para mí cuando al concluir el programa se anunció que el programa estaba auspiciado por la Iglesia Adventista. El orador era el pastor George Vandeman, y el nombre del programa, *It Is Written* (Escrito está).

La Iglesia Adventista ha tomado siempre muy en serio el mandato de nuestro Señor de predicar el evangelio a todo el mundo. Esto incluye también el uso de la tecnología. El pastor H.M.S. Richards empezó el programa radial en inglés *The Voice of Prophecy* en el año 1937. Al ver la respuesta positiva de este programa se decidió en 1942 iniciar un programa radial en español que se llamó "La Voz de la Profecía" y más tarde "La Voz de Esperanza" con el pastor Braulio Pérez Marcio como el primer orador. Desde aquellos comienzos el uso de la tecnología ha avanzado muchísimo. En el año 1995 se comenzó a hacer evangelismo satelital en Norteamérica con la serie *NET 95* dirigido por el pastor Mark Finley como orador. En el año 1998 tuve el privilegio de coordinar la transmisión mundial en español de la serie *NET 98* en la cual el orador fue Dwight Nelson. Más adelante, en 2008, se amplió aun más el evangelismo satelital en español con las predicaciones del pastor Alejandro Bullón. Una de ellas fue transmitida desde la Iglesia Central de Chicago.

Es maravilloso ver cómo Dios sigue guiando y bendiciendo el uso de la tecnología. Su servidor estuvo presente en las reuniones de los coordinadores hispanos cuando se empezó a tener diálogos

sobre la posibilidad de crear un canal adventista en español. Doy gracias a Dios de que a pesar de las dudas de muchos en cuanto a la posibilidad de llevar a cabo tal proyecto debido a la falta de finanzas, se hizo realidad nuestro sueño, y como resultado tenemos ahora el canal *Esperanza TV*.

Esperanza TV ofrece una gran variedad de programas, tales como *La Voz de Esperanza* con los esposos Omar y Nesy Grieve o el programa *Jesús 101* con la Dra. Elizabeth Talbot. Se presentan también programas de salud, documentales, musicales y programación juvenil e infantil. Hay mucho potencial para crear nuevos programas para lo cual es necesario apoyo financiero. Deseo invitar a cada hermano de esta Unión a que vea un programa muy especial que se transmitirá **el sábado 20 de abril** a través de *Esperanzatv.net*.

En este programa se informará en cuanto al gran potencial del ministerio del canal y la ayuda financiera que se necesita para llevar adelante la predicación del evangelio. ■

Carmelo Mercado es el vice presidente de la Unión del Lago.



▲ CARMELO MERCADO

EsperanzaTV

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www.esperanzatv.net

Head of the Class

LAKE REGION EDUCATOR
NAMED TEACHER
OF THE YEAR



Winton Ford

IN HER FIRST MONTH AS PRINCIPAL, A PIPE BURST IN ALEXANDRIA MILLER'S PARK FOREST, ILLINOIS, SCHOOL, LEAVING THE FLOOR COVERED IN SEVERAL INCHES OF WATER.

Overnight, the 20 students relocated from the South Suburban School to Emmanuel Church and resumed their lessons in Sabbath School rooms, connecting to the Wi-Fi in the sanctuary. This transition was extraordinary as Miller was then juggling a myriad of roles at the school: principal, teacher and bus driver.

Navigating the herculean task of handling such a disruption while wearing so many hats requires immense dedication and skill. These traits led to the city of Park Forest naming Alexandria Miller Teacher of the Year at their annual "academy awards" on Jan. 27, 2024. Residents and parents nominated Miller for her commitment to excellence.

It's a recognition she's quick to share with others. Miller credits the rich community involvement. Whether it's a PTA meeting or the school's "Taste Around the World" celebration where families bring foods from different cultures, neighbors and community members pour into school events, providing support and unwavering investment, including the

fire station and local businesses. Even the mayor took time to connect with the students.

The 32-year-old knows what it's like for children to be nurtured in a Christian environment. She was once a student at South Suburban and credits her third through eighth grade years at the school for sparking an interest in teaching and the pursuit of an education degree at Oakwood University.

The school's founding principal Renee Humphries made a lasting impression on her. "Not many people see and hear our youth," said Miller. "It was my a-ha moment of having an educator that made you feel like family, and Adventist education is like a little family showing you care and love."

Humphries is immensely proud of her former student's accomplishments. "She's a phenomenal educator," said the former Lake Region education superintendent who serves today as associate superintendent of schools in the Alleghany East Conference. "She's diligent and creative, and most of all she loves her students, and it's evident she

believes every child is special and wants them to be the best they can be.”

Deirdre Garnett, Lake Region Conference’s superintendent of schools, agreed Miller loves her students. “You know she is a good teacher when you see how they love her,” she said. “They have a little family there and you can feel it when you walk into the classroom.”

Home and School leader Naomi Fields witnessed Miller’s skills up close. Field’s eighth grade daughter Elizabeth has attended South Suburban for the past three years. “She is a very good communicator,” remarked Naomi, who also pointed out Miller’s ability to pursue opportunities for the students. The school is close to the downtown area and during the Christmas holidays businesses decorated Christmas trees. The principal seized this opportunity to raise the school’s visibility by having the students decorate a tree with the school’s name featured prominently. Another idea she pursued was to help the students write a book which is now in production. Fields said, “she got the information and helped the kids do their portion.” Copies will go on sale as a fundraiser.

RAISING THE BAR

It wasn’t a surprise that when the pipe burst in September 2018 Emmanuel Church members threw themselves into supporting the students and faculty, applying their dollar-a-day funds to the students. The experience perfectly summarizes what makes South Suburban an attractive school: community support and the initiative of an exceptional teacher and principal.

The legacy of care and love continues with Miller, both as teacher and mother to her 4-year-old son, Harper. She does Thursday check-ins to ensure emotional regulation and starts every day by telling her students to declare that this day will be a great one and reminds them that their words have power.

Miller is now setting her sights on making the larger community aware of the school and Adventist education. South Suburban prides itself on its efforts in the arts and STEM. In a district-wide Black history writing competition, where participants were tasked with picking a piece of art and writing a 100-word essay about someone who inspires them, all the winners were Adventist students.

The school’s strength, however, is its focus on science and mathematics. Boasting Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) scores within the 80th percentile, South Suburban School demonstrates it can compete with top-ranked institutions. Miller credits the success to teachers such as Luzmila Badillo Gualdrón, whose training in mathematics has fostered excitement in the subject.

Now in her ninth year in the classroom — fifth at South Suburban, Miller makes it clear she is enjoying walking in her calling in Adventist Christian education. She hopes her children will see in her what she saw in Humphries, a teacher who created welcoming environments for learning and faith and encouraged them to give their best every day.

“There is something special about Adventist education where everyone can stop and pray over a student and see them baptized,” Miller explained, “It’s been a blessing to be with the kids. We’re educating our students for today, the future and eternity.” ■

Nicole Brown-Dominguez is a Chicago-based freelance writer.



The Holy Place

“IF YOU CAN HEAR ME, CLAP ONCE.”

THERE WAS NO RESPONDING CLAP HEARD THROUGH THE MELEE THAT WAS MY CURRENT CLASSROOM.

I WAVED MY HANDS ABOVE MY HEAD. I RANG THE BELL THAT SIGNIFIED TIME'S UP. I YELLED. I WENT UP TO A COUPLE OF KIDS AND SAID I WAS TRYING TO GET EVERYONE'S ATTENTION, SO I NEEDED THEM TO BE QUIET WHILE I GOT THE REST SETTLED. THEY NODDED OK BUT THEN KEPT RIGHT ON TALKING AS I WENT TO ANOTHER GROUP. I YELLED AGAIN, LOUDER. NOTHING.

And by this time, you as the reader are wondering how I can call myself a teacher when I can't control my classroom, a teacher with many years of experience no less. For a moment, I, too, wondered that same thought! It was proving to be *“that class.”*

I had taken a year off teaching when my husband retired because, as he said, I was coming home

sideways from the challenges of a particularly hard school year.

During my year off (which ended up including several long-term substitute teacher gigs), I had decided I wouldn't send out lots of resumes. The Lord knew where I was and where I needed to be. I left it in His hands.



You, my child, were
into a world at war
Retreat is impossible
Arm yourself.

The following summer on a sunny July day, I commented to my husband, “I guess the Lord doesn’t want me back in the classroom this fall since I haven’t gotten any calls.”

Apparently, that was the trigger for the Lord to pull. The very next day I got a call from Linda Fuchs, education director of the Lake Union Conference at that time, asking if I would be willing to cover a maternity leave. “But I do have to tell you that it could be a bit of a challenge,” she added as she ended our conversation. This didn’t deter me as I have been one to relish that kind of challenge.

I spoke with Nicole Mattson, the local conference superintendent. She echoed Linda’s words, “This class needs an experienced teacher who is comfortable taking on a challenge. This class has been a struggle at times.”

The principal put it even more bluntly, “You have to understand, this is *‘that class’*” — a sentiment that would be voiced several more times by teachers and others associated with the school before I even met the class.

And this day, maybe three weeks into the school year, I met the full force of that challenge. This was one of the first days I had given them an active group work project that I knew would make some amount of noise, but I thought that as seventh graders they could handle it. Things started out ok for the first five minutes or so but while I was helping a group in the front corner, I could tell that several groups were no longer on task. When I was done with the first group, I stopped by two other groups and redirected them. It worked for a few moments. A kid asked for some odd supplies that were somewhere in my desk. As I was digging through trying to find them, I knew that basically the whole class was no longer on task, the volume was through the roof and kids were all over the place. I stood up and clapped. No response. After trying various methods, I sent up a quick prayer. What was I going to do to get the kids back to some semblance of order, or better yet: self-control?

At the beginning of the year, I had set up a living room in the back corner where we would always meet for worship, often for reading time, and sometimes for other necessary discussions. With a clean new carpet, several colorful throws and pillows, and an odd collection of chairs, it was an inviting space that allowed for different experiences and thoughts than when sitting on a hard desk chair.

I had staked a claim to one of the chairs, telling the students that they were not allowed to use it **except** any time they wanted to spend a few moments in personal prayer. It was to be a holy place in the classroom. A couple of students had taken some prayer time at the chair, but it had not had much traffic, except my before and after school moments of seeking His blessing.

Now, in this out-of-control moment, having exhausted my teacher options, I decided to give it to the Spirit. Weaving my way quietly through the melee, I headed to the prayer chair, as we were in the habit of calling it. With my back to the students, I knelt in front of it and bowed with eyes closed, pleading with the Lord to pour His Spirit into my classroom. It felt like the proverbial minute on the wrong side of the bathroom door, but I know it wasn’t more than a minute before I heard Stan’s* voice from the front of the room.

“Guys, she’s at the prayer chair!”

Ten seconds later, he was kneeling beside me, his arm resting across my shoulder. A second or two later, Jay slipped down on the other side. Within a minute all were on their knees, praying. And it was quiet and still, only the Spirit was moving.

We lingered in the living room for a bit, not so I could preach or scold, but that the Spirit would have more time to speak to each heart in that class. And in a Christian classroom, Spirit-controlled is even better than self-controlled. ■

*names have been changed

Sari Butler taught for many years in Michigan academies until her retirement in 2017

“**Within a minute all were on their knees, praying. And it was quiet and still, only the Spirit was moving.**”



Steve Atkins



Beginning Eternity

Raising Children in Their Early Years

The pre-K room at The Crayon Box Children's Learning Center at Andrews University is a colorful maze of learning centers — one features a wall-mounted rotary phone, play kitchen, and rack of dress-up clothes. Even the bathrooms are built with low sinks and miniature stalls.

The three-year-olds' room is laid out in similar fashion, with bright rugs and interactive toys on tables around the room. In the corner, yellow and red couches invite children to sit a while as their friends host imaginary meals cooked on a nearby play kitchen. This is a world made for children.

Esther Louw was drawn to the way the



By Sarah Gane Burton

Illustration by Karen Jimenez Findley

“classrooms looked like the teachers made it for the children.” She was impressed that the classrooms had a dedicated space for worship and that the curriculum the center follows teaches spiritual concepts. Louw and her husband, Eric, are both graduate students at Andrews University and parents of three-year-old Lauren. Louw knew she could take

classes half-time and keep Lauren at home, but the amount of time required for classes, studying and childcare was unsustainable. It made more sense to study full-time and have Lauren in daycare. Additionally, Louw wanted her daughter to spend time with other children. When a spot opened at The Crayon Box, the Louws enrolled Lauren.

For Louw, the reality of “it takes a village to raise a child” was instrumental in helping her decide to send her daughter to The Crayon Box. “We don’t have a village anymore, like people used to have,” she says. “We don’t have extended neighbors or family members around us anymore. Putting your child in an environment that is safe is no different.”



▲ Children from The Crayon Box listen to a story (top) and to a fire safety presentation.

She is grateful for “the emphasis that the teachers put into the children” and that her daughter is growing and learning in an Adventist environment.

The Louw family represent a large percentage of parents, many from non-Adventist backgrounds, who are entrusting the care of their children to professionals in childcare centers across the Lake Union. In a series of interviews with the directors of the five early childhood centers operating within the four-state territory of the Lake Union, the story is the same: many parents are choosing Adventist daycares for a variety of reasons. Several centers have a waitlist, even though they do not spend money on advertising.

How did we end up here against a backdrop of dueling philosophies on the best approach for raising children? Economic realities, the physical separation of nuclear families from extended family networks, and a host of other reasons necessitate dedicated, professional early childhood educational centers. In response, early childhood education programs have been developed by local churches across the Lake Union. These were initially grassroot programs started by church members that were successful enough to become full-fledged centers specifically serving preschool children. Today, five centers are state licensed/registered and/or NAD accredited and adhere to all health and safety standards.

Sue Tidwell is the associate director of Early Childhood Education at the Lake Union, helping the centers implement the North American Division curriculum, “Creation Kids,” and follow accreditation guidelines. The curriculum is currently being updated and a new curriculum for birth through age two is near completion. With these updates and other changes, the NAD hopes to bring in a level of professionalism and recognition to the field of early childhood education to foster permanence and guarantee the sustainability of these centers beyond their current directors.

“The Adventist church is already known for its education system. We can also be

known for our early childhood education and the curriculum that we have that provides a Bible-based, Christian-based foundation for all their learning,” says Tidwell.

SERVING A UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

The Crayon Box Children’s Learning Center has a unique origin story. Based on the Andrews University campus in Berrien Springs, it began as a child development lab in the 1950s and continues to have a close relationship with Andrews University faculty and students. Students majoring in early education have the opportunity to gain experience with young children at The Crayon Box and may observe and develop lesson plans under the supervision of the staff. Forty-five student workers assist the 13 staff in caregiving.

The Crayon Box has classrooms for children ages 2 weeks old through young 5’s, with a capacity of 150 children. They also offer afterschool, snow day, or holiday care for school age children up to the age of 12. In the summer, they run the Andrews University Summer Camp.

The children of faculty, staff and students are frequent attendees of The Crayon Box, along with children from the community. About 50% of the children come from Adventist families, the other 50% from primarily Christian families, and there is a waitlist for every classroom. Special programs and potlucks provide opportunities for the families to enjoy time together. A “free” table in the hallway of The Crayon Box piled with outgrown clothes and books that parents take from and restock testifies to the community environment.

“The families really buy into us,” says director Kristine Conklin. “Our infant room is already full for the next calendar year, and they are all siblings from current kids. Many of the parents who are not associated with the university are first responders: police officers, doctors, nurses, firefighters,” she explains. “Those people are needing to work; they need us to be here.”



▲ Of the 85 students attending the Troy Adventist Academy in Troy, Michigan, only a handful come from Adventist families. The majority are Hindu, with some Muslims and (non-Adventist) Christians.

The center emphasizes learning through play. “We don’t do ‘daycare hours’ or ‘learning hours,’ we learn all day,” says Conklin. “If you are walking to the playground, you’re counting: how many kids are there? We try to incorporate learning into play so that it’s not stressful for them, it’s fun.”

Conklin emphasizes the center’s goal to prepare children for living well, not just for school. “We want to make them really good people.”

SERVING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

At Troy Adventist Academy Preschool (TAAP), children work on crafts and manipulatives at tables or on the floor in bright, robin-egg blue classrooms. Located in Troy, Michigan, the preschool hosts classrooms for ages 6 weeks to 5 years old, with 85 current students and a waiting list. Due to the long waiting list last year, a second toddler room was opened, totaling five classrooms.

Of the 85 students, only a handful come from Adventist families. The majority are Hindu, with some Muslims and (non-Adventist) Christians. The staff is also widely diverse. “It makes my heart happy that they are willing to accommodate one another and be kind and learn to live together and work together,” says director Terri Morgan.

The center’s positive reputation has spread through word-of-mouth, with parents sometimes registering their children before they even enter the United States. Hindu and Muslim parents particularly appreciate that the center serves vegetarian food. The pre-K classroom is involved in a singing program



▲ Lambs Early Learning Center attracts families from the five Adventist churches in the Hinsdale area, as well as UChicago Medicine AdventHealth.



▲ Children from the Illinois Gurnee Christian Preschool learn Christ-centered lessons.

at Christmas and in the spring. These programs, and potlucks put on by the center, are well-attended by the parents. “The Hindu families are very interested in community,” says Morgan. “They love the potlucks and get-togethers.”

Morgan has facilitated engagement with the Intermediate School District so that qualifying students can receive services they offer, and she was recently invited to set up a booth at the Troy School District Adult Education Fair. “They asked if they could partner with us because they have heard from some of their students that this is a great place to work and very supportive of continuing education.”

Morgan is clear that this is not a business arrangement, this is ministry. Her philosophy is simple, “We teach the little children that God created them, that God loves them, that God expects them to love others, and that God sent Jesus. It’s like Sabbath school time every day. Not only do the children hear all of that but the staff do too. We are not here to take away what other people believe in. We are here to make what we believe so attractive that others want it. Let’s make this place a place of compassion, refuge and peace.”

BIBLE-BASED CURRICULUM

Children pose for a photo in the Gurnee Christian Preschool hallway in front of a festive red and pink bulletin board that says, “God is Love.” Like all the centers in the Lake Union, the preschool in Gurnee, Illinois, uses the “Creation Kids” curriculum. “A lot of

parents are looking for a safe place for their kids,” says director Delmy Jimenez. “First, they hear about the curriculum we are teaching, that we are teaching about Jesus, and they start asking about the program. They can see that we are not only here to teach their kids but that we show them love.”

Jimenez and six staff provide care for 20 children, with over half coming from non-Adventist community families. The preschool is full, with a waiting list, even though they have not advertised. “People find the program,” says Jimenez.

Jimenez tells prospective families upfront about the purpose of the curriculum in teaching young children about Jesus. “We always tell the parents, that what we want to do is help the kids come close to Jesus. I’ve never had a parent say, ‘I don’t like this place, I don’t want to bring my child here.’”

The preschool operates in the same building as Gurnee Christian Academy. When Jimenez began as director two years ago, only three children transitioned from the center to the kindergarten on site. “Right now, 14 of the kids are candidates to go to kindergarten and parents are asking about the program.”

When the church does activities, the preschool sends out information and sometimes the parents come. “We all have a mission,” remarks Jimenez, “and that’s to show others the love of Jesus. So, we try to show the kids that we love them and care about them.”

BUILDING CHARACTER AND COMMUNITY

Parents in Hinsdale, Illinois, are also looking for a safe place for their children to learn and grow. Ashley Robles directs the Little Lambs Early Learning Center, which currently has 24 students enrolled between the ages of 3–5 and six staff members. The center also shares space with the only pre-K to 12th grade Adventist school in the state of Illinois — Hinsdale Adventist Academy — serving the five local Adventist churches and UChicago Medicine AdventHealth. Of the 24 students, less than half are children of Adventist church members. Robles notes that many of the parents are highly educated, “so when we explain that the children are learning through play, they want to know if they are learning their letters and numbers. They have been impressed by how much their kids are learning through our curriculum.”

Robles views the Little Lambs Early Learning Center as a true community outreach program. The school is very engaged in the community, including walking around the neighborhood and picking produce from a garden maintained by community ladies. For Robles, “our mission expands to our community. We also strive to create an environment where parents are involved in the school community.” The church has a Monday morning prayer with parents when pastors come and pray with them; all parents are invited to stay. The church is also involved with Week of Prayer and other activities.

Robles credits the center’s success to the wholistic nature of the program and the positive environment it offers. “Parents are looking for a safe environment for their children. Parents are looking for that character development they might not see in other schools.” They are impressed by the curriculum, which teaches through play and includes social-emotional learning (SEL). If issues arise, the school community manages conflict resolution by inviting the parents to partner in discovering solutions, making parents “feel they are seen, and their kids are important to us.” “We are trying to implement a loving and caring environment.”

A PLACE TO PLAY AND LEARN

Door Prairie Christian Daycare is located on a beautiful 16-acre campus shared with Door Prairie Adventist Christian School in LaPorte, Indiana. The school is located at the edge of the city and the children enjoy two playgrounds and a big gym equipped with toys and balance bikes. “The kids run even during the winter,” says Elizabeth Rassi, daycare supervisor and acting director. One of the playgrounds was recently built entirely with the donations of parents and church members and volunteer effort from the parents.

The center has preschool and daycare classes, with children moving fluidly between the two. Usually, parents must choose either a preschool or a daycare program, Rassi explains, so the center is unique in offering both together. This, along with the potty-training offered in the 2-year-old class, is a big incentive for parents to enroll their children at the center. The two strictly preschool staff are certified, and the other eight staff members move between preschool and daycare.

About 50 children attend the daycare weekly, none of whom are from Adventist families. The Door Prairie Adventist Church doesn’t have many little children, but they decided to continue operating the center. When the daycare participates in school programs hosted by the church, there is standing room only as community families and church members gather to enjoy the performance.

“The staff are kind of like family,” says daycare director Lee Whitman, who also serves as an Indiana Conference pastor. “One person in the preschool has been there for 15 years. People tend to stay there once they come because it’s a good environment.” Rassi, who has worked at the center for five years, agrees, “It’s not only a good place to send your kids it’s also a great place to work.”

Rassi strives to create a transparent environment for the parents. “The parents have all our cellphone numbers,” she says. “We are really big on communication.” The transparency, uniqueness of the center’s offerings, and the spiritual curriculum make the center

an attractive place for community families to send their children. As with several Lake Union centers, there is no need to advertise — families learn about the program through word-of-mouth and there is a waiting list. “I like to think that since we are a religious facility, we can help the parents feel comfortable that we are a Christian environment,” says Rassi.

LET THE LITTLE CHILDREN COME

For Adventist families who do need childcare, Adventist early childhood education centers provide an environment with an Adventist worldview. Community families sending their children to Adventist daycares and preschools can trust that their children are learning, playing and growing in a loving, Christ-filled environment. Sue Tidwell sees the need for quality childcare as an incredible area of mission and outreach. “It introduces these little children to Jesus,” Tidwell says. The goal is not to create a daycare-to-elementary school pipeline, but to model Christianity and help these little children understand that Jesus loves them. “We don’t know the outcomes,” she says. “They will be known in eternity.” ■

For more information about these programs, please visit the following websites:

- The Crayon Box Children’s Learning Center: andrews.edu/services/crayonbox/
- Door Prairie Christian Daycare: dpacs.org
- Gurnee Christian Preschool: gurneechristian.school
- Little Lambs Early Learning Center: haa.org/preschool
- Troy Adventist Academy Preschool: troymi.adventist-schoolconnect.org

Sarah Gane Burton is a freelance writer based in Berrien Springs, Michigan.



▲ Door Prairie Christian Daycare in LaPorte, Indiana, attracts families from the community.

THE EARLY YEARS OF CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

DAYCARE VS HOMECARE

By Evelyn Sullivan | Illustration by Karen Jimenez Findley



If I ask you to go back in time and recall one of your favorite early childhood memories, no doubt your experience would include people, places and events.

I'm sure we can each share memorable stories that would put a smile on our faces. I can vividly remember listening to my grandmother read Bible stories while I was on her lap as she rocked me back and forth on a big rocking chair. The sound of the creaking chair, her soothing voice, and remembering the glasses that framed her face still warm my heart.

However, I recognize that some people did not have a positive early childhood journey due to traumatic events, neglect and adults who did not protect them. Whether good or bad, early childhood experiences shape and form the people we become. The North American Division has invested in incorporating early childhood education as the foundation of our education journey because we believe we must begin the journey on solid ground.

Historically, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has often quoted Ellen G. White's statement from 1872 that "Parents should be the only teacher of their children until they have reached eight or ten years of age."¹

You may ask, "Why are we starting children so young in our Seventh-day Adventist schools?" I'm always prepared to answer this question. The answer surprises people each time.

White said, "Mothers should be able to instruct their little ones wisely during the earlier years of childhood. If every mother were capable of doing this, and would take time to teach her children the lessons they should learn in early life, then all children could be kept in the home school until they are eight, or nine, or ten years old."²

White believed the ideal plan was for the mother to be the teacher during the formative years. However, she said, "God wants us all to have common sense, and He wants us to reason from common sense. Circumstances alter conditions. Circumstances change the relation of things."³

During the past 60 years, early childhood education (centers, preschools and pre-kindergarten classrooms) has been a topic of discussion among educators and government leaders. Some believe that early childhood education wastes time and money, while others believe investing in the early years can save us money in the long run. One thing I am sure about is that the early years are important.

"... Therefore, I, from the light that God has given me, [declare that] if there is a family that has not the capabilities of education, nor discipline and government over their children, requiring obedience, the very best thing is to put them in some place where they will obey. Put them in some place where they will be required to obey, because obedience is better than sacrifice. Good behavior is to be carried out in every family ... The Lord wants us to take all things into consideration."⁴

White was practical and not afraid to say God had shown her new light. This new light was given to her because she recognized that mothers were working, and the children were left unattended while they were working. She admitted that it would be better for the little ones to be under the discipline of a trained teacher than left unattended on their own.

"I say, these little children that are small ought to have education, just what they would get in school. They ought to have the school discipline under a person who understands how to deal with children in accordance with their different temperaments. ... He wants this education to commence with



the little ones. If the mother has not the tact, the ingenuity, if she does not know how to treat human minds, she must put them under somebody that will discipline them and mold and fashion their minds.”⁵

Now that we have sorted out what White counseled on school-age entrance, we can all agree that the early years are essential. She also said, “Now I want that just as long as Willie’s children (ages 7 and 3) are here, and they live here, they should have the discipline of a school. If it can be connected with this school by putting on an addition to the building, one room say, for such students, every one of us ought to feel a responsibility to provide that room....”⁶

How about that? White counseled that a building, one room [small centers or pre-schools] be added to schools. She was ahead of the times and recognized that those early years are the foundation of character development. Once again, she recognized that having a separate school for the little ones was important.

The early years are called the foundation years on which all future learning is built. If the foundation of a house is weak, it will compromise the structure’s integrity. The same can be said about the foundation during the early years — if it is compromised, it will weaken the child’s learning ability. The early years prepare children for successful experiences impacting their formal learning, behavior and health. Happy and stable children tend to become happy and stable adults.

Early childhood development is divided into five stages. Each stage builds on the previous stage. The first stage is **newborn development**. At this stage, the child is dependent on adults for everything. The second stage is **infant development**. An infant is also reliant on adults but has progressed in development. The third stage is **toddler development**. They still depend on adults but are beginning to show their independence. The fourth stage is **preschooler development**; you see the most growth during this

stage. They start separating themselves from their parents but still depend on other adults (i.e., teachers). The fifth stage is **school-age development**.

Investment in Seventh-day Adventist Early Childhood Education (ECE) is investing in future happy and healthy adults. For example, the first three years of life can profoundly impact reading when a child is in third grade. The more words children are exposed to during their formative years, the more confident they will be when they learn to read. Building vocabulary during the early years facilitates strong reading comprehension. Reading opens the world to extraordinary opportunities that can lead to future success.

Before kindergarten, if a child attends a Seventh-day Adventist center, preschool or pre-kindergarten program, the teacher will focus on helping students develop their spiritual growth, fine and gross motor skills, social-emotional skills, physical, linguistic and cognitive skills. These skills prepare children to receive formal educational instruction. This is often referred to as school readiness. When children start formal school ready to

learn, they will have the necessary tools for future success — this will allow children to confidently learn new skills and cope with new challenges.

ECE provides the building blocks for educational success. We all need to help lay a strong foundation for future success during this significant period. ECE is a partnership between the home, church, early childhood program, extended family, community and beyond. If your church or school is interested in starting an early childhood program, contact your local conference and union office of education. Together, we can help build happy and healthy children who will want to share Jesus’s love with others around them. ■

¹ Testimonies, Volume 3, Section IV, page 137
² Selected Messages, Book 3, Section VI, Counsel Regarding Age of School Entrance, pages 214–215
³ Ibid., page 225
⁴ Ibid., page 217
⁵ Ibid., pages 119–120
⁶ Ibid., page 219

Evelyn Sullivan, MEd, is director for Early Childhood Education at the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists.





▲ Jill Jennings, naturopathic doctor and founder of Foundational Health, prepared green smoothies for attendees as part of her presentation on nutrition.

Weekend Summit Offers Guidance on Teaching about Nutrition & Health

THE INDIANA CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS RECENTLY HOSTED THE HEALTH MINISTRY SUMMIT AT THE SPENCER, INDIANA, TIMBER RIDGE CAMP TO DISCUSS WAYS TO PROMOTE HEALTH AND NUTRITION WITHIN LOCAL CHURCHES.

Families were invited to attend for a weekend of faith, fellowship and learning about health. In preparation for the event, Lee Whitman, health director at the Indiana Conference, connected with Mark Bondarenko, executive director of mission integration at UChicago Medicine AdventHealth.

“The purpose of the event was to inspire our church communities in Indiana with innovative ways to do health ministry,” Bondarenko said. “The goal was to discuss how best to serve the needs of the church community. How do you recognize what your community needs and then help them find it? How can you be useful to your community?”

Speakers and facilitators at the summit included Jill Jennings, a naturopathic doctor and founder of Foundational Health, a

biblically-based lifestyle medicine program; Sherwin R. Callwood Sr., ThD, who has been a pastor for 36 years in Adventist Church conferences and is now chaplain manager at UChicago Medicine AdventHealth La Grange; Andres Flores, who was a church planting pastor and church planting coordinator for the Illinois Conference for 10 years; and Janette Rodriguez-Flores, a musician.

The summit overall focused on the 10 bricks that make up the foundation of health: faith, mindset, nutrition, movement, rest, finances, environment, community, stress management and purpose. However, Bondarenko said, there was a special focus on faith, nutrition and stress.

The faith emphasis of the summit was established from the beginning of the event,

with an opening prayer and vespers services on Friday as well as a full Sabbath service and night of worship and fellowship on Saturday. Stress management was covered in educational sessions and through encouraging participation in activities such as nature walks and music.

Perhaps the highlight of the weekend for many attendees was a two-hour cooking demonstration on how to prepare delicious whole-food, plant-based meals. “The nutrition section was very popular,” Bondarenko said. “It focused on what a whole-food, plant-based diet can do for your body and how that can help your mind and spirit.”

About 60 people, ranging in age from 14 to 80, attended the summit. Whitman said that about 40 of those were from the Indiana Conference, including 16 different churches, and the remainder were from the Illinois Conference.

The feedback from the attendees was overwhelmingly positive. “People loved it,” Whitman said. “It had a good, strong Bible base, and it was very relatable.”

Some comments submitted by attendees included:

“I’m totally happy with the whole experience. God is doing amazing work.”

“The presentation was awesome, and very spiritual and educational. Loved the food.”

“Thanks to the organizers. May God bless you and guide you for more of these seminars — and please invite me!”

Whitman hopes to have a health ministry summit every year, expanding on this one and emphasizing other aspects of health.

“This encourages people to be healthy and to share in community how to be healthy,” he said. ■

Julie Busch is associate vice president, marketing and communications for UChicago Medicine AdventHealth



Museum of Nature & Science Developing New Plans



World Changers Made Here.

THE ANDREWS UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF NATURE & SCIENCE IS DEVELOPING NEW EDUCATION PROGRAMS TO MAKE THE MOST OF THE SPECIMENS ON HAND. THE MUSEUM HAS GROWN SLOWLY BUT REMAINED PRIMARILY UNCHANGED SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN 1962, WHEN IT BEGAN AS A COLLECTION OF DONATED SPECIMENS USED FOR TEACHING IN THE BIOLOGY DEPARTMENT.

The majority of the museum's artifacts and collections have been donated over the years by alumni or members of the community, including the museum's most famous piece, the "Prillwitz Mammoth," a Columbian Mammoth (*Mammuthus columbi*) discovered by a local farmer in Eau Claire, Michigan, in 1962.

One of the major recent changes in the museum was the addition of Roshelle Hall as adjunct assistant curator. Since taking the position in January 2022, Roshelle has been working alongside curator and professor of biology Daniel Gonzalez-Socoloske to improve various aspects of the museum and community engagement. The team is currently working on a three-pronged strategy for the Andrews University Museum of Nature and Science, including greater community participation and engagement, scientific collaboration and academic development.

Hall and Gonzalez-Socoloske agree that community engagement is a critical component of their museum development plan. "We're always thinking of new ways to connect with our community," said Gonzalez-Socoloske. "To connect with our community on a deeper level, we will be revamping displays, putting a much more concerted effort into labeling specimens and setting up thematic displays. We also want to be much more intentional about our outreach programs that are anchored in the museum's mission, which is environmental education."

The museum also intends to become a working museum that actively promotes scientific research. Hall emphasized the necessity of correctly categorizing specimens and making them accessible via internet databases, allowing scholars to obtain critical data without physically visiting the museum. This effort will improve collaboration among scientists around the world and help biodiversity research. "In discussions with other universities, they're excited to hear what we are planning to do with developing our online database of our unique specimens," Hall explained.

The museum seeks to enrich Andrews University's curriculum by serving as a resource for various courses such as biology, art, design and education. Both Hall and

Gonzalez-Socoloske believe that museum specimens and the new displays can provide hands-on learning opportunities that bridge theory with practical experiences. By engaging with a diverse range of disciplines, the museum can become a dynamic educational tool for students across the university, Southwest Michigan and even the world.

The museum is committed to being more accessible and relevant to a broader community. Plans include rebranding and revitalizing displays to focus on local ecosystems, global species and current pressing environmental issues. The museum looks to actively participate in groundbreaking work and events through outreach activities to educate and engage people of all backgrounds.

To learn more about visiting, volunteering, contributing to research or donating to the Andrews University Museum of Nature & Science, please contact assistant curator Roshelle Hall by email at hall@andrews.edu. ■

Nicholas Gunn is a University Communication student writer.



▲ Daniel Gonzalez-Socoloske and Roshelle Hall hold specimens while standing in front of the "Prillwitz Mammoth," the most complete Columbian Mammoth found in the state of Michigan. The mammoth's remains were discovered in 1962 on the Wesley Prillwitz farm in Eau Claire, Michigan.

Nicholas Gunn

Indiana Church Moves to Alleviate Hunger Crisis

INDIANA'S SOUTH BEND FIRST CHURCH HAS INITIATED A PROJECT TO HELP ALLEVIATE HUNGER IN A REGION OF SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA.



▲ In a partnership with Adventist University of Africa and Hope Channel Africa, a consignment of food was delivered on Nov. 19, 2023.

The church's support of the Maasai community in Kenya started last year with a Christmas project to raise funds to support three church companies in Kajiado, Kenya, that are experiencing famine.

Associate Pastor Omwocha Nyaribo is from Kenya and approached his congregation about taking on this project because he was aware of the widespread suffering.

"The church responded so well," he said, quickly raising \$9,000.

In a partnership with Adventist University of Africa and Hope Channel Africa, a

consignment of food was delivered on Nov. 19, 2023.

Furthermore, Save the Children is projecting an estimated one million children under the age of 5 and 135,000 pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers are acutely malnourished and in need of treatment.

At South Bend First Church, the vision is to empower the Maasai community to become self-sustainable by drilling three wells and teaching sustainable farming practices.

The church has partnered with Maranatha Volunteer International to drill these wells in June and July 2024. Their goal is to raise \$30,000 to make this a reality and ensure the Maasai community never suffers from hunger or thirst again.

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink ..." Matthew 25:35 ■

Indiana Conference Communication

Kenosha Dedicates New Church Building

ON SABBATH, JAN. 6, MEMBERS OF THE KENOSHA COMPANY GATHERED FOR A SPECIAL CELEBRATION — THE DEDICATION OF THEIR NEW CHURCH BUILDING! THE CONGREGATION HAD A LONG JOURNEY IN FINDING THIS BUILDING, BUT THEY HAVE DEFINITELY SEEN GOD'S HAND IN THE PROCESS.

The company had previously been meeting in a location with no off-street parking and no main floor restrooms. It was no longer meeting their needs and they began looking for a new place to worship. They considered several buildings before this one became available, each one seeming to be the right one. However, God had a better place in mind right on the main street of town with a lot of visibility, making it easy for visitors to find!

After finding the right place, there was still some work to do. George Andrews, lay pastor, said, "We had to have a lot of vision in order to see a one-time tailor shop turned into

a place of worship. You would never know it wasn't a church setting. To God be the glory!" Renovations were completed with the help of donated commercial floor tiles, given by church members in Wisconsin.

The congregation was eager to begin ministry in their new location and Andrews held his first evangelistic series there shortly after the building was purchased.

The dedication service was a time of celebration for the members, many of whom shared their excitement for their new church sanctuary. They also appreciated the presence of Wisconsin Conference officers,



Titus Naftanaila, president, and Amir Gulzar, executive secretary/treasurer, who came to assist in conducting the dedication of the church building.

The celebration ended with a time of fellowship sharing a meal together.

The members of the Kenosha Company are thankful for God's blessings and anxious to see how He will lead them in the future. ■

George Andrews is the Kenosha Company lay pastor, **Bill Ochs** is Wisconsin's Planned Giving & Trust Services director and **Laurella Case** is Wisconsin's communication coordinator.

Making Friendships Blossom and the Church Grow Through a Plant Exchange

VILLAGE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH'S WOMEN'S MINISTRIES GROUP HOSTED A THRIVING PLANT EXCHANGE WITH NEARLY 100 PARTICIPANTS IN MAY 2023. THE EVENT OFFERED MORE THAN JUST GREENS; IT FOSTERED THE EXCITEMENT OF GROWING BEAUTIFUL SURROUNDINGS, PROMOTED THE THERAPEUTIC CONSEQUENCES OF PLAYING IN THE DIRT, AND PROVIDED A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY TO GET UP CLOSE WITH NATURE TO SEE HOW GOD'S CREATION DEVELOPS. PASTOR RON KELLY SAID THIS EVENT IS A FANTASTIC OPPORTUNITY TO ENCOURAGE ADVENTISTS TO GET BACK TO THEIR AGRICULTURAL ROOTS.

One of the most heartwarming parts of such events is knowing that they create an opportunity to connect with community members or church members who have not been attending for a while. One of the Village Church's online viewers had a daughter in the area who had not been to church in some time. The online viewer encouraged their daughter to go to the exchange and check out the planting options. Thankfully, the daughter did decide to come to visit the church. You never know what higher purpose God might have for church socials designed to care for, and share with, the community.

Plants that were shared included tomatoes, squash, watermelon, flowering annuals and perennials, herbs and more. Several people dug up seedlings to share, and others gave away old plants they no longer wanted.

Not just plants were provided. Healthy fresh food, in the form of asparagus, grape tomatoes, and packets of onion sets were shared with those who wanted them. Additionally, seed potatoes were provided that could be planted in something as simple as a bale of straw. Seed packets were also given away and ten people went home with handmade bird houses.

Volunteers collected unused or donated garden equipment to share with those in need, including multiple small rototillers, garden gloves, fertilizer and more. The church generously donated hundreds of dollars' worth of seed-starting soil to help gardeners get growing.

The event was largely organized by Village member Diane Trickett. Flowers are one of Diane's passions and they continually remind her of other people. She said that anytime someone divides a plant or shares with others, it creates a memorable token of joy to remember them. Diane asked, "Whenever it blooms, who do you think about?"

At the end of the previous event, no plants, seeds, soil or tools remained. Many people are anticipating the event this spring. The upcoming plant exchange will offer free items such as grass seed, garden hoes, rake, shovel, a bulb drill and more.

Please plan to attend this May 19 from 10 a.m.–12 p.m. Even if you don't have your own items to exchange, you will be welcome to take a few items. Spiritual books will also be available for participants who stop by. ■

Robert Rice is the Village Church Bible worker.





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Conferences Launch Joint Online Academy

THREE CONFERENCES IN THE LAKE UNION ARE TEAMING UP TO DELIVER SYNCHRONOUS ADVENTIST EDUCATION ONLINE FOR GRADES 1–8. TOGETHER, THEY’RE BRINGING LIVE INSTRUCTION TO CHILDREN ACROSS INDIANA, WISCONSIN AND ILLINOIS, ALLOWING THEM TO ACCESS EDUCATION SAFELY FROM THEIR HOMES FOUR DAYS A WEEK.

The Rationale: INspire Academy was launched by the Indiana Conference during the 2023–2024 school year as a successful synchronous online school. Building upon this success, they’re expanding the reach by joining forces with other conferences to extend this opportunity to students in neighboring states. The goal is to make Adventist education accessible to children in both rural areas and busy urban settings.

Nuts and Bolts: The school day will commence at 8:30 a.m. and conclude at 3:30 p.m. Additionally, they’re organizing optional field trips to facilitate face-to-face social interaction among students. These outdoor education events, academy education days,

planned field trips, and other activities are designed to cultivate friendships and foster social development in students. As is the case in Indiana, the Wisconsin vouchers will help pay tuition for any eligible students.

For more information on enrolling for the 2024–2025 school year, please visit INspiresda.org, select the “Apply Today” button and complete the interest form.

Please continue to pray as we work together to educate our children for eternity. ■

Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin Communication

Young People Team Up With Their Pastors to Preach Overseas

A GROUP OF YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS FROM CHURCHES ACROSS THE LAKE UNION TEAMED WITH THEIR LOCAL PASTORS TO PREACH THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL THROUGHOUT CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA, AS WELL AS THE CARIBBEAN. THE 13 PARTICIPANTS – FOUR PASTORS AND NINE OF THEIR RESPECTIVE YOUNG ADULT CHURCH MEMBERS – PARTNERED LAST YEAR WITH THE MINISTRY SHAREHIM TO WORK WITH ACTIVE EVANGELISTIC EFFORTS.

FIRSTHAND ACCOUNTS

Abdiel Lozano and Diana Mora, together with Freddy De los Santos, senior pastor of Milwaukee North Hispanic and three other churches in Wisconsin, journeyed to Santa Clara, Peru, to work with an evangelistic campaign.

Diana, who currently works as a school paraprofessional, admitted some nervousness even though she had preached before; yet she was buoyed by how encouraging and supportive the Santa Clara church members were. She also recalled a day of divine “serendipity.”

“November 1 is celebrated as the Day of the Dead, and by God’s providence, that was the day I preached about the state of the dead,” said Diana. “I could see that many people were hearing this message for the first time, and they were being convinced by what Scripture says. At the end of the meetings, one teenage girl decided to be baptized. It was the first baptism held in that relatively new church, so it was a very special celebration.”

Brothers Daniel and Marcus Toppenberg, Detroit-area natives, ventured to Cúcuta, Colombia, with Dan McGrath, pastor of the Metropolitan Church in Plymouth, Michigan. This was a first-time experience for both

► Left to right: Nathan Zapata, Leo Lara, and Fort Wayne First Pastor David DeRose take a break from preaching to enjoy a cultural excursion arranged by the ShareHim coordinators.

Daniel, a senior at Southern Adventist University, and Marcus, a freshman at Union College. They each preached a ten-part series in different churches around the city and according to McGrath, the young men shined!

McGrath said group leaders began calling Marcus “Pastor,” because he did such an excellent job, and Daniel exhibited a unique teaching style that resonated with the guest attendees in a simple yet profound way

► Brothers Daniel and Marcus Toppenberg, Detroit-area natives, ventured to Cúcuta, Colombia, with Dan McGrath, pastor of the Metropolitan Church in Plymouth, Michigan.



▲ Abdiel Lozano and Diana Mora (pictured here), together with Freddy De los Santos, senior pastor of Milwaukee North Hispanic and three other churches in Wisconsin, journeyed to Santa Clara, Peru, to work with an evangelistic campaign.





▲ Thirteen participants from the Lake Union teamed up for evangelism through ShareHim, an initiative based at the Carolina Conference, which seeks to establish strong, healthy mentorship bonds between pastors and young adults. These bonds, forged through a memorable team-building excursion to an international or domestic evangelism site, then provide an impetus for young adults to engage in long-term, active soul-winning in their local spheres or perhaps even beyond.



that deepened their understanding of the Adventist message.

Another pastor who witnessed the impact of his young people preaching the transforming message of Jesus Christ was Darrel le Roux, senior pastor of the Grand Rapids Central and Lowell churches in Michigan. He partnered with Jake McFarland and Trevor Mathison to go to El Salvador, and reported the encounter exceeded their expectations and has even carried over to the home front.

Trevor was grateful for how warm and welcoming the Salvadorian church members were. "I never personally witnessed how powerfully God works in other people's lives on your behalf when you work for Him," he added. "It led a young man to tears and ultimately a baptism."

Actually, it led to multiple baptisms, as Trevor also sealed his decision for Christ earlier this year.

Pastor le Roux says they plan to collaborate and prepare presentations the three will be presenting to the local church. "This was one of my desired outcomes," he noted, "and I believe the ShareHim experience affirmed Jake and Trevor to want to do this back in our own church."

Meanwhile, David DeRose, senior pastor of the Fort Wayne First Church in Indiana, traveled with Nathan Zapata and Leonardo Lara to the Dominican Republic in early October. They witnessed the power of God's Word as they each preached during an evangelistic series.

"The experience not only provided an opportunity for the three of us to bond more closely," said DeRose, "but it helped us to more tangibly appreciate our connection to the worldwide Adventist Church." He continued, "We ministered side-by-side with our brothers and sisters from the Dominican Republic," as well as fellow ShareHim missionaries from Kentucky, Nevada, California and Massachusetts.

ABOUT SHAREHIM

ShareHim, an evangelism initiative based at the Carolina Conference, seeks to establish strong, healthy mentorship bonds between pastors and young adults. These bonds, forged through a memorable team-building excursion to an international or domestic evangelism site, then provide an impetus for young adults to engage in long-term, active soul-winning in their local spheres or perhaps even beyond.

While expressing appreciation for the Lake Union's participation, the director of ShareHim, Jeremiah Weeks, concisely articulated the essence of this ministry: "By God's grace, we're seeing encouraging results, with young adults growing spiritually while building closer mentoring relationships with their pastors. According to the pastors, many of the young people are now more involved in leadership and ministry in their home churches. Also, a number of the young adults involved from the NAD have decided to pursue full-time ministry, which is great news!"

All are invited to visit sharehim.org to learn more about how the ministry operates, survey the trip itinerary for 2024, tap into helpful resources and read inspiring testimonies. Pastors are especially invited to contact ShareHim to discuss the prospect of formulating a team of young adults and participating in one of the upcoming trips. ■

John Simon is a freelance writer.



▲ Since 2013, the gathering has occurred every other year, bringing together senior youth and young adults aged 16–35 from across the Lake Union Conference, along with pastors, youth directors, ministerial directors, conference presidents and union administrators. Pictured here are youth sponsored by the St. Joseph Church in Michigan enjoying the Chicago sights during the 2024 evangelism congress.

At Evangelism Congress Youth Encouraged to “Do Something” for Their Communities

THROUGH A GOD-ORDAINED ENCOUNTER, A GROUP OF ANDREWS UNIVERSITY STUDENTS REGISTERED JUST DAYS BEFORE THE CONGRESS. ONE FAMILY FROM INDIANA TRAVELING TO THE EVENT WAS IN AN ACCIDENT TOTALING THEIR VEHICLE YET THEY PRESSED ON. A HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR WONDERED IF IT WAS TOO LATE TO GIVE HER LIFE TO CHRIST AND REALIZED IT WAS NOW TIME TO BE BAPTIZED.

These were some of the stories from the 300-plus delegates who attended the “Now is the Time” biannual Lake Union Youth Evangelism Congress held in Northbrook, Chicago, Feb. 16–18, 2024. The weekend was a culmination of years planning for an event geared toward equipping and supporting a generation of youth in their evangelistic

endeavors within their respective churches and communities.

Sacramento’s Capitol City Church Pastor Damian Chandler was the featured speaker, and he captivated the audience with his powerful presentations, creating unforgettable moments throughout the weekend.

Dollar-for-dollar match

Through the years, the Lake Union Conference has witnessed remarkable outcomes, with young adult leaders utilizing a total of \$515,872 from a collaborative evangelism fund established by the union, local conferences and local churches to initiate various evangelism projects. The aim of all these initiatives has consistently been to spread the message of the gospel throughout their local communities. Notably, this year’s evangelism fund reached an all-time high, with a generous contribution of \$85,000 from the Lake Union.

For every dollar (up to \$85,000) from the union, the local church will match one dollar. (For example, if an evangelism project total budget is \$1,000, and the local church decides to support with \$500, the Lake Union will match that \$500, completing the \$1,000 the project needs.) This gives young adults a total of \$170,000 for evangelism, further emphasizing the conference’s commitment to empowering and encouraging the youth and young adults in their mission to share the teachings of Jesus Christ within their church community.

Testimonies

Since 2013, the gathering has occurred every other year, bringing together senior youth and young adults aged 16–35 from across the Lake Union Conference, along with pastors, youth directors, ministerial directors, conference presidents and union administrators.

In 2016, KhaiKhai Cin, the organizer of this year’s congress, saw his own evangelism initiative take flight, thanks to the Lake Union Youth Evangelism Congress, and was determined to extend the same opportunity to others. KhaiKhai and his sister, Cady, along with youth from the Grand Rapids Myanmar Company and Battle Creek Zomi Group, launched Myanmar Community Services (MCS), a ministry designed to assist their fellow refugee communities in Grand Rapids, Michigan. “I’ve seen the impact this event had on myself and many young people and



▲ A group photo of the 300-plus delegates who attended the “Now is the Time” biannual Lake Union Youth Evangelism Congress in Northbrook, Chicago, Feb. 16–18, 2024.

Katie Fellows

I wanted to make sure others could experience that as well,” KhaiKhai explained.

A few days before this year’s congress was set to kick off, KhaiKhai, a seminary student at Andrews University, bumped into a friend, Ethan Drew, and encouraged him to attend. Ethan happened to run into another friend, Eliana Fisher. Ethan told Eliana about the upcoming event, and she grew very excited — so much so she immediately reached out to her pastor at the St. Joseph Church, Roy Castelbuono, and told him she wanted to attend. At the church board meeting a few days later, members approved eight young people — most of them with no ties to the congregation — to attend the congress. “It was so easy,” said an elated Eliana.

She considers attending the congress a “God encounter.” Last summer, she and about five other friends began a Bible study. They wanted to incorporate an outreach activity and soon began handing out water bottles inscribed with inspiring verses to beachgoers at the nearby Silver Beach. Throughout last summer they saw their group grow to some 30–40 young people. “Isn’t that just crazy?” she said. “Friends told friends who told others.” A mixture of Andrews students and community young adults were drawn to a space where they

feel valued. This last Valentine’s Day, they distributed cards to nursing home residents. The St. Joseph Church has entrusted them with the responsibility of leading the worship service once a month.

Eliana said they’re now busy readying their application for funds to take their initiatives even further. “At the congress we heard practical ways to get new ministries started,” she said.

They’re thinking about doing a triathlon, which they hope leads to a Vacation Bible School and eventually grows into a Pathfinder club. They’re also hoping to get a church van to provide transportation to a health clinic for those in need and looking at starting a community garden. “The list is endless,” said the second-year master’s student in the Andrews University School of Communication Sciences & Disorders.

The weekend, she noted, was a reminder of how much God cares for us. “God worked out a miracle for us to be a part of it, where our ministry can now reach even more people.”

KhaiKhai explained several people have already submitted their ideas, but there are a lot of funds left. “Keep praying,” encouraged KhaiKhai. “If you do not have the perfect project idea yet, God will open your mind to meet the needs of your community.

You may not know the impact of your project, at least on this side of Heaven, but what you do with God’s calling will have an eternal impact on others.” ■

To learn more about the Lake Union Youth Evangelism Congress, visit lucyec.org.

To see more photos, visit [flickr.com/photos/lakeunionherald/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/lakeunionherald/)

To watch the archived programs, please go to our @LakeUnionHerald YouTube channel.

Cassidy Miranda-Chavez is communication and marketing director for the Center for Youth Evangelism.



▲ During the livestream program, Lake Union Youth Evangelism Director Ron Whitehead interviewed Great Lakes Adventist Academy Senior, Kellie Slide, about an agriculture ministry.

New CEO to Lead UChicago Medicine AdventHealth

MONICA REED, MD, A VETERAN HEALTH CARE LEADER WITH MORE THAN 30 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE, HAS BEEN NAMED PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER FOR UCHICAGO MEDICINE ADVENTHEALTH.

As CEO, Dr. Reed will be responsible for overseeing the strategic development and growth of UChicago Medicine AdventHealth, which includes four hospitals in Bolingbrook, Glendale Heights, Hinsdale and La Grange, and more than 50 sites of care.

Dr. Reed started her career in leadership as an OB-GYN attending physician and associate director of the Family Practice Residency program for AdventHealth Orlando. She has served in several senior leadership roles at AdventHealth, including chief learning officer and chief medical officer for the Central Florida Division; CEO for the Central Florida Division South Market; and CEO for AdventHealth Celebration, which became nationally recognized as a clinical destination for whole-person care under her leadership.

In 2019, Dr. Reed founded Reed Consulting Group, an Orlando, Florida-based consulting firm focused on developing value propositions for a variety of health care, clinical technology and consumer businesses.

“Dr. Reed is a future-focused leader with a capacity to not only articulate a clear vision, but bring others along the journey,” said David Banks, group CEO for AdventHealth’s Multi-State and Primary Health divisions. “As we continue to see more changes in market and consumer demands, I’m confident Dr. Reed will serve as a change agent and help position our hospitals for the future, as we deepen our promise of wholeness in our Chicagoland market.”

In 2023, AdventHealth’s Great Lakes Region formed a joint venture with the

University of Chicago Medicine, combining the expertise and resources of both organizations to ensure a connected health system, and bring academic medicine to the western suburbs of Chicago.

“Through our partnership with UChicago Medicine, we have the opportunity to unite the best of academic medicine with excellent faith-based, whole-person care,” said Dr. Reed. “I’m excited to join the team in the Great Lakes Region and collaborate on

bringing our mission and vision to life as we seek to leave a lasting impact in the lives of those we serve.”

Dr. Reed earned her medical degree from the Loma Linda University School of Medicine in Loma Linda, California, and holds a master’s degree in consulting and coaching for change from the University of Oxford Saïd Business School and HEC Paris, a Paris business school.

Herb Buchanan, who had been serving as interim regional CEO since December 2023, has been named chief strategy and integration officer for UChicago Medicine AdventHealth. In this role, Buchanan will lead the strategic planning processes that will help create and achieve brand loyalty, business growth, competitive advantage, market relevance and sustainability products and services across the Great Lakes Region. Both Dr. Reed and Buchanan assumed their new roles on Feb. 19. ■

AdventHealth Communication



2024 Lake Union Schools

Illinois

Alpine Christian School ▶ Rockford
Downers Grove Adventist School ▶ Downers Grove
Gurnee Christian Academy ▶ Gurnee
Gurnee Christian Preschool ▶ Gurnee
HAA Little Lambs Early Learning Center ▶ Hinsdale
Hinsdale Adventist Academy ▶ Hinsdale
Marion Adventist Christian School ▶ Marion
Metro-East Adventist Christian School ▶ Caseyville
North Aurora Elementary School ▶ North Aurora
North Shore Adventist Academy ▶ Chicago
Thompsonville Christian Junior Academy ▶ Thompsonville

Indiana

Aboite Christian School ▶ Roanoke
Adventist Christian Elementary ▶ Bloomington
Cicero Adventist Elementary ▶ Cicero
Cross Street Christian School ▶ Anderson
Door Prairie Adventist Christian School ▶ La Porte
Door Prairie Christian Daycare ▶ La Porte
Evansville Adventist Academy ▶ Evansville
INspire Academy ▶ Indiana Conference
Indiana Academy ▶ Cicero
Indianapolis Junior Academy ▶ Indianapolis
Indianapolis Southside Christian Academy ▶ Indianapolis
Maple Creek Adventist Academy ▶ Columbus
Northwest Adventist Christian School ▶ Crown Point
Richmond Adventist Elementary School ▶ Richmond
South Bend Junior Academy ▶ South Bend

Lake Region

Chicago SDA Christian School ▶ Chicago
Flint Fairhaven Elementary School ▶ Flint, Michigan
Indianapolis Capitol City SDA School ▶ Indianapolis
Peterson-Warren Academy ▶ Inkster, Michigan
South Suburban SDA Christian School ▶ Park Forest, Illinois

Michigan

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

Wisconsin

Bethel Junior Academy ▶ Arpin
Frederic Adventist Christian School ▶ Frederic
Green Bay Adventist Junior Academy ▶ Green Bay
Hillside Christian School ▶ Wausau
Maranatha SDA Christian School ▶ Lena
Milwaukee SDA School ▶ Milwaukee
Milwaukee SDA School – South Campus ▶ Milwaukee
Milwaukee SDA School – Waukesha ▶ New Berlin
Otter Creek Christian Academy ▶ Altoona
Peterson Adventist School ▶ Columbus
Three Angels Christian School ▶ Monona
Wisconsin Academy ▶ Columbus

Education statement

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



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SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks qualified candidates for the following staff Salaried positions: DHSI Community Outreach Coordinator (reopened), Customer Service and Print Project Manager. For more information, go to sau.catsone.com/careers.

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks qualified candidates for the following staff Hourly positions: Closing Shift Supervisor (Village Market), Office Manager (School of Engineering and Physics), Carpentry Technician, S.A.L.T. Outreach Coordinator (School of Religion), Alarm Technician, Landscape Supervisor. For more information, please visit sau.catsone.com/careers.

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks a full-time teaching faculty member in information technology. Subject areas include computer networking, systems administration, cybersecurity and web development. The ideal candidate will be proficient in developing and teaching undergraduate IT courses, including both lecture and laboratory components. 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 southern.edu/jobs.

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks a full-time associate vice president for Academic Administration and dean of Graduate and Professional Studies. Candidate should have a PhD with a minimum of five years of successful full-time graduate teaching experience at the higher education level. Applicant will assume a leadership role in all aspects of graduate education and provide academic, administrative and strategic direction to Graduate Studies, Online Campus and the Adult Degree Completion (ADC) Program. For more details, visit southern.edu/jobs.

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks a full-time program director to launch a new Doctor of Physical Therapy program. The ideal candidate will be proficient in managing

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SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks a full-time teaching faculty member for the Department of Biology/Allied Health, beginning fall 2024. PhD in biology who will teach upper and lower division courses and labs. Candidate should be committed to involvement with undergraduate students in the classroom as well as guiding independent student research projects. Additionally, candidate should be a practicing Seventh-day Adventist believing the biblical record of the creation of life on earth in six literal days. For more details, visit 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 an 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, 2023. For a full job description and desired qualifications, please visit southern.edu/jobs.

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks full-time teaching faculty in the School of Business. Candidates should have a graduate degree (minimum). Doctorate in business-related field preferred. Ideal candidates will have successful, professional experience in for-profit companies/organizations. Candidates will bring relevancy to courses through connecting theories, current events and real-world experience. Candidates will facilitate learning in alignment with a Christian biblical worldview and Seventh-day Adventist beliefs and values. Ideal candidates will be committed to student learning, engagement and spiritual well-being. For more information, please visit our job board at sau.catsone.com/careers.

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks a full-time engineering teaching faculty member for School of Engineering and Physics 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 southern.edu/jobs.

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY School of Nursing seeks a full-time faculty to join a mission-focused team. Teaching responsibilities will be primarily at the undergraduate level. An earned doctorate is preferred. Requisite qualities include current RN adult health or ICU clinical experience, successful teaching experience, interest in research, flexibility and commitment to Adventist nursing education. The candidate must be a member in good and regular standing in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. To apply, please visit our job board at sau.catsone.com/careers.

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY School of Religion seeks full-time faculty member to begin fall semester of 2024. Must be active member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in good and regular standing and should have PhD (or be near completion) in New Testament. Positive experience in pastoral ministry and teaching is helpful. Must demonstrate contagious love for Jesus, strong commitment to authority of Scripture, and deep passion for Adventist message and mission. Good people skills and ability to engage students in a positive, faith-building manner in the classroom are essential. To apply, please visit our job board at sau.catsone.com/careers.

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CALENDAR OF OFFERINGS

MARCH

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- 13 Hope Channel International, Inc. (GC)
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY

GENERAL EVENTS

April 2: Ambassador Talks, virtual

April 4, 2 p.m.: Pitch Competition, Howard Performing Arts Center

April 11, 10:30 a.m.–7 p.m.: Andrews University Teaching & Learning Conference, Newbold Auditorium, Buller Hall

April 12–15: April Preview

April 13, 9 p.m.: Gymnics Homeshow, Andreasen Center for Wellness

April 14, 3 p.m.: Gymnics Homeshow, Andreasen Center for Wellness

April 14, 12–7 p.m.: International Food Fair, Johnson Gym

HOWARD PERFORMING ARTS

CENTER EVENTS

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

April 7, 7 p.m.: Howard Center Presents: Wintley Phipps

April 13, 8:30 p.m.: Andrews University Wind Symphony Spring Concert

April 20, 8:30 p.m.: Andrews University Symphony Orchestra Spring Concert

ILLINOIS

April 13: VBS Training, conference office

April 21: Master Guide Training, conference office



INDIANA

April 4–6: Music Festival, Indiana Academy

April 12–14: Teen Leaders in Training Campout, Timber Ridge Camp

LAKE REGION

April 19–21: Marriage Retreat, Oakwood Resort in Syracuse, Indiana

MICHIGAN

April 5–7: Hispanic Marriage Retreat, Camp Au Sable

April 12–14: Women's Ministry Retreat, Camp Au Sable

April 19–21: Women's Ministry Retreat, Camp Au Sable

April 20: Statewide Youth Rally/Training, Great Lakes Adventist Academy

April 26–28: Church Leaders' Workshop, Camp Au Sable

WISCONSIN

April 4–6: Music Festival, Wisconsin Academy

April 19–21: Wisconsin Academy Alumni Weekend

April 26–28: Hispanic Men's Retreat, Camp Wakonda

April 27: Adventurers Fun Day, Camp Wakonda

LAKE UNION

April 5–6: Early Pioneers and Civic Engagement Conference, Battle Creek, Michigan

April 13: Children's Leadership Conference, Andrews University

April 26–27: ASI Lake Union Spring Fellowship, Detroit area

NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

April 19–20: Division Level Pathfinder Bible Experience, Greeley, Colorado

Sabbath Sunset Calendar

	April 5	April 12	April 19	April 26
Berrien Springs, Michigan	8:15	8:23	8:31	8:39
Chicago	7:21	7:28	7:36	7:44
Detroit	8:03	8:11	8:18	8:26
Indianapolis	8:13	8:20	8:27	8:34
La Crosse, Wisconsin	7:37	7:45	7:54	8:02
Lansing, Michigan	8:09	8:17	8:25	8:33
Madison, Wisconsin	7:29	7:37	7:45	7:53
Springfield, Illinois	7:27	7:34	7:41	7:48

Data procured from timeanddate.com. Error not exceeding two minutes and generally less than one minute.

Events listed were scheduled to proceed at press time. Please call ahead or check event websites before making plans to attend.

Prayers Reflect Life, Not a Formula

WHEN I WAS A CHILD, I TALKED LIKE A CHILD, I THOUGHT LIKE A CHILD, I REASONED LIKE A CHILD. WHEN I BECAME A MAN, I PUT THE WAYS OF CHILDHOOD BEHIND ME. (1 CORINTHIANS 13:11)



▲ JOHN GRYS

How does one speak about prayer along with many who have made such attempts over thousands of years? Since this issue of the Lake Union Herald addresses the issue of early childhood education, I thought I would bring into consideration the possibility of how our various seasons of life might inform our prayer life. The words of Paul above demonstrate that lifespan influences ways of being, including our prayer life. Equally important, how I understand God will influence how I pray. Thus, both the aging process and the ways I understand God influence my prayer life. And I am so thankful for this.

Let me give you an example from the life of Jesus. Perhaps two places in His life (and there are more) are best known for prayer. The first, typically known as “The Lord’s Prayer,” is offered by some gospel writers during the early stages of His public ministry. And by one account, this prayer is offered after being prompted by a question. The second prayer, captured by John (Chapter 17) is offered within the shadow of the cross, at the end of His public ministry. Both prayers reflect where Jesus is in his ministry space and his life space. Thus, both are not quite the same kind of prayer. The first is offered with great simplicity and fewer words. The second, after doing life with His disciples for the past three years, reflects the complexity of His life with them ... and as He considers His impending death. This is why I find formulas for prayer so problematic: prayer as a way of being reflects both our internal world and our outer world and not some formula. There are times when formulas may be helpful but ultimately, prayer reflects life and believe me when I say, life is not a formula.

The beauty of Jesus’ two prayers is that they reflect room for both kinds — a simpler worded approach and one that is much more complex and brings into view those things that are coming down the pike. Jesus’ second prayer reflects the urgency of one who knows the end is near. With that backdrop of His end being near, He prays for those He’s shared life with. They are foremost on His heart and all who they represent — those who come after their testimony. His prayer brings into focus the past, the present and the future.

The life of prayer brings together the fullness of what it means to be a follower of Jesus and is influenced by the front end of life and ministry as well as the back end. This life of prayer remains fluid and yet constant. Pray away through those tides of life. He is near. ■

John Gryns is president of the Illinois Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.



How to Handle Designated Donations



▲ JENNIFER GRAY WOODS

JANE DOE IS A MEMBER AT MY LOCAL CHURCH WHO IS STRUGGLING FINANCIALLY TO PAY RENT. CAN I DESIGNATE THAT I WANT MY OFFERING TO HELP PAY JANE'S RENT?

The question is really whether you can make a tax-deductible contribution if you designate how you want your donation used. This is a good question and one that we will address as part of our series on tax guidance for churches and religious organizations.

A designated contribution is one where contributions are made for a specified purpose or on behalf of a specified individual.

Churches qualify for exemption from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. However, churches, and other 501c3 organizations, are required to meet certain criteria including that the church must be organized and operated exclusively for religious or other charitable purposes. Typically, when someone donates to a qualified exempt organization, their contribution is also considered tax deductible if certain conditions are met.

There are two issues with designated contributions. The first issue is whether the donation is being designated for a use that is in line with the

church's tax-exempt purpose. The second issue is whether, in accepting the donation, the church still has full control over how the donation will be used and isn't simply acting as a conduit for sending funds to a project or individual that wouldn't otherwise be treated as a deductible contribution.

If a designated contribution is for an approved project or program of the church, the contribution will be tax deductible. For example, if the church has a building fund and a member wants to contribute specifically toward the fund that is a tax-deductible contribution.

However, if a donor wants to designate their contribution to be used for a specified individual this usually is not treated as a tax-exempt contribution. The issue is that the donation isn't being given for the benefit of the church or in furtherance of the church's tax-exempt purpose, but for the benefit of an individual.

Churches should be careful in only accepting contributions that are in furtherance of their tax-exempt purpose. If a church receives a donation that designates that funds are to be used in a manner that is outside of the purpose and mission of the church, it should not accept the funds.

One way for churches to be able to help members contribute to those with financial needs is by establishing a special fund, such as a benevolence fund for that purpose. Through this arrangement contributions can be directed to the fund and the church can make sure the funds are being used to help those with financial needs either in the congregation or in the community. ■

Jennifer Gray Woods is the lawyer for the Lake Union Conference, as well as the Public Affairs and Religious Liberty director.



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From Bitterness to Sweetness

MY DAD IS A PASTOR, AND WHEN I WAS 9 YEARS OLD, HE GOT A CALL TO LEAVE OUR HOME COUNTRY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC TO COME TO THE UNITED STATES AS A MISSIONARY PASTOR. HE AGREED AND JULY 25, 2016, WE WERE ON OUR WAY TO AMERICA.

At first, I thought we were going on a vacation, but I soon realized we were staying for a longer time.

I'm not a big fan of change and it was a bit difficult to adjust to the weather and the new way of doing things. Learning the language was quite easy for me however, because I was young, and I loved reading. Although there were many opportunities for increasing my knowledge and expanding my horizons, I did not notice I was becoming bitter and angry.

I spent a significant amount of time thinking about my previous home and all the friends I left behind.

I couldn't seem to make a worthwhile friendship at the schools I went through, and it made me taciturn and despondent. From Grades 6–7 I went to an Adventist academy and while the environment was extremely good, I couldn't seem to find my place. I really remember getting along well with my teachers, as they reached out to me. I think they could see something in me that I couldn't, and they tried to draw me out of my shell.

During my 8th grade year, I looked at what I had become. I had gone from a sweet little girl who loved Jesus, to a

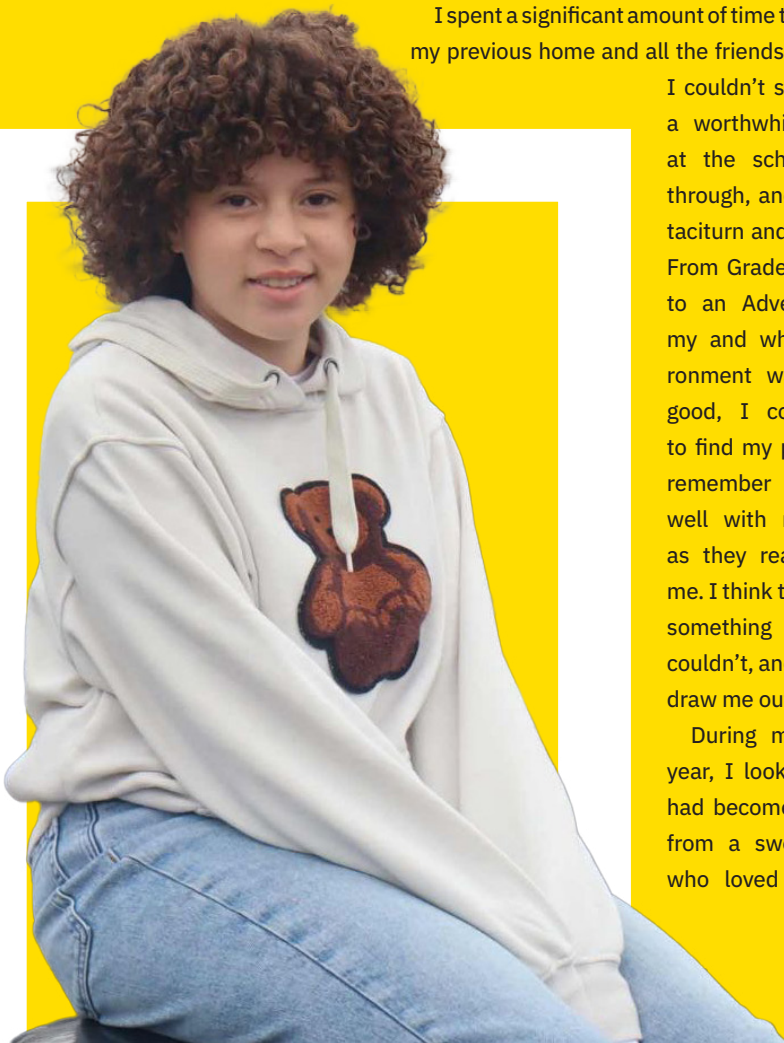
young teenager who walked like there was no hope in life — as if all the stories I had heard about God delivering those who love Him meant nothing. I immediately reached out to God and asked Him to deliver me from myself, to change my heart and let me start all over again.

For the second semester of my freshman year, my mom asked me if I wanted to attend Great Lakes Adventist Academy. I felt a strong conviction that I should go, even though I was thoroughly scared of being in a new environment. Thankfully, I had two friends that went there at the time and they helped me transition smoothly. Slowly through the chapel meetings, the weeks of prayer, the dorm worships, God spoke to me and became a real presence in my life. I saw how He had been and continued to be an essential part of my daily life. I realized that I had only needed to reach out to Him, and he was going to do everything in His power to bless me and help me develop that much needed relationship with Him.

He has been so good to me, and I praise Him for the work that He has done and continues to do for me and through me. There's nothing better than knowing He's always with me and I just ask Him to help me be a blessing to others. ■

Marelin Gonzalez is junior class pastor at Great Lakes Adventist Academy.

“There's nothing better than knowing He's always with me and I just ask Him to help me be a blessing to others.”



Fumble and Recovery in the End Zone

WHEN JEREMI POWELL FIRST TRIED OUT FOOTBALL, HE THOUGHT IT WAS THE WORST. AT 10 YEARS OLD, HE'D BEEN SIGNED UP BY HIS MOM TO CHANNEL HIS ENERGY AND KEEP HIM OUT OF TROUBLE. WHAT LEFT AN IMPRESSION, INSTEAD, WERE THE EMBARRASSING TACKLES HE ENDURED.

He kept at it, however, and soon enough he was the one doing the tackling. The sport quickly became like a home and, before long, his talent shone through. By high school he had gained the status of a four-star athlete and all-American football player.

Jeremi was recruited to the University of Florida as an outside linebacker, where his name quickly became well known. He won the Chris Patrick Courage Award in 2018, was a key contributor on special teams, and was awarded player of the week multiple times. Despite a successful career, however, he still felt like something was missing.

One day, he was called into his professor's office and had a chance encounter with a stranger. "There was something about this dude that was very contagious," he describes. "He had a glow about him." When he asked his professor about it, she told him that the stranger's glow stemmed from a love of God. Jeremi affirms, "I was trying to be like that guy."

As he realized this, he also recognized that football was beginning to treat him differently. Despite his hard work, he struggled with his identity and endured verbal and emotional abuse from his coaches. "I can never forget," he recalls, "I went to practice one day, and I was kneeling down, and I just started crying ... It was a pain that comes when you realize that something that you love has broken your heart."

Reaching his breaking point, he contemplated taking his life. However, through a series of God-ordained events, his friends intervened and helped him get back on his feet.

After graduating from college, Jeremi struggled to find purpose and in the midst of this, felt compelled to return to church. He eventually attended

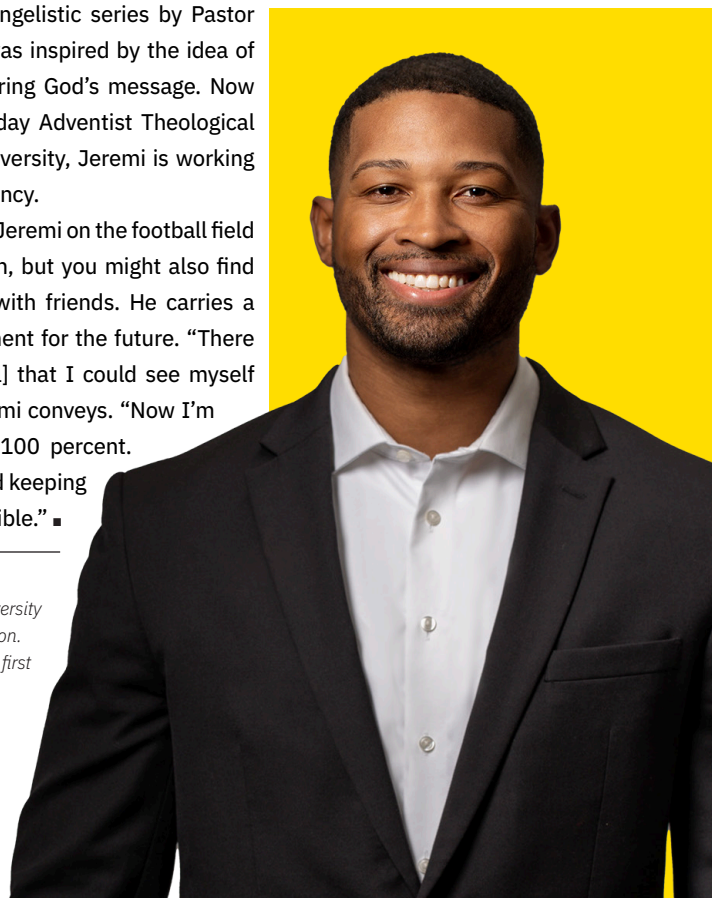
a service at the Bethlehem Seventh-day Adventist Church of Clearwater, where he had grown up. "I walk into this church and there's just a whole bunch of people my age," Jeremi reflects with a laugh. "And they're cool people."

The next Sabbath, Jeremi found himself back at church. Before he knew it, he was attending regularly. He met his wife, Monique, in the church, and found even more happiness in his new community. They launched programs which were successful and fulfilling, and Jeremi soon found himself wishing for a career in which he could carry out God's work all day.

After attending an evangelistic series by Pastor Carlton P. Byrd, Jeremi was inspired by the idea of dedicating his life to sharing God's message. Now enrolled at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University, Jeremi is working toward a career in chaplaincy.

Today you can still find Jeremi on the football field during intramurals season, but you might also find him enjoying downtime with friends. He carries a tangible sense of excitement for the future. "There was nothing [but football] that I could see myself giving 100 percent," Jeremi conveys. "Now I'm here, trying to give this 100 percent. Just doing God's work and keeping things as genuine as possible." ■

Isabella Koh is communication coordinator for the Andrews University Office of University Communication. A longer version of this story was first published in the award-winning student publication, "Envision" magazine.



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