

SERVING SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS IN THE LAKE UNION SINCE 1908

# HERALD

MARCH 2025



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PERU PROJECT



Growing up in Lima, Peru, every outing with friends revolved around the same question: not just where to go, but what we were going to eat. Food wasn't just a necessity; it was an experience that brought us closer. As Peruvians, we take pride in our cuisine—fresh ingredients and unique seasonings that reflect the richness of our culture and the joy of sharing. Meals weren't simply about eating; they were about connection, community, and celebrating life together.

Even today, when I think about those shared meals, I realize they were more than just social gatherings. They were acts of togetherness, moments where relationships were deepened, and stories were shared. They remind me that something as simple as sitting at a table with others can have profound meaning.

This understanding of community and connection resonates deeply with the mission of Project Amigo. Its purpose is not for one party to “fix” the problems or lives of the other. Instead, it's a space where cultures can meet, share, and inspire one another. In Peru and across the South American Division, the church has grown significantly in recent years through intentional outreach initiatives that involve the entire church membership. This passion for outreach demonstrates that even with limited resources, the desire to connect and serve can lead to incredible results. Project Amigo, the Lake Union and South Peru Union partnership, offers us a metaphorical table where these values can flourish. It's a place where we not only bring our own gifts but also receive the wisdom and inspiration of others.

The beauty of Jesus' example is clear in Luke's Gospel, where He is observed either going to a meal, at a meal, or coming from a meal. Meals in Jesus' ministry were more than just physical nourishment—they were transformative moments of grace, inclusion, and connection. Tim Chester, in *A Meal with Jesus*, writes, “Food connects.” He explains that meals, as seen in Jesus' life, enact grace, community, and mission. They were opportunities for relationships to flourish and for barriers to be broken.

This issue of the Lake Union Herald will share insights from this year's participants in Project Amigo. Their stories reflect how coming to the table brought life-changing lessons to their hearts—lessons that will become catalysts for future conversations and connections.

So, who will you invite to your table? The table is waiting. Take a seat, and let the conversation begin.

*Ruben Casabona is associate director of Communication.*

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*By Ruben Casabona*

**ABOUT THE COVER:** Lake Union Executive Secretary Elden Ramirez aids in the church construction. Photo by Ruben Casabona | Design by Christiana Michel

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

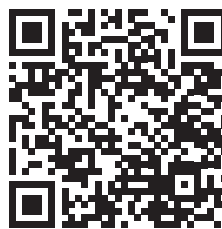
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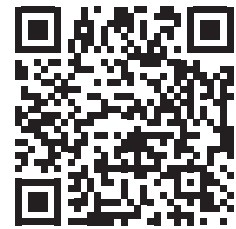
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# Maranatha, Amigo!

In January of this year the Lake Union decided to do something different for our annual Lake Union conference officers' retreat. We traveled to Peru to visit the South Peru Union, our sister union with which we are collaborating in Project Amigo. If you haven't heard, Project Amigo is a collaborative mission initiative with our brothers and sisters in southern Peru.

The main event of the 12-day trip was the construction of a church in the village of Chilca, a couple hours from the city of Cusco. When we arrived, the slab-and-steel skeleton of the church was in place courtesy of Maranatha Volunteers International. Our job was to lay the cement blocks that formed the walls of this little church. Twenty-seven conference and union officers and their spouses joined hands in this project, most without having any experience in working with cement blocks and mortar. It was a wonderful bonding and learning experience! At the conclusion of each course of blocks we paused for a celebration, shouting out the words: "Maranatha, Amigo!" led by our construction site supervisor, Justin Ringstaff, secretary of the Michigan Conference.

On our first Sabbath, before arriving at the construction site in Chilca, we had the opportunity to visit Los Uros, the Floating Islands on Lake Titicaca. We worshipped in a "floating church" that was built 20 years ago by a group of Maranatha volunteers, several of whom were from the Lake Union and led by Tom Slikkers, a church member from Holland, Michigan.

In the afternoon, after Sabbath lunch at the offices of the Lake Titicaca Mission, we made our way to Plateria on the shores of the lake where Adventist pioneer missionaries, Fernando and Ana Stahl, lived in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The little home in which they lived is now a museum where the story of their work is told.

In Plateria we also participated in the dedication of a new, much needed, pastoral parsonage.

The Lake Union and its conferences have funded three new parsonages in south Peru.

After the completion of our project in Chilca, we spent Sabbath in churches around the city of Cusco where several of our group preached including Mark Eaton, secretary-treasurer of the Indiana Conference; he translated a sermon and practiced the pronunciation before delivering it in Spanish. On Friday and Sunday, we got to see some of the tourist sites around Cusco, including the ancient ruins of Machu Picchu.

Our final day was spent visiting the Peruvian Union University campus near Lima. This university has three campuses with nearly 18,000 students, making it the second largest Adventist university in the world. It is exciting to see how this university advances the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Peru.

We are committed to Project Amigo being a two-way street – both unions blessing the other through various types of expertise, financial resources and innovation. We have much to learn from the church in Peru relative to passion and commitment to mission. In fact, the very first mission trip under the banner of Project Amigo involved five student missionaries from their university who came to be evangelists in Hispanic churches in the Wisconsin Conference last summer and fall.

Our group returned home with a renewed appreciation for the global mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the importance of advancing together. As it has been said about the



▲ KEN DENSLow



second coming of Jesus, “No one goes anywhere until the gospel goes everywhere.”

We came home with a renewed focus on our Lake Union motto: Together in Mission: I Will Go.

This is the last time I will be writing for the President’s page before my retirement in April. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve these past four years in the Lake Union – the union in which I began ministry 48 years ago. While I

am retiring from full-time denominational leadership, Pat and I will continue to reside in the Lake Union. For years I have quoted a phrase that defines for me the mission in which we are engaged: “Preparing a people to meet Jesus when He comes.” May He find us all faithful in that task. ■

**Ken Denslow** is president for the Lake Union Conference

# Guided by Grace

## THE POWER OF MENTORS AND DISCIPLESHIP



▲ BEN MARTIN

Have you ever paused to ask yourself how you've gotten to where you are? I am not speaking from the standpoint of what brought you to this town or this church, but rather the journey of life; what were the things that helped you develop into the man or woman you are today?

More than likely, as you reflect on this journey, you are not where you are because of events or your hard work as much as because of the people who helped along the way. It may have been a particular teacher, pastor, colleague, or friend who devoted more time to and mentored you. This act of guiding and teaching, of investing in someone's spiritual growth and development, is what we call discipleship.

Discipleship has always been intergenerational—crossing generational lines. So, when I asked how you got to where you are, I wondered who disciplined you.

Matthew 28 outlines the importance of discipleship as Jesus makes this His one command in the great commission. Here, He invites us into His mission of making disciples. This means that discipleship is not just a personal journey but a spiritual duty toward others to guide them in their faith and help them grow spiritually.

How does discipleship differ from traditional evangelism? First, I do not believe the two can be separated. Evangelism is often limited to passing on a set of beliefs; true evangelism must ultimately lead to a relationship. Discipleship is the journey alongside someone leading them into a relationship with Jesus.

I think of my seventh-grade teacher, Mr. Christoph. We all called him “Mr. C.” Teaching past retirement age, Mr. C. was gruff on the exterior and took math very seriously. In his class, we would spend what felt like hours each day doing problem

after problem. Math, however, was not his number one passion. Although he was the math teacher, I remember his Bible classes the most fondly because they spilled into the rest of the day. We would go deep into studying God's Word, which often led to more questions the deeper we went. These questions would interject into our lunches and be batted back and forth over a game of table tennis after school. Although math was his primary subject, the Bible was first in his heart. His faithful love showed. Through my time with Mr. C during and after school, I developed a love for math, table tennis, and God's Word. Mr. C helped shape who I am. That intergenerational friendship, formed years ago in a seventh-grade classroom, has profoundly impacted my life and ministry.

The idea of mentoring and discipling is a biblical concept as well. I think of Moses and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha, and Paul and Timothy. Each of these biblical mentors reached across generational lines to mentor someone else.

So, as you reflect on Moses, Elijah, or Paul, I want you to ask yourself, “Who can I disciple?” Who will be your Joshua, Elisha, or Timothy? If we are serious about finishing this work, then we must be ready to reach across generational lines and disciple the next generation. ■

*Ben Martin is the children and family discipleship pastor at Pioneer Memorial Church on the campus of Andrews University.*



# Fearfully and Wonderfully Fit

## EMBRACING YOUR UNIQUE WELLNESS

Early on in my fitness journey, I decided to run a half marathon. At that time in my life, I had a lot of friends who loved to run, and even though I hated it, I believed that I could fall in love with running if I just tried hard enough.

“A half marathon this year, a marathon next year, and then who knows? Maybe an ultra marathon after that!” I told myself and dutifully followed my training plan the months leading up to the race. The day finally came, and while the weather was great, and the route along Lake Michigan was scenic and flat, that event turned out to be one of the most painful and unenjoyable fitness experiences of my life. I completed the race, but photos from that day document how miserable I felt as I crossed the finish line.

“I’m never doing that again,” I moaned to my husband, as I limped back to the car.

That race taught me an important lesson: my health and fitness journey doesn’t have to look like anyone else’s. Since that day, I’ve enjoyed exercise via CrossFit, cycling, mobility training, music-based classes, bungee fitness (look it up!), and more. My path has been unique, because I’m unique, just as God intended.

Paul highlights this concept in 1 Corinthians 12 as he describes how the Holy Spirit gives us distinct gifts. He goes on to liken the individuals of the church in Corinth to different parts of the body, each with its own purpose. But our special attributes extend beyond our contributions to our faith community. As God “knits” us together (Psalm 139:13), he instills talents, desires, and preferences, ensuring our singularity.

This results in an incomparable life experience, that includes our overall health. Meaning, your ideal nutrition and fitness habits may be different from

others, and it may take time to discover them. If that sounds like a no-brainer, consider how many times you’ve felt like a failure when you’ve attempted to adopt a new exercise routine or diet, unsuccessfully.

The next time you’re tempted to feel this way, remember: God “fearfully and wonderfully” made you one-of-a-kind (Psalm 139:14). Instead of wondering why you can’t emulate the wellbeing practices of others, use your individuality to discover how to thrive and honor God with your bodily temple, in your own way. ■

*Rachel Keele is director of Andrews University Wellness.*



▲ RACHEL KEELE



# What Matters Most



▲ DENIS KAISER

How do we respond when we disagree with one another, especially when we feel wronged or convinced something is incorrect? Disagreements are inevitable, and our Adventist pioneers were no strangers to them. One notable example involved the interpretation of the “king of the north” in Daniel 11:40-45.

Early Seventh-day Adventists largely identified the “king of the north” as papal Rome, believing this power paralleled the last phase of the fourth kingdom described in Daniel 2, 7, and 8.<sup>1</sup> However, the papacy had long lost political power, and prominent Bible commentators like Adam Clarke and Thomas Newton had long argued that the “king of the north” represented Turkey.<sup>2</sup> As geopolitical events in the Middle East seemed to support this view, Uriah Smith adopted it and began promoting Turkey as the “king of the north.”<sup>3</sup>

This created tension with James White, who urged caution in interpreting “unfulfilled prophecy.”<sup>4</sup> When Smith repeatedly addressed the topic in the late 1870s,<sup>5</sup> White publicly opposed him. At a Battle Creek tent meeting on Sept. 28, 1878, White delivered a 70-minute Sabbath-morning sermon to over 1,000 people, challenging Smith’s view.<sup>6</sup> He argued that the prophetic parallels in Daniel required consistency: If the papacy represented the last power in Daniel 2, 7, and 8, it must do so in chapter 11 as well. White also summarized his sermon in the *Review and Herald*.<sup>7</sup> Though he planned to publish a “continuation” of the editorial on the subject, none followed—likely due to counsel from Ellen White, who urged him to avoid stirring public disputes.

Reflecting on this episode years later, Ellen White observed that while James White’s views might have been correct, public debate on such issues was unwise. She emphasized that speculative matters, especially those not central to the faith, could lead to division and detract from the church’s mission. Instead, she counseled focusing on the “main pillars” of the Adventist message, such as the

Sabbath and the commandments of God. By placing peripheral issues in the background, the church could avoid unnecessary contention and keep its efforts centered on spreading the gospel.<sup>8</sup>

In today’s world, disagreements often spill into the public sphere with little effort. Social media allows us to instantly share our opinions with thousands of people. But Ellen White’s counsel remains relevant: Are the topics we broadcast truly of “vital interest”? Do they foster unity and lead others to Jesus, or do they amplify division and distraction? ■

1 J. White, ed., *A Word to the Little Flock* (Gorham, ME: James White, 1847), 8–9; U. Smith, “Will the Pope Remove the Papal Seat to Jerusalem,” *Review and Herald*, May 13, 1862, 192; J. White, *The Prophecy of Daniel: The Four Kingdoms, the Sanctuary, and the Twenty-Three Hundred Days* (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Pub. Assn., 1863).

2 A. Clarke, *The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments* (London: T. Tegg & Son, 1836), 4:618; T. Newton, *Dissertations on the Prophecies* (London: Thomas Tegg, 1826), 352–356.

3 U. Smith, “Thoughts on the Book of Daniel: Chapter XI (Continued),” *Review and Herald*, Mar. 21, 1871, 108–109; U. Smith, *Thoughts, Critical and Practical, on the Book of Daniel*, 1st ed. (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Pub. Assn., 1873), 146–147, 330–331, 353.

4 J. White, “Unfulfilled Prophecy,” *Review and Herald*, Nov. 29, 1877, 172.

5 U. Smith, “The Eastern War,” *Review and Herald*, Oct. 18, 1877, 124; U. Smith, “Thoughts on the Book of Daniel: Chapter XI - Continued,” *Signs of the Times*, May 30, 1878, 164.

6 J. White, “Meeting at Battle Creek,” *Review and Herald*, Oct. 3, 1878, 116.

7 J. White, “Where Are We?,” *Review and Herald*, Oct. 3, 1878, 116–117.

8 E. G. White to E. J. Waggoner and A. T. Jones, Feb. 18, 1887, Lt 37, 1887.

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





# Unidos en la Misión

En el mes de enero, su servidor y los administradores de las cinco Conferencias y la Unión del Lago fuimos a Perú para construir un templo.

Es interesante ver cómo surgió la idea de este proyecto. Sucede que el presidente de nuestra Unión, Pastor Ken Denslow, se reunió con nosotros para proponer la idea de apoyar y trabajar en forma mutua con la Unión Peruana del Sur del Perú. Se acordó que la Unión del Lago y las Conferencias de nuestra Unión llamaríamos a esta iniciativa “Project Amigo” y apoyaríamos a la Misión Peruana del Lago Titicaca con la construcción de por lo menos dos casas de pastores y a la Misión Sur Oriental del Perú con la construcción de un templo en una pequeña localidad de Chilca en Cusco, Perú llamada “Primavera”.

La idea de construir un templo en Primavera comenzó con una visión que tuvo un hermano llamado Carlos Delgado. Carlos y su esposa Bessie vivían bien y eran miembros de la Iglesia Adventista de Miraflores en Lima, Perú. Cuando llegó la pandemia; ellos sintieron que era tiempo mudarse a un ambiente fuera de la ciudad; así que se mudaron a Primavera. No habiendo Iglesia cerca del lugar donde ellos vivían, con el tiempo, sintieron el llamado de Dios para tener sus propios cultos en su casa y compartir la luz de Cristo a los niños que vivían en esa comunidad. Al ver la cantidad de niños que recibían durante las reuniones de culto, Carlos se dirigió al presidente de la Misión, Pastor Eudis Vásquez, pidiéndole su ayuda para construir un templo. El Pastor Vásquez, viendo la pasión de Carlos por amor a estas almas jóvenes, se propuso ayudarlo; y desafió a Carlos a compartir parte de su terreno para la construcción del Templo. Carlos aceptó la idea, y allí inició el proceso de hacer realidad su sueño, teniendo como participantes de este proyecto a los administradores de Perú y de nuestra Unión.

Póngase a pensar como Dios dirige su obra de forma maravillosa. Dios puso en el corazón de los

esposos Delgado el deseo de ganar a los niños de su comunidad para Cristo. También Dios puso en el corazón del Pastor Denslow y los administradores de nuestras Conferencias el deseo de apoyar la obra Adventista en el Perú. Los administradores de la Unión Peruana del Sur y de la Misión Sur Oriental de Perú también escucharon la voz de Dios y dieron su apoyo de plantar una nueva Iglesia que daría como énfasis la evangelización a los niños. Comenzamos el nuevo año como un cuerpo unido, durante cuatro días, trabajamos poniendo bloques de cemento, y mientras lo hacíamos, noté que había niños viendo lo que estábamos haciendo para ellos.

Yo doy gracias a Dios por laicos como los esposos Delgado; que desean compartir la luz de Dios a los niños y sus familias. Doy gracias a Dios por los administradores y pastores en Perú, por el apoyo que están dando en plantar una nueva Iglesia. También, doy gracias por los administradores de nuestra Unión, por hacer el esfuerzo de ir lejos a trabajar en otra cultura fuera de nuestro territorio para avanzar la predicación de las buenas nuevas de salvación. Finalmente, lo que se hizo es fruto de la oración de nuestro Señor, que seamos uno, para que “el mundo crea, que tú me enviaste.” ■

**Carmelo Mercado** es el Vicepresidente de la Unión del Lago.



▲ CARMELO MERCADO

▼ Carlos Delgado y Pr. Mercado “Unidos en Misión”





Heber Lopez

▲ One of the guests David Ocegüera (front right) invited to present was Kenneth Rose, CEO and president of UChicago medicine Advent Health Bolingbrook Hospital, who discussed resilience in high stakes job.

# Pastor Helps Fellow Ministers Build Resilience

For nearly two decades, Chicagoland Pastor David Ocegüera found himself working 60 to 70 hours a week as he managed two church locations. Driven by a deep desire for success and growth, he poured his heart into ministry, often sacrificing his own well-being in the process.

“I wanted the churches to thrive and do meaningful work,” he reflected. However, this intense workload ultimately took a toll on his health, leading to burnout and a panic attack that forced him to confront the unsustainable pace of his life. “I had been focusing too much on my work and not enough on my own health,” he admitted. This

pivotal experience ignited his commitment to helping other pastors navigate the challenges of ministry.

Recently, Ocegüera organized a retreat centered on building resilience—the ability to recover from difficulties—to help his fellow pastors cope with the unique pressures they face, especially in light of the

COVID-19 pandemic and changing societal expectations. The retreat was particularly meaningful as it aligned with Ocegüera's doctoral research on resilience in ministry.

In his studies, Ocegüera is focusing on leading organizational change. He recognizes that the health and well-being of pastors are crucial for effective leadership, especially in a world that is constantly shifting around them. "Before COVID-19 changed everything, being a pastor was already difficult, but the pandemic made it even harder," he pointed out, observing that many pastors now find themselves on the brink of burnout.

Research conducted by Richard P. DeShon highlights the complexity of pastoral roles, requiring up to 64 different skills. Ocegüera noted that the research indicates pastors also need to manage counseling, handle finances, and fulfill various other responsibilities. All these expectations can create stress, making it hard for pastors to feel competent and supported.

Ocegüera also discussed the challenges brought on by today's constant communication through smartphones. "In the past, a pastor would have a landline phone and only be reachable at home," he explained. "But now, they can be contacted all the time, which creates additional pressure." This always-on availability detracts from the personal time pastors need to recharge and find balance.

Furthermore, the changing attitudes toward religion present a significant challenge. Many people today are searching for spiritual fulfillment but do not view the church as the primary place to find it. Instead, they often turn to social media platforms like YouTube or TikTok for spiritual insights. Ocegüera remarked that this complicates the already difficult task for pastors, who feel the heavy responsibility to bring back the large congregations of the past. "Some churches look to their pastors as if they alone can fix everything," he noted, which can weigh heavily on those in leadership positions.

During his retreats and seminars, Ocegüera creates spaces for open discussion among pastors. In one of his sessions called "Fill Your Cup," he encourages pastors to spend intentional time with God and focus on their own needs. The recent retreat sparked lively conversations where pastors shared their struggles and successes, demonstrating the

importance of community and support. "After leading these retreats, I see that pastors want to know they're not alone in their challenges," Ocegüera stated.

He identified three main points that pastors consistently expressed after his talks:

- They need places where they can feel safe being vulnerable.
- Hearing that other pastors experience the same challenges helps them feel hopeful.
- Having strong support systems is essential to carry the burdens of pastoral work.

Ultimately, Ocegüera hopes that by teaching resilience, he can help pastors maintain their well-being while leading their communities. He believes that if pastors can remind themselves that they are more than just their jobs, they will find greater joy in their calling. "You are a beloved child of God first, and then a pastor," he emphasized, encouraging pastors to embrace their identities beyond their roles.

Looking to the future, Ocegüera's efforts have already begun to expand beyond his original research. With a grant from VersaCare, he successfully launched a Pastoral Resilience Retreat that brought pastors from across the United States together. The overwhelmingly positive feedback highlighted the critical need for support in ministry. "Healthy pastors lead healthy churches," Ocegüera concluded, underscoring the importance of this work not only for their personal well-being but also for the churches they serve. His mission is clear: to help pastors reclaim the joy of ministry once again.

For more information, visit <https://www.resilientuniversity.org/>

**Matthew Lucio** is the assistant to the president for communication at Illinois Conference.



▲ Bolingbrook Pastor David Ocegüera recognizes that the health and well-being of pastors are crucial for effective leadership.



# In the Grip of Grace

“He has made everything beautiful in its time.” These words are difficult to accept when one looks at the world and the chaos and tragedy of the human story. My life story attests to God’s capacity to turn the most tragic of beginnings into the most beautiful of stories that does not end but continues into eternity.

My story starts with my father, a carpenter who worked for the Seventh-day Adventist church in Papua New Guinea, and my mother, a homemaker. We were a family of seven, and being the eldest in my family, there were high expectations for me for the betterment of our family.

Unfortunately, all that he could contribute to my personal journey ended in 1984 when he suffered a severe stroke, which left him paralyzed on the right of his body. This devastating event had a profound impact on our family. My mother, unable to cope, abandoned our family after a year. My father’s condition only worsened, leaving him bedridden for 17 years until his passing in 2001.

During those years, our fledgling family hit rock bottom. No one was there for us; even my immediate relatives and family friends would not come and visit us. Everyone in the village abandoned us and did not recognize us as members worth assisting. Lacking significant resources to add to community contributions like compensation or bride price, we were irrelevant.

The situation got worse during the first year after

my mom left. I was 10 years old and had to be responsible for my younger siblings. There was no food, money, clothes, or even a blanket to keep ourselves warm at night. To illustrate the dire situation, I remember one day walking home from our small garden; I was so hungry and picking up a piece of sweet potato thrown on the roadside and eating it. We were all becoming severely malnourished, not having eaten a good meal for months on end; we could see bones protruding, barely concealed by our flesh. I was so worried that I decided to collect the fat from mutton flaps cooked by mothers on the roadside to supplement our diet of mainly sweet potatoes. However, I was older and somewhat self-conscious, so I recruited my little brother to collect our “protein.”

I told my small brother to sit next to the village mothers and ask them if he could collect the oil and lamb fat residue dripping from the various pan’s edges. He would collect the fat after sitting all afternoon by the roadside with the ladies frying lamb flaps. In the evening, he would return to the house with four tins full of lamb fat mixed with cooking



oil, all solidified. We would then collect the wild ferns and eat the remaining sweet potatoes with the concoction.

Our little shelter had begun to deteriorate as the rain and cold wind penetrated every corner of the house, for the fraying bamboo walls and rotting thatched kunai grass roofs could offer little resistance. Our father had built the house when healthy; as children, we could do nothing but endure.

Yet through it all, my father prayed. He was bedridden and could do little to help us, yet his faithfulness in prayer and faith in God slowly persuaded me that things could get better for us and pushed me to take the first tentative steps toward creating a better future. I decided to go to school after my mother had returned to take care of my siblings in response to my pleas to be our one human ally in this struggle.

One memorable occurrence illustrates the welcoming party the devil had arranged for me as I set out on this essentially uncertain journey. One Friday, I had nothing to wear to school since I had washed my only shirt and long pants in preparation for the Sabbath. Hurriedly, I got my belt and tightened it over the tabale (small cloth) and pajapu (cordyline leaves) I had picked from the roadside, covering myself from the waist down, and quickly headed off to school. Unfortunately, I went to school late that day while everyone was in assembly. The teacher saw me coming and ordered me to stand before the assembly.

“Don’t you know that this is the SDA mission school?” He asked sternly, “Who told you to wear this thing?” Apart from the sheer horror of being called to the front of the student body, I couldn’t speak English/Tok pidgin, so I stammered, “*mi aka nawi, mi aka bijore hangu gokoni sabat naka,*” (I have no other clothes, my clothes are preserved for Sabbath). Not only was I late, but I was also inappropriately dressed and seemed to be deliberately not speaking English. He decided to meet out punishment equal to the rebelliousness displayed by striking me with his wooden meter-long ruler on the buttocks five times so ferociously that the student’s belt broke. The tabale and pajapu dropped in front of all the students, and I ran naked across the field and into the nearby bushes.

I suspect I may still have some residue trauma from the incident 40 years later.

However, as I matured, I realized that it was not only my family who went through such struggles; it is the human lot and there are stories more painful than mine. From this empathetic perspective, I took to the path of forgiveness and saw people, both believers and nonbelievers, as God saw them. I had the choice to trust the God who is love and chose to love as He did or let the hate take over. By God’s grace, I chose love, which has made all the difference.

If an angel had told my father in a dream during those days that his son would have the privilege of studying at Andrews, along with his grandkids attending American colleges, he would have found it impossible to believe. God did not just give dreams nor send angels to tell me everything would be okay during those days. He did more than that; He decided to walk with me every step of the way. Looking back, I realize I had nothing to fear, my family was secure in that all-powerful, righteous right hand. We have always been in the grip of grace. ■

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**Aki Pawa** hails from Hela Province in Papua New Guinea and is in the MDiv program at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University.



▲ From left to right: Hindramalai, Aki, Elatu, Schubert, Aileen, Pawa Hundu

# Pioneers, Perseverance and Progress

## THE PERU-LAKE UNION PARTNERSHIP



1870–1894

1894–1904

1904–1909

### Early Years

Ferdinand Anthony Stahl was born Jan. 3, 1874, in Pentwater, Michigan, and faced a challenging childhood marked by loss and hardship. His father died when he was eight months old, and his stepfather's mistreatment led him to flee home at age 10. Ana Christina Carlson, born Nov. 27, 1870, in Sweden, came from a Lutheran family. Their meeting in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, marked the beginning of a partnership rooted in shared resilience and faith.

### Education and Marriage

The Stahls married in a simple civil ceremony when Ferdinand was 19 and Ana 22. Ferdinand worked as a store manager while studying at night, and Ana worked as a waitress. Their first child, Frena, was born during this period. Nine years into their marriage, they encountered Adventist canvasser Nelson Hubbert, whose influence led Ferdinand to quit smoking and explore Bible studies. Though initially resistant due to what he believed was his stepfather's hypocrisy of reading scripture daily, Ferdinand eventually embraced the Adventist faith, losing his job as a result of keeping the Sabbath.

Motivated by their newfound beliefs, the couple pursued nursing education in Madison, Wisconsin, and later at the Battle Creek Sanitarium in Michigan. Inspired by Adventism's global missionary fervor, they set out to preach the gospel worldwide.

### First Mission: Ohio

After completing their nursing education, the Stahls managed a struggling health post in Cleveland, Ohio. Their dedication transformed the facility, leading to its success and eventual expansion into a sanitarium. Their second child, Wallace, was born during this time. Ferdinand's growing conviction to serve abroad led him to seek guidance from Ellen G. White, who encouraged them to offer their services to the General Conference.



**F**erdinand and Ana Stahl were prominent Adventist missionaries whose impactful work spanned Bolivia, Peru, and beyond. Their legacy of service among indigenous populations reflects their dedication to spreading the gospel, improving health and education, and advocating for the marginalized.



1909–1910

1911–1918

1918–1921

### Second Mission: Bolivia

In 1909, the Stahls embarked on a mission to Bolivia, traveling with Pastor Eduardo Thomann. Ferdinand's work included selling Bibles and providing medical care. Ana supported women and children, while their children, Frena and Wallace, contributed by learning local languages and engaging in community outreach. Over two years, the Stahls served diverse communities, including miners and indigenous populations, laying the groundwork for Adventist mission work in the region.

### Third Mission: Puno Highlands

From 1911 to 1918, the Stahls worked in the Puno highlands of Peru, focusing on health and education among the Aymara and Quechua peoples. Their efforts began in Platería, where they observed the devastating effects of poor hygiene and substance abuse. They organized hygiene classes, performed medical procedures, and taught disease prevention. The first official Adventist school in the region, established in 1911, became a model for educational outreach.

Despite threats and opposition, the Stahls' mission flourished. By the end of their stay, Ferdinand reported significant evangelistic achievements: 500 baptisms in a year, 2,075 members in the highlands, and 46 missionary schools, 45 of which were led by Platería-trained teachers. Health concerns ultimately forced the family to leave Puno.

### Fourth Mission: Peru Mission

After a brief return to the United States in 1918, the Stahls resumed their work in Lima, Peru. They contributed to the Peru Mission and extended their influence in northern Peru, where they laid the foundation for future Adventist efforts. In 1921, Ferdinand explored opportunities in central Peru, focusing on the Brow Forest area.



1921–1926

### Fifth Mission: Brow Forest in Central Peru

In 1921, the Stahls moved to central Peru, establishing the Metrado Mission Station among the Asháninka and Yánesha people. Their work emphasized health, education, and spiritual outreach. Ferdinand's reports inspired the allocation of funds for mission expansion. By 1922, the Stahls had created additional mission stations, cementing their reputation as selfless and courageous missionaries.

Almost at the end of the book he exhorted:

**May the Spirit of God impel many young men and women to abandon their worldly ambitions and consecrate their lives to God, going to these needy fields, among people who have never heard the beautiful story of the cross. May the Lord move those who cannot go, to give generously the resources entrusted to them, so that the work of the gospel may progress.... Continue the work with these children of Christ who are in darkness.**



1927–1939

### Sixth Mission: Upper Amazon Mission of Peru

Following a European tour to share their missionary experiences, the Stahls began their sixth mission in the Peruvian Amazon, centered in Iquitos. The mission's focus on health and education led to the establishment of a maternity home by Ana, which operated for nearly 30 years and laid the foundation for the Ana Stahl Adventist Clinic.



1939–1968


### Later Years and Legacy

By 1939, health issues prompted Ferdinand to retire. Despite leaving the mission field, he continued preaching in Northern California, where the Stahls worked briefly among the Klamath Indians. Exhaustion eventually led Ferdinand to step back from active ministry.

Ferdinand passed away on Nov. 30, 1950, at age 76, and Ana died on Oct. 5, 1968. Their lives exemplify unwavering commitment to Adventist missions, particularly among indigenous populations. When Ferdinand finished his work in the Puno highlands, he decided to share his experiences in a book, which he titled *En el país de los Incas* (In the Land of the Incas) and completed in 1919.

*Condensed from the Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventist entry written by Gluder Quispe. Full article available at <https://bit.ly/3WdK5AX>.*





► Carlos Delgado donated land for a church built with help from the Lake Union.

# Service Uninterrupted

THE LAKE UNION - PERU KINSHIP ENDURES

**W**hy did a delegation of conference and union leaders from across the Lake Union travel more than 3,000 miles to Peru earlier this year? The vision was to help lay the foundation for a new church, dedicate parsonages and kickstart a five-year collaboration dubbed “Project Amigo.”

There we were, a group from across the Lake Union perched high in Puno, a rural Peruvian city more than 12,000 feet above sea level, next to the majestic Lake Titicaca. This stunning lake, the highest navigable lake in the world, is shared between Peru and Bolivia, with roughly half of its waters belonging to each country. Known for its deep blue waters and serene landscapes, Lake Titicaca has been home to vibrant cultures for centuries, making it a place of great historical significance.

In the middle of Lake Titicaca are the Uros Islands, an extraordinary network of over 110 artificial floating islands constructed entirely from totora reeds. These islands are home to people who maintain their traditions and live in tight-knit communities where they care for each other. On one of these islands, the Seventh-day Adventist Church operates a school serving the children of the community, providing hope and education in this unique setting.

We worshipped with the Uros Island Seventh-day Adventist Church on a clear 50-degree Sabbath in January. It was a humbling experience to join this community in praising God amid the tranquil beauty of the floating islands. Later that afternoon, we traveled to Platería, a key site in the history of Adventist education in Peru. This small but significant town is where the first Adventist school in Peru was established, rooted in the belief that God cares for every aspect of our lives—physical, mental, and emotional.

We also visited the Fernando Stahl Museum, in what was once his home. It now commemorates his ministry and contributions to education and holistic care in the region. While in Platería, we had the privilege of inaugurating one of three new parsonages for local district pastors. This means the local pastor and his family living in two rooms of the museum will now have a place to call home.

Our next stop was Chilca, a city nestled in the Sacred Valley of the Incas. The first thing you might notice are the surrounding green mountains and breathtaking views in this verdant agricultural region. Its fertile lands and proximity to Cusco, the capital of the Inca Empire, had made it a key area for the Andean people for centuries. The lower elevation of a little over 9,100 ft. allowed crops like corn to thrive, making it an essential part of their civilization. Today, the valley remains a peaceful place where people live simple lives, waking up to the songs of birds and the beauty of nature.

In Chilca, we met Carlos Delgado, a systems engineer and the information technology supervisor for a large multinational corporation. During the pandemic, he felt a strong calling to leave Lima and move with his wife, Bessie, and children to this rural area. After purchasing land and building a home, he established a children's ministry attracting scores of neighborhood kids. Eventually they outgrew the home's capacity. After conversations with the Southeast Peru



Mission and Maranatha Volunteers International, Carlos generously donated a portion of his land to build a church and ministry center.

The Lake Union group spent four days in Chilca constructing this future house of worship. As we built the foundations brick by brick, around us we could see green fields, grazing animals, and hear the Urubamba River rushing below. Occasionally, a train carrying travelers to Machu Picchu would pass by, adding to the area's charm.

The process was filled with joy and connection as we worked and sang songs. Each brick laid brought us closer to creating a space where children could learn, worship and grow. By the end of the week, a rewarding snapshot of the future emerged: joy and laughter soon to fill the new space.

As we traveled throughout the area, people welcomed us with warmth and open arms. Born and raised in Peru, I'm used to this hospitality, to the point of almost taking it for granted. Seeing our Lake Union visitors deeply moved and touched by such heartfelt kindness reminded me of the beauty in these partnerships. These moments highlight the mutual learning and connection which are at the heart of Project Amigo. It's not just about helping. It's about forming relationships that can inspire and transform both sides, now and for eternity.

#### **"PROJECT AMIGO" REFLECTIONS**

In the vibrant tapestry of Peru, six words emerge to encapsulate the spirit of its people: Contentment, Family, Commitment, Hope, Community and Hospitality. We asked participants, leaders and their spouses from our various conferences, to share their personal stories and reflections on one unique element of Peruvian culture. Through their eyes, we discovered not just a culture, but a way of life that embraces joy even in the face of challenges.

#### **Contentment**

"I discovered a lot of opportunities where people seem to be happier. For instance, in the United States, we have a more complicated life, more luxuries. And if we feel that our wants are not

fulfilled, we are unhappy. In Peru, I see people being satisfied with their basic needs being covered. When I say basic needs, I mean shelter. I mean, community, food and also health. And people here seem happy because they are together, because they spend more time in nature and because they have their needs covered." — *Titus Naftanaila, Wisconsin Conference president*

"People here are more content; they don't have complicated lives as we have in the United States. Houses are smaller, which don't need to be cluttered with so much stuff. But also, there's contentment in people. They're happy with what they have and that is something I think I'm taking home with me—that it's not about material things, it's not about what you can buy. It's the inner self that gives you satisfaction and contentment." — *Amir Gulzar, Wisconsin Conference executive secretary/treasurer*

"One of the things that I think we can learn as we go back home is that we don't need to have too much to do great things. If we take what we have and we put it in God's hands, then He can take that and do great things. When you look at this church that we're building, it's not a fancy building; but when you look at it, everyone is working hard. Everyone is excited to be able to worship in the place that is now the house of worship. That's something inspiring that I think we can all learn from." — *Elden Ramirez, Lake Union Conference executive secretary*

#### **Family**

"It seemed like there's a lot of family cohesiveness. Family is important to the Peruvians, and I love that you see family. In the homes [...] they're all together and I enjoy that because that's something that we're missing [in the U.S.]: Family cohesiveness." — *Eddie Allen, Lake Region Conference vice president for multilingual ministries*

#### **Commitment**

"I think of the experience of our brother Carlos, who is the one who donated the property where

**If we take what we have and we put it in God's hands, then He can take that and do great things.**



## It doesn't matter where you live, you can always be ... reflective of the character of God.



we are building the church, literally right in his backyard or in his front yard... He was explaining just how excited he is that finally they're able to have a structure where not only they can serve the children, but he's saying, 'Well, we know that as we continue to serve the children, their parents will come and be a part of what's happening here.' He didn't stop because he didn't have a place of worship. He kept pressing forward, he kept persevering, understanding that there is a great work to be done here through children's ministry." — **Michael Campos, Illinois Conference executive secretary**

"[Carlos' grandfather] wasn't asking, how can I help? Of course, he's [77 years old] and he just found what he could do, and he just did that throughout the morning and afternoon with a smile. He was bringing one block at a time from uphill down to the work site with a smile, and just seeing how their faith isn't just based on words or just having the financial resources, but it's based on action in what they're doing. It's a reminder that our hope isn't based on material things. Our hope is based on seeing God through so many gifts He gives us daily, at every second, and seeing His hand, not only through Him giving us material blessings, but giving us the hope of an eternity with Him." — **Erica Campos, Illinois Conference**

### Hope

"There's no way you can go to the floating islands and receive even the simple trinkets that they give to us and not realize that they do that because that's who they are. And so that gives me a lot of hope because it reminds me that it doesn't matter your context, it doesn't matter where you live, you can always be ... reflective of the character of God." — **John Gryns, Illinois Conference president**

### Community/Hospitality

"Normally in the U.S., we greet each other with a handshake, and it takes some time to get to a place where you might give someone maybe a midway handshake hug. But here, everybody embraces with a warm hug. When we went to the floating island for church, I noticed that they didn't sit until we were first all seated. The

level of hospitality was amazing. They allowed us to feel like we were a part of their family. The warmth was like none other." — **Abraham Henry, Lake Region Conference executive secretary**

"[The trip has] been pretty amazing... because when we came here, the way that they greeted us, the way that they actually shared gifts [had an impact]. ... So just the culture and the friendliness and the kindness and the joy that they're actually excited to see us...that really brought up my spirits and made me excited to be here." — **Kent Nichols, Lake Region Conference chief financial officer**

"I've noticed both here and in the United States [that] people of Hispanic culture have an abundance of relationships, love, and that is really what makes quality of life. It's love that makes life, regardless of the material abundance you have. It's good relationships, it's support that makes for kingdom-building and it makes for quality of life and wealth. Material wealth sometimes works against that. It tends to divide. It tends to cause conflict. So, I see these people as very abundant--abundant in their culture, abundant in their faith, and abundant in quality of life." — **Mark Eaton, Indiana Conference treasurer/executive secretary**

"I think that in the United States, often we measure abundance by wealth, by how much money you have. I think what the big difference that I see here in Peru is that abundance seems to be measured more by friendships and involvement in community and time spent together. How can we encourage people to have this shift of mindset when it comes to abundance? Well, I think that's only possible through conversion. You know, we change our goals, we change our aspirations, we change our whole perspective, when we come into life in Christ. The only way that we can understand true abundance of spirit and generosity and community and friendship is as we experience Christ, as we experience the abundance that He has for us. He said that He came so that we would have abundant life." — **Ken Denslow, Lake Union Conference president**



“Most people think of [abundance as] having unlimited financial resources and having opportunities to be able to do whatever you need to do with the resources that you have. However, in Peru, that’s not necessarily the case. They’re very successful in mission and ministry because they believe in the concept of partnership, working together. And as a result of that, they’re able to be very successful. Abundance is more than just what you have, but what you’re able to accomplish together as a result of a focused mission together.” — *Glynn Scott, Lake Union Conference treasurer*

“I think Peru does model community in a very real way for us in America, where it’s not an ‘I’

culture, it’s a ‘we’ culture. Everybody uses their resources and their time and even just the joy of sharing experiences together. It reminds me of the book of Acts, where the Bible says that they came together, they broke bread daily, and they met from house to house, and that they worshiped God with simplicity and gladness of heart. One of the lessons I’d like to bring back to America is the concept of using our home as a launching pad into the community, where our home becomes a kind of a center of influence to be a blessing to those around us.” — *Justin Ringstaff, Michigan Conference executive secretary* ■

*Ruben Casabona is the associate director of communication for the Lake Union Conference.*

**... abundance seems to be measured more by friendships and involvement in community and time spent together.**

# Team Members Save Colleague's Life

Everyone agrees it's a miracle that Marty Baham is still alive. Baham, a radiologic technologist at UChicago Medicine AdventHealth GlenOaks, suffered a devastating aortic dissection, a tear in the wall of the aorta from his chest to his kidneys.

Most people don't survive such a tear, but this 58-year-old did, thanks largely to fast action by his GlenOaks colleagues, the skills of a UChicago Medicine cardiovascular surgical team, and subsequent support from his brother, fellow team members and other friends.

"This is true divine intervention," said Donna Fitzpatrick, GlenOaks director of radiology.

Fitzpatrick credited GlenOaks CT technologists Tiffany Spino and Aiman Madani for playing key roles in Baham's survival. When Madani arrived for work at GlenOaks on Monday, Aug. 26, he happened to park next to Baham's car and noticed that Baham appeared to be asleep in the driver's seat. Madani alerted Spino, who was preparing to leave work. Knowing Baham was supposed to start his shift soon, she went out to the parking lot, assessed his condition and quickly called the hospital's emergency department to request a gurney.

"Initially, I thought he was sleeping," said Spino, a longtime friend of Baham who was concerned about his well-being because of the blistering heat that day. "I said to him, 'What are you doing? You're going to die of heat stroke.'" Baham opened his eyes, looked confused and tried to speak but slurred his words. That's when Spino called for help, fearing he was having a stroke.

After Baham was rushed inside the hospital, Madani performed a CT scan that revealed the aortic dissection. A subsequent CT angiography of Baham's chest, abdomen and pelvis showed the dissection was

extensive. He soon was airlifted by helicopter to UChicago Medicine in Hyde Park for emergency surgery, which lasted more than eight hours.

After spending more than three weeks recuperating at the hospital, Baham was discharged to a rehabilitation hospital. During his time at the hospital, Spino and Brittney Mollicone, a UChicago Medicine AdventHealth GlenOaks ultrasound technologist, visited with him and stayed in touch regularly. The UChicago Medicine AdventHealth GlenOaks radiology team is a tightknit group. "It's like a family," Baham said. "We're constantly doing stuff for each other."

Spino, Mollicone and Baham emphasized that the emergency care he received at UChicago Medicine AdventHealth GlenOaks that day was the same high level of care that anyone in his situation would receive at the hospital. "This is what we do every day," Baham said.

Fitzpatrick, though, said Baham's survival hinged on more than excellent medical care. "This is about the spirit in this place, about living the mission and it coming to life," she said. "Helping out your coworkers like that is not above and beyond. It's just who we are. The compassion and dedication shown to Marty, even when the situation seemed impossible, is exactly what we're here to do – to care for the whole person: body, mind and spirit." ■

*Katie Quirke is marketing and communications specialist at UChicago Medicine AdventHealth.*



# Andrews University Recognized for Creation Care Efforts



World Changers Made Here.

**Andrews University, led by its Creation Care Council, has received a distinction among higher education institutions and a national grant for the environmental efforts it currently makes and for its plans to further such environmentalist action.**

The University has been named an affiliate member of the Higher Education Climate Leadership Network, a group created by the nonprofit organization Second Nature that focuses on helping higher education institutions solve sustainability issues. This recognition provides a national network of resources and opportunities with other universities and colleges across the United States in matters relating to environmental stewardship and climate action.

The Creation Care Council, founded by Andrews University President John Wesley Taylor V, is “tasked with identifying ways in which our university can best fulfill its mission to care for God’s creation,” according to a memo from the Office of the President.

Andrews was also one of 11 schools in the country awarded a 2024 Second Nature Catalyst Grant, which provides \$7,500 to support climate action initiatives. The University’s proposal is to develop a pilot hydroelectric project to generate clean renewable energy for the campus by using the constant water flow of the St. Joseph River. Padma Tadi Uppala, associate dean for research and creative scholarship in the College of Health & Human Services, and a member of the Creation Care Council, wrote the proposal.

According to the grant proposal, in addition to providing the University with a cleaner energy source, this hydroelectric project could result in “an estimated annual savings of about \$1,000 per turbine for the university.”

This projection is based on an estimated turbine output of 14 kilowatts an hour.

During a recent presentation by Uppala, Taylor and Katherine Koudele, chair of the Department of Sustainable Agriculture and professor of animal science, during the 2024 Andrews Autumn Conference on Religion and Science, several projections were made concerning the hydroelectric project. The University is expected to reduce its carbon emissions by 4,395 pounds annually, and there are hopes that this technology can be shared with neighboring Berrien County communities that also live alongside the St. Joseph River. In the grant proposal, Uppala, professor in the School of Population Health, Nutrition & Wellness, also noted that the use

of hydroelectric sources is the best renewable energy option for Andrews because its geographic location limits the effectiveness of wind and solar power sources.

Locally, Andrews University is a member of the Michigan Climate Action Network and is in the process of joining the United Nations Climate Change and Universities Partnerships Programme.

Plans are currently being developed for the construction and implementation of the turbine system. Matias Soto, an adjunct faculty member of Andrews’ School of Engineering and the director of the Innovation & Entrepreneurship program, was instrumental in crafting the hydroelectric project. He shared that the University is still waiting “to obtain government permits for design and construction of this project.” ■

**Andrew Francis** is a student writer for *University Communication*.



▲ The St. Joseph River runs next to the main Andrews University campus.

Gerald Paul New



▲ What began as a gathering for healing, culminated in a celebration of new beginnings when 22 individuals chose to embrace a fresh spiritual journey through baptism at the Berean Transformation Center.

# Tragedy unites grieving family and community at South Bend's 'Hope for the Hurting Heart' series

Hope and healing found an unexpected home at the Hope for the Hurting Heart evangelistic series held in South Bend, Indiana.

When a local family experienced the sudden passing of their two-month-old son during the conference, Berean Transformation Center which was hosting the weeklong event, became a sanctuary of comfort and compassion.

Led by host pastor Claval Hunter and guest speaker James Doggette Jr., the church community rallied around the grieving family, offering not only support but also a message of faith and renewal that would shape the week's journey.

The family's attendance at the conference turned their pain into a pathway for healing, inspiring others as the week unfolded with worship, fellowship, and a powerful celebration of new beginnings. The church visited the grieving family, offering a comforting presence and embodying its mission of compassion.

On the third night, 14 family members attended the conference's session, joining

over 200 participants who had gathered for a week of spiritual renewal and practical empowerment.

Doggette, who serves as Lake Region's Young Adult director, tailored his message to speak directly to the family's brokenness, delivering a heartfelt message on the healing power of Christ amid life's darkest hours. His words offered a balm to the wounded hearts, drawing the family and attendees closer to a faith that promises strength even when answers seem distant.

As the week unfolded, the *Hope for the Hurting Heart* series held from Oct. 13-19, 2024, continued its mission to provide a sanctuary for those facing life's trials, blending spiritual encouragement with actionable guidance.

The conference's approach to healing was holistic, acknowledging that life's challenges

extend beyond the spiritual and into the emotional and practical. With sessions led by experts such as psychologist D'Andria Jackson, Lake Union Stewardship Director Jermaine Jackson, and Family Nurse Practitioner Akila Karanja, the event offered tools for navigating mental health struggles, enhancing financial literacy, and cultivating spiritual resilience.

## NEW BEGINNINGS

The conference's final day culminated in a celebration of new beginnings. Twenty-two individuals chose to embrace a fresh spiritual journey through baptism, including five members of the grieving family. Each baptism served as a symbol of hope, as the candidates publicly declared their commitment to faith and healing. For the family who had lost their beloved child, this moment marked a turning point—a chance to rebuild their lives with the comfort of God's promise and the solidarity of their church family.

To ensure lasting support for these newly baptized individuals, the Berean Transformation Center introduced Sabbath afternoon discipleship classes. These sessions, Hunter explained, are designed to nurture each person's spiritual growth, helping them discover their unique gifts and find meaningful ways to contribute within the church community. He expressed a commitment to walking alongside these new members, emphasizing the importance of mentorship and ongoing support as they continue their spiritual journey.

Reflecting on the week, Hunter shared his gratitude for the ways in which God's presence permeated the event. *Hope for the Hurting Heart*, he observed, became a beacon of light for those carrying heavy burdens, illustrating how faith and fellowship can uplift even in the darkest times. "The week," he noted, "reflected the transformative power of community and faith. When we come together, through faith, we can experience healing, strength and a path forward." ■

Stanton Witherspoon is a freelance multimedia journalist.



# Lake Union Approves Ordinations

## 11 PASTORS AFFIRMED IN PASTORAL CALLING

After extensive examination by church leadership and the pastors' congregations, the following individuals were approved for ordination by the Lake Union executive committee in 2024, as confirmation of God's calling in these pastors' lives.

### INDIANA CONFERENCE



**Anthony Nix** pastors the Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church. He graduated from Southern Adventist University with a bachelor's degree in religious studies. Among his pastoral achievements are hosting evangelistic series; serving as class instructor at

Indiana Academy; leading a youth rally; and sitting on the Indiana Conference K-12 education board.



**Sam Ngala** pastors the district for Bloomington, Ellettsville, Martinsville, and Spencer, Indiana. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in business administration, a master's degree in finance, and a MDiv from the Seventh-day Theological Seminary at Andrews

University. Among his pastoral achievements is launching the Hope Adventist Church plant in Indianapolis in 2010. This plant became a church which helped to launch the Indiana Mizo church plant in 2012 and the Indianapolis Zomi church plant in 2016. Both church plants were recognized as churches.



**Thomas Clark** pastors the Columbus, Indiana, district. He graduated from Western Governors University with a degree in Business Management and currently is in the Master of Arts for Pastoral Ministry program at Andrews University. Among his pastoral achievements: assist-

ing in starting a Spanish church plant in Seymour, Indiana, in 2020; and playing a key role in opening Maple Creek Adventist Academy in 2021, where his involvement continues.

### ILLINOIS CONFERENCE



For **Felipe Soares**, the call to ministry was something he resisted for many years. Growing up in a small church of 30 people on Long Island, New York, Soares loved serving his local church but struggled to believe that God could use him in full-time ministry. It wasn't

until he faced a crisis at the age of 20 that God used his former boss to challenge him. In an unexpected moment, his boss spoke words of encouragement, seeing in Felipe a potential for ministry that Felipe himself had not yet recognized.

Soares received a bachelor's degree in theology and a Bachelor of Science degree from Washington Adventist University. He completed his MDiv at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University. He currently serves as associate pastor at the North Shore Church, as well as acting chaplain of North Shore Adventist Academy.



**Rodney Balmes'** journey into pastoral ministry began with a realization that he was more naturally interested in the church and theology than his chosen field of study. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in theology from Southern Adventist University and an MDiv

from the Seventh-day Theological Seminary at Andrews University. Balmes serves as a pastor at the Hinsdale Fil-Am Church.

## LAKE REGION CONFERENCE



**Paul Retemiah** pastors the Muskegon Heights Wood Street and Idlewild Churches in Michigan. He graduated from Andrews University with a bachelor's degree in accounting and religion. Among his pastoral achievements are:

chaplain resident at the Emory Hospital in Decatur, Georgia; discipleship leader, Bible worker and mentor at the All Nations Church in Berrien Springs, Michigan. He previously served the Snellville Church in Snellville, Georgia. He has shown expertise in patient and spiritual care, evangelism and community outreach, and as a substitute teacher.



**Rohan Barnwell** pastors the Chicago Morgan Park and Gary All Nations Churches. A St. Vincent native, he graduated Atlantic Union College with a bachelor's degree in theology and religion. Among his pastoral achievements are family enrichment, marriage officiant, Christian chaplaincy, and clinical pastoral education.



**Ruddy Arnaldo Caldera Gutierrez** serves as the district pastor for Grand Rapids, Michigan. He graduated from the Cuba Adventist Theological Seminary (SETAC) with a bachelor's degree in theology. Among his pastoral achievements are his training in the

International Rescue and Relief Jungle and Island Survival and his accomplishment as Master Guide instructor. He previously served as pastor to the East Mediterranean Region, Jordan, and chaplain at the Primacy Collegiate Academy in Taiwan.

## MICHIGAN CONFERENCE



**Giancarlo de Miranda** pastors the Warren Seventh-day Adventist Church. Under God's direction, he helped the Warren Church to experience revitalization. He graduated from Hartland College with a bachelor's degree in pastoral evangelism and from Andrews

University with a Master of Arts in pastoral ministry. Among his pastoral achievements are establishing a missionary training school in Brazil, plus preparing several students to serve the Adventist Church as pastors and Bible workers.



**Paul Ratsara** pastors the Buchanan and Chikaming churches. He graduated from Asia Pacific University with a bachelor's degree in applied theology and from Andrews University with an MDiv. Among his pastoral achievements: seeing 16 youth baptized in 2011 at South

Africa's Eesterust church; helping to reopen the Alpena School in Northern Michigan.

## WISCONSIN CONFERENCE



**Carlton Mouzon** pastors three churches and one church plant in Lena, Wisconsin. He graduated from Southern Adventist University with a bachelor's degree in theology and biblical languages. Among his pastoral achievements are successfully shifting the church

culture toward evangelism by initiating small group Bible studies with members and non-members; and establishing youth and young adult ministries. Mouzon previously served as leader and lay pastor in the South Atlantic Conference, outreach coordinator and pastoral assistant in the Upper Columbia Conference and ministerial extern in the Georgia-Cumberland Conference. ■

*Compiled by Lake Union assistant communication specialist Katie Fellows.*

# ORDINATIONS



▲ Craig Harris, associate youth director for Michigan Conference, pictured left, was publicly recognized on Nov. 18, 2024, for his many years of “way above outstanding” leadership contributions to Club Ministry within the Lake Union and beyond.

## Youth Leader Recognized for Overseeing Lake Union’s International Camporee Master Plan

The Lake Union Conference Youth Ministries Department awarded Craig Harris the “Club Ministry Moses Leadership Award” during the annual Lake Union year-end meeting.

The Moses leadership miniature sculpture award has the same look as the full-size bronze Moses sculpture given to the community of Gillette, Wyoming, at the 2024 Believe

the Promise International Camporee.

Harris, associate youth director for Michigan Conference, was publicly recognized on Nov. 18, 2024, for his many years of

“way above outstanding” leadership contributions to Club Ministry within the Lake Union and beyond.

Known for his outstanding leadership contributions, Harris was affirmed for his club ministry leadership training events, directing numerous Lake Union Camporees, TLT visionary master planning, development of many club ministry leadership resources and his service to the Lake Union on numerous North American Division club ministry committees.

Ron Whitehead, Lake Union youth director and director of the International Camporee, presented the award to Harris, sharing that Harris is valued and respected by all Lake Union Conference youth professionals. He noted that it was a fitting moment to honor Harris right after he coordinated plans for the almost 5,000 Lake Union Pathfinders contingent attending the August 2024 “Believe the Promise” International Camporee in Gillette, Wyoming.

Whitehead concluded, “Pastor Craig is a master club ministry professional who has only four or five equals in the world. He comes with unique, God-given club ministry leadership gifts and skills. What a blessing it is to have Craig Harris within the Lake Union.”■

**Debbie Michel** is editor of the Lake Union Herald.

## Union-wide Master Guide Training Shapes Future Youth Leaders

The Master Guide Toolbox initiative, launched in 2012 and supported by the Lake Union Conference and the Center for Youth Evangelism, has become a cornerstone in training the next generation of spiritual leaders in youth ministry.

With a mission to provide accessible, high-quality training, the program has grown significantly, now serving hundreds of candidates annually in their journey towards gaining Master Guide investiture.

“At its core, our initiative is about equipping passionate individuals for effective ministry,” said Cheryl Logan, co-director for Master Guide Toolbox.

The Toolbox offers a blend of semi-annual weekend training events and a club for ongoing classes which correspond with academic coursework, accommodating busy



▲ While seminary students participate in the Master Guide training, the initiative has attracted students from public campuses and also professionals. L to R: Miriam Morgan-Skinner, Edgar Miranda, Cheryl Logan, Ron Whitehead, Sergio Gil, Miquel Martinez, and Rothschild Dangervil.

students eager to make a difference in their communities.

Candidates compile a Master Guide portfolio, culminating in an exit review that marks their transition into a life dedicated to youth service. The investiture ceremony, characterized by prayer and blessing, signifies their commitment and readiness to impact lives positively as spiritual leaders.

Several students from the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University have said that the initiative not only nurtures them personally but has also strengthened them to participate in youth ministry beyond the seminary.

One example is Miquel Martinez, a seminarian who participated in the Master Guide Toolbox, and shared his motivations: “Becoming a Master Guide is one of my biggest successes in my ministry. It allows me to impact young people’s lives, guiding and mentoring them so they will continue their friendship with Jesus and ultimately become Master Guides themselves.”

Natasha Richards, a chaplain for public campus ministry and another student at the seminary, expressed her desire to understand the experiences of young adults. “Becoming a Master Guide allows me to connect with students through their interests and experiences, helping them in their spiritual journeys,” she explained. Her four-year experience at Andrews University has enriched her commitment to serving others. “I have always

found joy in learning from and teaching young adults, embracing their creativity and seeing the world through their eyes. The conversations that arise when I connect with them on their level are truly remarkable.”

Another seminarian Edgar Miranda emphasized that being a Master Guide is about responsibility and mentorship. “The training and preparation for becoming a Master Guide was incredible and eye-opening at times with many aspects being very practical, hands-on and very beneficial as well as valuable,” he asserted, reinforcing the program’s commitment to developing leaders. “I believe I can use my spiritual and hands-on training to help with life experiences as a mentor not only for young people, but also to fellow servants of the Lord.”

While seminary students participate in the Master Guide training, the initiative has attracted students from public campuses and also professionals.

Dorcas Kilembe, a college freshman at Lake Michigan College, noted the training’s importance: “Master Guide training helps members understand their role in the Church’s mission, equipping them to nurture faith and mentor the next generation of leaders.”

Miriam Morgan-Skinner, a doctor of nursing practice, reflected on her own transformative journey through the program and the profound impact on her daughters’ involvement in the Pathfinder Club. Her daughters observed her unwavering commitment to

complete the portfolio requirements despite long days at work, and one of them expressed her desire to become a Master Guide. “Leading by example can help to change the future of our youths,” she noted.

The Ruedinger-Quispe family shared their experience integrating the Master Guide program into their family life while raising young children. Nate remarked, “For me, it is a way to give to others something I never had the opportunity to do as the church.” He and his wife, Yerling, are pleased they can now pass on the blessing to their children and others in the club ministries they lead. “Leadership by example is the most effective form of leadership, and it has been an incredibly positive experience for our children. The Master Guide program has not only equipped us for ministry outside the home but has also prepared us to better minister to our own children.”

For more information, visit [cye.org](http://cye.org). ■

*Herald staff with Cheryl Logan, coordinator the Master Guide Toolbox for the Center for Youth Evangelism.*



▲ North American Division Youth Director Tracy Wood and seminarian Natasha Richards



▲ L to R: Alfred Dilembe, his daughter Dorcas; Briana and Olivia with mom Miriam Skinner; Ron Whitehead; Chantal J Emile, and Cheryl Logan.



▲ In the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, Andrews University initiated a virtual mission trip that included 22 undergraduate and graduate students volunteering to offer trauma processing sessions to North Carolina students.

# Andrews University Students Provide Trauma Support Via ‘Virtual Mission Trip’

**In a collaborative effort to support students affected by Hurricane Helene, Andrews University has initiated a virtual mission trip that includes 22 undergraduate and graduate students volunteering to offer trauma processing sessions. The initiative aims to provide crucial social-emotional support to schools in Western North Carolina.**

“Our goal is to lay a foundation of social-emotional support for Western North Carolina students as they continue to process the aftermath of Hurricane Helene,” said Mindy Salyers, director of Consultation Services and a leading figure in the project. “We hope this will enable school administrators and staff to further develop resiliency skills among their students.”

The volunteer Andrews University students, who represent a range of majors including speech pathology, social work, theology, and psychology, participated in training on Oct. 23 to prepare for the trauma processing sessions. These sessions have focused on whole-group trauma processing based on the story of Jesus calming the storm from Mark 4.

During these sessions, students are encouraged to contextualize their trauma

responses to Hurricane Helene using the story’s framework. They reflect on what they experienced during and after the storm—focusing on their senses by considering what they tasted, touched, felt, smelled, and heard; how their bodies alerted them to

stress and anxiety as trauma responses; and the God-given coping skills they can use to calm themselves and regulate their emotions.

The initiative, well-supported by local educators and mental health professionals, has reached a total of 685 North Carolina students in six schools to date.

Dustin Young, assistant professor of social work, and Harvey Burnett, chair of the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences, are among those backing the effort, along with Jose Bourget, Andrews University lead chaplain.

Feedback from the participating schools has been overwhelmingly positive. “Thank you again for a heart that reached out and helped people in WNC. Your extended hand was truly a blessing in so many ways!” remarked Dr. Sarah Wilson, principal at Captain Gilmer Christian School. “We really appreciate your help and the resources you provided for our students!” added Lindsay Seafong, principal at Silver Creek Adventist School.

As the intervention progresses, the team remains committed to aiding in the healing process for students in the aftermath of the hurricane, highlighting the importance of addressing the emotional challenges they face. “At the end of the day,” said Salyers enthusiastically, “our hope is to empower these students with the tools they need to navigate their feelings in the wake of trauma.” ■

**Mindy Salyers** is director of Consultation Services.





▲ Many Andrews University students attended the 35th annual communication conference, which took place in Chicago, Illinois, from Oct. 17–19. The association aims to nurture the professional growth of Adventist communicators in a spiritual and social environment.

# Andrews University Students and Alumni Win Communication Awards

Several Andrews University communication students and alumni have been recognized by the Society of Adventist Communicators (SAC) for exemplary work in communications-related areas, including design, photography, writing, video and spoken word. The awards were given during the 35th annual communication conference, which took place in Chicago, Illinois, from Oct. 17–19. The association aims to nurture the professional growth of Adventist communicators in a spiritual and social environment.

According to the SAC website, “Each year communication, film, design, and marketing students and professionals have the opportunity to submit projects for award consideration in more than 15 categories.” Each submission is evaluated on “content, creativity, audience appeal, and quality of craft” by

a panel of judges specific to the category of media.

## Envision Magazine

Envision Magazine, a Christian collegiate lifestyle publication, is produced entirely by students from the Department of

Communication, Visual Art & Design. Student contributors to the magazine won three major awards during the ceremony on Saturday evening.

For her work as a graphic designer and illustrator on the Envision Magazine story “Oranges for Dinner,” Chloe De Leon, senior graphic design major, won “Best Student Print Design.” Her project was evaluated on effective use of design principles and choice of print medium. The judges noted her “great balance of creativity and content while exploring principles of design. This is something we would pick off a table and read.”

The award “Best Student Artistic/Design Photography” went to Nate Reid, junior digital communication/digital media major, and Skyler Campbell, senior graphic design major, for their work on Envision’s cover. The project was selected for its ability to express a clear message, idea and emotion within a single image. The judges commented, “Fantastic execution that immediately intrigues the viewer and piques interest in the story behind the subject. This entry left the judges with no suggestions for improvement.”

Sophomore elementary education major Amanda Park won the “Best Student Long-Form Feature Writing Award” for her article “Hidden in the Waiting,” published in Envision Magazine. Her story, evaluated for effective reporting, was recognized for its vivid descriptions, relatable storytelling and ability to capture “the power of nature as an antidote to the modern epidemic of busyness and impatience.”

## Individual Student Awards

Nicholas Gunn, sophomore elementary education major, received the “2024 Student of the Year Award,” one of the Society of Adventist Communicators Professional Recognition Awards. At the awards ceremony, Kimberly Maran, SAC executive director, noted, “As a communicator, Nicholas has shown his talent across multiple platforms, from writing for Andrews University, the Lake Union Herald and the Benton Spirit



▲ Nicholas Gunn, sophomore elementary education major, received the “2024 Student of the Year Award,” one of the Society of Adventist Communicators Professional Recognition Awards



▲ North American Division Video Producer/Photographer Pieter Damsteegt read a personal tribute to his mentor, former Lake Union Herald Editor Gary Burns. Burns was recognized with the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Newspaper, to his community outreach on WAUS 90.7 FM and his YouTube channel.” She continued, “His work as a junior editor and his role in Benton Harbor’s communication strategy have enhanced transparency and engagement .... His commitment to faith-based initiatives began in high school and continues today.”

Gunn’s dedication to leadership, community service and excellent communication were highlighted throughout the program, as he received several other honorable mentions as well. In the podcast category, his interview with gospel singer K-Anthony was highlighted. Two of his writing projects, “Alumni Highlight: Emma Kinnard Now Commissioner” and “Zach Fedoruk Continues Fifth Annual Hotdog Giveaway Tradition,” also received recognition.

Moraya Truman, junior digital communication/digital media major, received the “Best

Student Microcopy Award” for her work on social media copy for The Hopeful, a film released in 2024 focusing on the founders of the Seventh-day Adventist church. The award is given to a contextualized phrase or series of short sentences that inspire a target audience to action online. Truman was recognized for her posts promoting the film’s theatrical release, which the judges noted “received a lot of engagement, and the NAD’s social media pages reflected an uptick in engagement as well.” Additionally, Truman received an honorable mention for campaign design on the same project.

Htet Myint, MLS certificate recipient, also received an honorable mention in the long-form feature writing category for his Envision Magazine article “Sponsorship and Solidarity.”

Several students received honorable mention recognition throughout the ceremony

as well. Alina Weber, senior photography major, was recognized for her work on the January/February 2023 Lake Union Herald cover featuring Sojourner Truth. A group of students from an Andrews cinematography class were acknowledged in the web video category for their work on the project “Eliza’s Gift,” created for the Lake Union Conference. The class included students Kara Shepard, Nate Reid, Lia Glass, Moraya Truman, Nigel Emilaire, Solana Campbell and Yohance Mack.

### Alumni Awards

Andrews University alumni were also well-represented at the awards ceremony. Among them were Francis Tuffour (MA ‘17, DMin ‘17), Alexander Carpenter (BA ‘03), Raquel Mentor (BSELED ‘14), Richard Aguilera (BARCH ‘92) and Pablo Fernandez (MA ‘15). Three alumni were specially recognized as monument award winners: Claudia Allen (BA ‘13) who received the Young Professional Award, Olivia Woodard (BFA ‘20) with the Reger Smith Cutting Edge Award, and Gary Burns (MA ‘98) who was recognized with the Lifetime Achievement Award.

The standout number of conference participants and award winners associated with Andrews University exemplifies the quality of the school’s educational programs and the impact of its extended community. To learn more about the Department of Visual Art, Communication & Design at Andrews University, visit their website at [www.andrews.edu/cas/vacd](http://www.andrews.edu/cas/vacd). ■

*Isabella Koh is the communication coordinator for the Office of University Communication at Andrews University.*



▲ The 2024 Master of Divinity cohort is pictured outside of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary.

# Record Enrollment in MDiv Program at Andrews University

**Enrollment in the Master of Divinity (MDiv) program at Andrews University's Seventh-day Theological Seminary has expanded to include 460 students, the highest enrollment in the last six years and the second highest in the program's history.**

Several factors have contributed to this milestone. In response to the rapidly evolving market and social needs of the academic world, the MDiv program has introduced several innovative changes. The expansion of hybrid study options now offers students a range of learning modes—online, Zoom, in-person, summer, and off-campus intensives—providing greater flexibility and accessibility.

Additionally, the program has launched a Spanish cohort in collaboration with

the Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and has enhanced its concentrations and dual degree offerings through partnerships with other campus programs. In recent years, the North American Division (NAD) Ministerial Department has also made a significant impact on enrollment with its NextGen initiative, which has encouraged young people across the NAD to think about pursuing ministry.

Fernando Ortiz, MDiv program director, says, “To meet the ever-growing demand for

new pastors, we are committed to meeting the needs of the global church by offering multiple delivery methods for courses within the MDiv program. This flexibility is crucial for pastors and administrators with demanding schedules, allowing them to engage with our program more effectively.” ■

*Office of University Communication, Andrews University*



# New President/CEO Announced for UChicago Medicine AdventHealth Hinsdale

**AdventHealth named Elise MacCarroll-Wright as president and CEO of UChicago Medicine AdventHealth Hinsdale in its Great Lakes Region, effective Jan. 6, 2025. She replaces Adam Maycock, who recently made the decision to transition to another opportunity, and will report to Monica Reed, Great Lakes Region president/CEO.**

“With her strong background in operations and experience leading cross-functional teams, we’re excited to have Elise join our Hinsdale leadership team,” Reed said. “This is a legacy hospital with a longstanding reputation of providing quality care, and her leadership will continue to build on this rich heritage.”

MacCarroll-Wright currently serves as the corporate vice president of ancillary and support services for AdventHealth, where she is responsible for the connectivity and standardization of areas like radiology, pharmacy, laboratory and respiratory care. She has held various ancillary leadership roles throughout her career with the organization, including as vice president of radiology operations for AdventHealth Medical Group in the Central Florida Division, senior director of clinical support and ancillary services for AdventHealth Orlando and AdventHealth for Children, and administrative director of imaging services for these same campuses. Prior to joining AdventHealth, MacCarroll-Wright began her health care career with roles at North Ridge Medical Center in Fort Lauderdale and HCA North Florida Hospital in Gainesville.

“In my current role, I’ve had the pleasure of collaborating with many teams across the system, including the incredible team at

UChicago Medicine AdventHealth Hinsdale,” she said. “I look forward to joining the leaders, providers, team members and community of Hinsdale in advancing our whole-person care promise.”

MacCarroll-Wright earned a bachelor’s degree in business administration with an emphasis in healthcare management from Western Governors University. She is a graduate of the AdventHealth Executive Leadership Program as well as the SMI

Advancing Women Leaders Program. Her community service includes serving as board chair for CORE, board member for I See My Destiny Inc. and coordinator for annual mission trips to the One More Child Children’s Ministry Center in Guatemala. She and her husband, Bryan, have two sons, Cody and Ethan. She spends her free time reading, hiking, boating and enjoying nature with her family. ■

*AdventHealth Corporate Communication Herald.*



# CLASSIFIEDS

## ANNOUNCEMENT

### Attention Broadview Academy

**Graduates:** Our 2025 school reunion is April 25 & 26, 2025, at the North Aurora Church, 950 Mooseheart Rd., North Aurora, IL. Let your classmates know. Honor classes: '55,'65,'75,'85,'95,'05. Friday Night Vespers: 7:30 p.m.; Sabbath Services: 9:30 a.m. till 5 p.m. All are welcome!

## SERVICES

**Wings of Life Missions** – Follow the journey of frontline missions in Central America as we plant churches, conduct health outreaches and more. Read the exciting stories, pray for the work, and consider volunteering on a short-term trip. Follow, engage and partner with us in our mission of Moving People. Visit [www.wingsoflife.net](http://www.wingsoflife.net) for more info. Be sure to follow us on Facebook and Instagram.

**Raise Smarter Kids.** Kids grow better with radio! LifeTalkKids.net offers stellar educational and captivating programs 24/7. Building character for now and for eternity is what LifeTalk Kids is all about. Listen online or download our FREE APP at LifeTalk.net

### Considering Rural Living?

Explore Greeneville, Tennessee! Located near the Smoky Mountains, Greeneville Adventist Academy has an accredited Adventist K-12 day

school program, supported by two constituent churches, prioritizing the Bible, evangelism, mission trips, academics, and a high-quality music program (voice, band, bells and strings). [MyGAA.org](http://MyGAA.org) or 423-639-2011.

## EMPLOYMENT

**Andrews University** seeks qualified applicants: Andrews University is seeking qualified Seventh-day Adventists who may fill open roles in fulfilling our mission to Seek Knowledge, Affirm Faith, and Change the World. If this is of interest to you, please check out our current openings at: [andrews.edu/jobs](http://andrews.edu/jobs)

**Union Adventist University** is seeking applicants for a full-time nursing faculty. This individual will function as a lead course instructor for a medical-surgical or critical care course, including performing didactic and clinical instruction as well as recruiting and supervising clinical instructors. Doctoral degree preferred, master's degree with desire to continue at the doctoral level required. Full benefits package including health care, tuition assistance, retirement plan, and many other benefits. See job description and instructions for application at [uau.edu/](http://uau.edu/)

**Union Adventist University** seeks candidates for two nursing faculty positions. These

are full time exempt positions with a start date of 6/1/2025. Responsible for preparing undergraduate students to successfully complete the Union BSN curriculum and pass the National Council State Boards of Nursing Examination. Excellent benefit package that includes tuition assistance for dependents. See the full job description and instructions for application at [uau.edu/employment](http://uau.edu/employment).

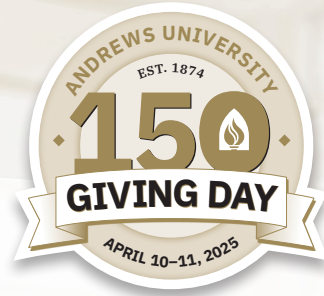
**Union Adventist University** is seeking qualified candidates for Student Success project manager. This is a full, non-exempt position with excellent benefits including tuition assistance for dependents. The project manager will oversee and support student outreach and strategic initiatives that promote academic success, retention, and graduation. Involves data-driven insights and management, resource coordination, and continuous improvement of systems to optimize academic support resources. See the full job description and instructions for application at [uau.edu/employment](http://uau.edu/employment).

**Union Adventist University** seeks qualified candidates for the position of Vice President

for Financial Administration (VPFA). The VPFA aligns institutional resources to achieve the university's mission, vision, and strategic initiatives. The ideal candidate will have 7+ years of managerial accounting and financial management experience; degree in accounting, finance, or business. CPA or CMA preferred but not required. Excellent benefits package and tuition assistance for dependents included. Please see the full job description and complete the online application at [uau.edu/employment](http://uau.edu/employment).

**Union Adventist University** is seeking qualified applicants for Office Coordinator for the Physician Assistant Program. This is a full-time, non-exempt position with excellent benefits including tuition assistance for dependents. This role supports the Program Director and Clinical Coordinator, serves as a liaison between students and faculty, assists with event and meeting planning, and other duties. Please see the job description and apply at [uau.edu/employment](http://uau.edu/employment) or contact Megan Heidtbrink at [megan.heidtbrink@uau.edu](mailto:megan.heidtbrink@uau.edu) for more information.

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



ANDREWS UNIVERSITY

# Giving Day

*April 10-11, 2025*



Scan to learn  
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Andrews  
University

World Changers Made Here.

**Pacific Union College** seeks qualified candidates to fill open positions in fulfilling our mission to Learn with Purpose, Rise in Faith, and Serve in Love. Beautiful mountain campus, minutes to shopping, an hour+

drive of ocean and skiing. If interested, please check out our current openings at: <https://www.puc.edu/campus-services/human-resources/current-job-postings>

# MILEPOSTS

## OBITUARIES

**GARROW**, Phyllis E. (Dorgeto), age 78; born April 13, 1945, in Holland, Mich.; died Mar. 31, 2024, in Grand Haven, Mich. She was a member of the Grand Haven Church, Grand Haven, Mich. She is survived by her husband, Andrew L. Garrow; son, Bill Garrow; daughter,

Lelaine Gates (Garrow); father, Howard Dorgelo; mother, Claribel (Dunnewin); sisters, Donna DePas, Nancy Hill; and seven grandchildren. Memorial services were conducted by Pastor Jarod Thomas, and inurnment was in Ofield Funeral Home Cemetery, Holland, Mich.

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

## CALENDAR OF OFFERINGS

### MARCH

- 1 Local Church Budget
- 8 World Budget Adventist World Radio (GC)
- 15 Local Church Budget
- 22 Local Conference Advance
- 29 Northern Asia-Pacific Division (NSD)

**OWEN**, Ardith R. (Wheeler), age 90; born Sept. 14, 1934, in Kalamazoo, Mich.; died Dec. 2, 2024, in Kalamazoo, Mich. She was a member of the Paw Paw Church in Paw Paw, Mich. She is survived by her sons, Craig Owen, Elliott Owen; daughter, Cheryl (Jon) Gibson; sister, Barbara Simmons; five grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren. A memorial service was conducted by Elder Jim Merrills on Dec. 14, 2024; inurnment with private graveside service in Michigan. others.

## OMISSION

The Jan/Feb issue ran a series of drawings on pp. 37-39 featuring past Lake Region conference presidents. We inadvertently omitted the name of the artist, who was **John Bauer**.

# Sabbath Sunset Calendar

	March 7	March 14	March 21	March 28
Berrien Springs, Mich.	6:43	7:51	7:59	8:06
Chicago	5:48	6:56	7:04	7:12
Detroit	6:29	7:37	7:45	7:53
Indianapolis	6:43	7:50	7:58	8:05
La Crosse, Wis.	6:01	7:10	7:18	7:27
Lansing, Mich.	6:35	7:43	7:52	8:00
Madison, Wis.	5:54	7:03	7:11	7:19
Springfield, Ill.	5:57	7:04	7:11	7:19

\*\* Note that on March 9, 2025, Daylight Savings Time began resulting in a forward shift by 1 hour. Data procured from [timeanddate.com](http://timeanddate.com). Error not exceeding two minutes and generally less than one minute.

ADVENTIST  
WORLD  
RADIO  
ANNUAL  
OFFERING  
MARCH 8, 2025



# MIRACLES EXCEEDINGLY ABUNDANTLY ABOVE ALL THAT WE ASK OR THINK!

From hundreds of thousands of baptisms in Papua New Guinea to miraculous conversions in the Middle East, you can't miss the thrilling updates of what God is doing around the world! Share these inspiring stories with your church during the **Adventist World Radio Annual Offering on March 8.**



## ADVENTIST WORLD RADIO

📞 1-800-337-4297

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✉ [@awr360](https://twitter.com/awr360)

📺 [awr.org/youtube](https://www.youtube.com/awr360)

12501 Old Columbia Pike  
Silver Spring, MD 20904 USA

Download the  
**AWR Offering Packet**  
for **March 8** at  
**[awr.org/offering](http://awr.org/offering)**





## ANDREWS UNIVERSITY

### GENERAL EVENTS

**March 7–10:** *March Preview*

**March 7, 2:30–3:30 p.m. (general admission):** *Honors Scholars and Undergraduate Research Poster Symposium*

### 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](http://howard.andrews.edu).

**March 1, 4 p.m.:** *Music Festival Finale Concert*

**March 5, 7 p.m.:** *Michigan Seventh-day Adventist Conference Band Clinic Concert*

**March 9, 4 p.m.:** *Sunday Music Series: Andrews University Composers*

**March 24, 7 p.m.:** *Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association Music Clinic Concert*

**March 30, 7 p.m.:** *Howard Center Presents: The Katinas*

## ILLINOIS

**March 1:** *Conference Pathfinder Bible Experience, Richland Bridge Church*

**March 6-8:** *Choir Festival, Hinsdale Adventist Academy*

## INDIANA

**March 1:** *Conference Pathfinder Bible Experience, Cicero Church*

**March 1:** *Hispanic Women's Retreat, The Grand Hall at Westlake Gardens, Indianapolis*

**March 7-9:** *Indiana Pathfinder/Adventurer Training Institute, Timber Ridge Camp*

**March 21-23:** *Hispanic Elders Retreat, Timber Ridge Camp*

## LAKE REGION

**March 1:** *Dia Internacional de la Mujer Adventista, Conference Wide*

**March 1:** *Conference Pathfinder Bible Experience, Camp Wagner*

**March 21-23:** *Retiro para Ancianos, Camp Wagner*

**March 29:** *Men's Ministries Rally, Motor City, Location TBD*

## MICHIGAN

**March 1:** *Camp Meeting Registration Opens*

**March 1:** *Conference Pathfinder Bible Experience, Cedar Lake Church*

**March 8:** *Evangelistic Rally, Lansing*

**March 9:** *Sabbath School Workshop, Conference Office*

**March 16-23:** *Faith Identity Trip*

**March 28-30:** *Adventist Community Services, Camp Au Sable*

## WISCONSIN

**March 1:** *Conference Pathfinder Bible Experience, Wisconsin Academy*

**March 7-9:** *Women's Empowerment Weekend, Camp Wakonda*

**March 9:** *Junior Benefit, Wisconsin Academy*

## LAKE UNION

**March 15:** *Global Youth Day, Covenant House, Chicago*

**March 25-27:** *180° Symposium, Pioneer Memorial Church, Berrien Springs*

**March 29:** *Pathfinder Bible Experience, Village Church, Berrien Springs*

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



# The petitions of a humble heart and contrite spirit He will not despise.

The opening of our hearts to our heavenly Father, the acknowledgment of our entire dependence, the expression of our wants, the homage of grateful love—this is true prayer.

The Signs of the Times, July 1, 1886

**I AM GOING TO . . .**

open my heart to our heavenly Father

**I AM GOING TO . . .**

acknowledge my dependence on Him

**I AM GOING TO . . .**

express my wants

**I AM GOING TO . . .**

show Him my gratitude in love

# Immigration Enforcement and Your Rights



▲ JENNIFER GRAY WOODS

*I heard that the Department of Homeland Security is now allowing Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials to conduct searches and raids at previously protected areas such as schools, churches, and hospitals. What does this mean and what rights do individuals have if they are stopped by ICE?*

Up until recently there had been a long-standing policy prohibiting ICE from operating at or near sensitive locations unless there were specific urgent circumstances such as the prevention of a national security threat. This policy was in place so that individuals, regardless of their documentation status, would be able to have access to essential services. However, the policy was rescinded in January meaning that undocumented individuals could now face deportation or other immigration actions while engaging in activities such as going to the hospital to receive medical care, going to school or attending church.

However, this new policy does not override an individual's constitutional rights. Notably, individuals, regardless of citizenship or status in this country, still have many constitutional rights including due process rights.

These rights include the right to be protected from unreasonable searches and seizures by the government. This means that generally ICE officials cannot search a person or areas where there is an expectation of privacy without consent unless they have a judicial warrant. A judicial warrant is a formal written order signed by a state or federal judge authorizing an officer to make an arrest, seizure or search.

Because of these constitutional protections ICE officials are not allowed to enter areas where there

is an expectation of privacy, such as schools without consent or a judicial warrant unless there are urgent circumstances. ICE officials would be able to access public areas within buildings however, since there isn't the same expectation of privacy in those spaces. Churches where there is mix of public areas, such as church lobbies, and private areas, such as a pastor's study should be mindful of what spaces they have the right to deny ICE, or other officials, the right to search and which areas are off limits absent a warrant.

The North American Division of Seventh-day Adventist affirmed these rights in a January 16, 2018, statement. "As the most ethnically-diverse Christian denomination in the U.S., the Seventh-day Adventist Church proudly defends the rights of all men, women and children, no matter their country of origin — the equal rights afforded in the United States Constitution and fair treatment as immigrants and refugees in our beloved country."

I encourage our members, regardless of their status in this country to know what their constitutional rights are and, in all things, to act according to love of Christ and His principles. ■

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





# What Do You Have?

2 Kings 4:1-7 tells the story of a widow, who recently lost her husband and now finds herself in a financial nightmare.

With no money, creditors demanding payment and threatening to take her sons as slaves for repayment, this widow's hope is dwindling by the second. The prophet Elisha asks her a simple question: "What do you have in your house?" (2 Kings 4:2). Her response, is a remark that we may have all expressed in similar situations: "Nothing there at all." However, what she did have was the makings of a miracle that would prove to be more than what she could have ever imagined.

Often times, in the midst of life's challenges, it's difficult to identify what is right in front of us. Doubt and surrender eventually finds a comfortable spot to set up camp. Consequently, it becomes increasingly difficult to recognize the solution that God has already provided for our situation. Just like the widow who initially only saw a small jar of oil for a few remaining meals but later recognized that it was actually her meal ticket towards financial freedom. Through the prophet Elisha, God was able to turn a small jar of oil into an oil-producing business. This miracle afforded the widow the opportunity to pay off her husband's large debt, retain possession of her sons and live comfortably into the future, all from what she considered just a small jar of oil.

As you continue to navigate through the new year, ask yourself (and God) the question, "what do I have?" Philippians 4:19 reminds us that God will meet all our needs, according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus. However, He also wants us to remember that "lazy hands make for poverty, but diligent hands bring wealth" (Proverbs 10:4). Elisha instructed the woman and her sons to be a part of the solution by going out and gathering as many jars as they could. He subsequently directed them to sell the oil. Thus, it is essential that we

too make concerted efforts in resolving our own circumstances.

So, what is your oil? What has God already supplied for you, that you may not recognize is your key to a miracle? Whether it is a skill you learned back in high school, a dish you cook that everyone loves, a talent for words or writing, or even something seemingly insignificant like clutter in your garage or basement that could turn out valuable. The fact is God has already provided you with your oil. Will you allow Him to transform your small jar of oil into the next miracle? ■

**Jermaine K. Jackson** is associate treasurer of the Lake Union, as well as its stewardship director.



▲ JERMAINE JACKSON



# Lifetime of Smiles

It's true what they say...everything happens for a reason. I came to this realization recently as I stood in a busy gym at Indianapolis Junior Academy, my alma mater.

It was the very same gym where I had to run laps for PE Class in the fifth grade. Not much had changed but the energy from the AMEN clinic I was volunteering at as a dental provider gave me a whole new perspective of where I was—physically and mentally.

If you had asked me five years ago, “Angie, what do you want to do for a career?” I would not have been able to answer that question. It felt like all my friends were confident in where they wanted to futures go, and I had no clue. The second semester of my senior year had already begun, and I still had no idea. I had no idea, that is, until there was an opportunity to volunteer at the Pathway Healthcare Expo that was being held at Indiana Academy. I was paired with Dr. Philip Frist, a dentist. I was to be his “dental assistant” for the expo, but I had no clue what I was getting myself into. I was a ball full of nerves not knowing how I was going to be able to help but God had placed me with the perfect person. Dr. Frist was so patient and kind. He taught me so much about dental health in the few hours we

worked together. His kindness and passion for oral health sparked an interest in me that I didn't know I had. That volunteer experience gave me clarity in wanting to work with teeth and helping people feel confident in their smile.

About a month later, I had another opportunity to help others on a mission trip to El Salvador. Working with others in need made me feel a deeper connection to not only those I was helping but to God as well. I felt God's love through the deep gratitude we received from the people we were

there to help. I could see the gratitude by how dedicated they were by lining up hours before the dental clinic was open, driving from hours away, simply to receive free dental care. The immense gratitude they showed for the help they received made me aware of how I had taken for granted the dental care I had access to. God was leading me to see that this interest that had sparked in me a month prior was the direction for me. In dental health, I could learn not only how to care for others smiles and educate, but I could also bring smiles by letting God guide me to be a resource to those in need.

After graduating with my bachelor's degree of science in dental hygiene, with a minor in health promotion from Indiana University South Bend, I am a registered dental hygienist. God has guided me throughout my journey so that I may continue to share his love. He led me to the opportunity to work for Verity Smiles Studios with Dr. Clarissa Oliveria who shares the same passion and loves to serve others for Christ. This is the same passion I saw in Dr. Frist that ignited my dental hygiene journey. Verity Smiles Studios, among other local Indianapolis health care providers, volunteered time to assist in the AMEN clinic to help Indianapolis locals gain access to free healthcare and dental services. It was amazing being part of a group that came together for one mission: to show God's love through acts of service. I was able to reconnect with Dr. Frist and share my testimony of how God placed him in my life to recognize a passion for dentistry. In the moment I couldn't recognize that God was leading me, by placing people and experiences in my life, to where I am now. God has purpose for each one of us. ■

**Angie Giron** is a member of the Indianapolis North Hispanic Seventh-day Adventist Church.



# Priceless Treasures

“We have waited 26 years for this building.” That’s what a local told us as we wrapped up our project. Another group would come and finish what we had started, but for now, our work was drawing to a close.

The sun was hot and we were all coated in varying layers of concrete, sweat, and sunscreen, but as the last block was set on our building project, none of the discomfort mattered.

By then, a crowd had gathered on the side of the road, some with tears in their eyes and bright smiles on their faces. Passing cyclists and pedestrians took their eyes off the path before them to get a better look at the newly made building, still missing a roof, but sporting a paper sign at its corner that read “Iglesia Adventista” scrawled in vibrant red marker.

During our two-week stay in Cuba from Dec. 4-16, our group of about 40 individuals had two main building projects. Our task at the first site was to haul gravel in for the floor and get the walls and gable ends erected. I don’t think I’ve ever hauled so many cement blocks in my life! In addition to the building projects, we ran a health expo and Vacation Bible School for children. On our final Sabbath, it was so exciting to witness 25 people give their lives to Jesus in baptism.

God used the church members in Cuba to teach me many lessons. They reminded me to find joy in the simple things, to be flexible, and not to take blessings for granted. Many things didn’t go according to plan during our trip. Challenges included a lack of building materials, lack of fuel, and an intense illness that spread quickly through our ranks. Despite these obstacles, God brought us through and reminded us that He had the master plan—all we had to do was have faith.

The opportunity to be a light in the darkness, to reach the unreached, is something that has changed my life forever. Matthew 6:19-21 says, “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and thieves break

in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth or rust destroy and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is there your heart will be also.” The people of Cuba are priceless treasures, our neighbors and family members are treasures, and God has called us to store those treasures in heaven. He never said our mission for Him would be without trials, but the promise that He offered His disciples is applicable to us today. John 16:33 says, “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

Jesus is calling you and me to gather His treasures. Will you answer His call? ■

**Grace Busch** finds pleasure in going on mission trips. Before her recent trip to Cuba, Grace assisted in various community service projects in Puerto Rico during her senior year at Great Lakes Adventist Academy. A member of the Grayling Seventh-day Adventist Church, she enjoys working with animals and writing.



Whatever makes you  
feel whole, **chase it.**

The always-learning, strength-building, soul-nourishing boss of your own day. The steward of your incomparable human spirit. **And as you chase what makes you feel whole, we'll be right there with you.**

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