

SERVING SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS IN THE LAKE UNION SINCE 1908

HERALD

MAY/JUNE 2025



Summer Camp & Camp Meeting Issue

Often, I tell people I have the best job in the world. I get to hear story after story of lives transformed through a personal encounter with Christ. Time and again, these divine moments seem to unfold in two sacred spaces: camp meetings and summer camps. Whether it happened during the flicker of bonfire flames at a Friday night program at summer camp or in the stillness of an early morning devotional at camp meeting, those special moments planted seeds of faith deep in the hearts of so many, including my own family.



Those gatherings weren't just programs—they were Spirit-filled experiences. Encounters with a living Savior who drew near when we knelt in prayer, sang songs of surrender or simply listened in silence.

Camp meetings have long been places of revival—times when heaven feels just a little closer. And now, as the world around us seems to be unraveling, we find ourselves longing for that same nearness to God in our daily lives. Our greatest need is to be **communing with Christ amid crisis**. The temptation is to become busy—doing, fixing, planning—but the invitation is to abide. When we spend time at the feet of Jesus, we are reminded: “**He must increase**, but I must decrease.” (John 3:30). His power is made perfect in our weakness, and His presence is the rain we need to revive our weary hearts.

Let it rain, we pray—not just in our events or strategies, but in our souls. **The Sanctuary**

Story gives us a sacred pattern: daily communion, continual cleansing and a journey into deeper intimacy with God. It's not just history—it's our roadmap for revival.

You may notice the bolded words above—they reflect our conferences' bold, faith-filled camp meeting themes this year. As you read the stories in this issue, may you be inspired to attend one or more camp meeting. You never know how one week—or even one weekend—with Jesus might change everything. (By the way, Lake Region is foregoing a summer camp meeting this year to allow their members ample opportunity to attend the General Conference session in July.)

Debbie



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Summer camp

ABOUT THE COVER: Jacob Gibbs brought to life familiar scenes from camp meetings and summer camps through his illustrations.

ABOUT THE ARTIST: When he's not drawing, Jacob serves as an associate chaplain at Andrews University and an associate pastor at Pioneer Memorial Church — but his favorite roles are being a husband to his wife, Emily, and a father to their two little girls.

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

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The Holy Ground of Summer Camp

There are moments in life when God's presence becomes undeniably real, when the movement of the Holy Spirit is so evident that it changes the trajectory of a person's life.



▲ ELDEN RAMIREZ

For many young people, such moments occur at summer camp. In a world where anxiety, depression, and social isolation among youth are at an all-time high, research has demonstrated that intentional experiences in nature, especially within faith-based communities, have a profound impact on mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being. According to the American Camp Association, 96% of campers said that camp helped them make new friends, and 70% of parents reported that their child gained self-confidence as a result of the camp experience.

Ellen G. White, recognizing the power of God's creation to impart eternal truths, wrote: "Next to the Bible, nature is to be our great lesson book. In it God has revealed Himself to us."² She further emphasized, "To the little child, not yet capable of learning from the printed page or of being introduced to the routine of the schoolroom, nature presents an unfailing source of instruction and delight."³ White described nature as a spiritual classroom, where simple natural scenes teach profound truths: "In the home school, nature may be constantly at work to teach her precious lessons. The little child finds delight in the works of nature, and his parents should make it their business to point out the marvels of God's handiwork. The impressions thus made will not be soon forgotten."⁴

Summer camp embodies this model by removing distractions and immersing young people in an environment where faith becomes tangible. It is a place where Scripture is not only read but experienced, through awe-inspiring sunsets, fireside

prayers, and the gentle voice of the Spirit calling hearts to Jesus.

Recent research reinforces the spiritual and developmental significance of Christian camp ministry. A 2021 study published in the *Journal of Youth Development* identified five foundational characteristics of Christian camps: relational, safe space, participatory, unplugged from home, and faith-centered.⁵ These elements, combined, support deep personal and spiritual growth. Another study presented to the Association of Youth Ministry Educators concluded that summer camp staff experiences significantly contribute to long-term faith formation and leadership development through mentoring, reflective practices, and the rhythm of daily spiritual life.⁶

The Seventh-day Adventist Church reflects this pattern. Many university administrators, professors, healthcare professionals and church leaders trace their leadership journeys back to summer camp. Serving as counselors, worship leaders, or program directors, they were shaped by a model of servant leadership that strengthened their calling and spiritual resilience.

My own life was forever changed at summer camp. As a child, I sat under the stars at the campfire bowl, surrounded by young people, listening intently as the summer camp pastor shared the gospel and appealed for baptism. That night, as the flames flickered and the Spirit moved, I made the life-changing decision to be baptized. I had no idea then how profoundly that moment would shape my life. Years later, God led me back to that same

camp, this time not as a camper but as its director. Serving in that sacred place, I had the indescribable privilege of watching my own children walk the same path of faith, making their own decision to follow Jesus. In one of the most meaningful moments of my life, I stood in the river at that camp and baptized them, witnessing firsthand the faithfulness of God across generations. That day, they became fifth-generation Seventh-day Adventists. More importantly, they made the most significant decision of their lives, to follow Jesus for themselves. It was not just an inherited faith but a personal commitment to the Author of their salvation. That day, they fully embraced the gift of salvation, a gift they now treasure and that continues to strengthen their walk with Christ.

Summer camp is a place where the Holy Spirit moves unmistakably, not only in the lives of campers but also in the young adults who dedicate their summers to ministry. Year after year, staff members return, eager to invest in children, yet they often find that the Spirit is transforming their own hearts as well. Whether leading worship, mentoring campers, or simply offering a listening ear, they discover that ministry is not only about what they give, but about what God does in them.

With all that camp ministry offers, it is heartbreaking to know that many children are unable to attend due to financial limitations. For those whose lives have been touched by camp, I encourage you to prayerfully consider sponsoring a child. If there are children in need within your local church, you can start there. However, if your church does not have children in need, you can reach out to your conference youth director, who is continually working to assist kids who cannot afford to attend camp. A single week of camp can change the course of a young person's life forever. It is more than just a place for fun and adventure; it is holy ground, where the presence of God is felt, where young hearts are called to Jesus, and where lives are transformed for eternity.■

Elden Ramirez is president of the Lake Union Conference.



▲ Elden Ramirez baptizing his daughter Elennie in 2013, at summer camp.

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Through Paths of Uncertainty



▲ JASMINE FRASER

“We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.” 2 Corinthians 4:8, 9.

Decades after the French Revolution, Charles Dickens penned an epic literary expression depicting the historical discourse of the years leading up to the socio-political upheaval of that era. Dickens’ opening controversial statement captured the upheaval in these words: “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way.”¹ This controversial expression seems a relevant description of current issues facing individuals and families.

As I listen to many of the concerns being voiced, it seems simultaneously the best and worst of times. Many are stricken with fear and anxiety as they envision a future for their family. As uncertainty provokes fear and anxiety in many, it is heartening to know that despite socio-political upheavals, there is hope for families.

One of the central narratives in Scripture outlines the struggles of a nation for centuries. From slavery, to exile, to being oppressed by enemies and circumstances, biblical Israelite families were inundated with varying degrees of stress. In many ways their circumstances could be described as the best and worst of times. Yet a pivotal point

in their narrative became the catalyst not just for them, but for ensuing families throughout the ages. We see God’s supernatural intervention in the lives of families through the “Passover²” and other numerous occasions.

The Passover is a symbol of God’s redeeming love, reminding us of whose we are (identity) and where we are going (purpose). It marked the intervention and providence of God on behalf of oppressed families. The Passover evidenced a dramatic exodus from Egypt, pointing families on a journey to the promised Caanan. It was celebrated at the threshold of the promised land, as a reminder of God’s providence.

Families today are on a journey to the promised heavenly Caanan and are faced with various challenges. In times of uncertainty, let the Passover be a symbolic reminder of hope that fosters faithful worship and dedication to God. May this reminder guide in your relationship with God and others and renew your endeavor to serve for the cause of Christ. ■

¹ See “The Tale of Two Cities”

² See Exodus 12 and Joshua 5

Jasmine Fraser, Ph.D. is assistant professor of Religious Education, and director, Program of Department of Discipleship and Lifespan Education.



Walk Like You are at Summer Camp

My family and I have always enjoyed our Adventist camps, whether it be in the form of Adventurer camps, district church retreats, marriage or health retreats.



▲ MICHAEL QUION

My wife and I have served as camp doctor and nurse, while our children have taken on roles as campers as well as counselors and staff. In a recent weekend in March, we were blessed to coordinate the 2025 Michigan Conference Health Retreat at Camp Au Sable. Each moment I spend time at camp, I feel a certain refreshment. Is it the fresh air, wholesome food, the calming sights and sounds of nature?

I am grateful that our Adventist camps have played a part in nurturing me and my family, both personally and within our church community. It doesn't take much more than a brisk morning boardwalk stroll around the lake, an outdoor song service at dusk, or a shared meal in the cafeteria to recognize the interwoven elements of ministry: Personal ministry, Family ministry, Youth ministry, Children's ministry, Education, Evangelism, Women's and Men's ministries, and Health ministry. Health ministry, too? Yes, all these come together in one place—a unique center of influence.

Health principles encourage Holy Spirit benefits!

Amazingly, two-thirds of the health principles promoted by NEWSTART, STARTANEW.me, and more are naturally addressed simply by spending time outdoors. Being active in nature provides exercise, fresh air, and sunlight exposure—often leading to improved rest and increased water intake. Studies of children that grow up in “green spaces” (field/forest environment) have a 15%-55% lower

risk of developing psychiatric illness, depression, anxiety and alcoholism.

A 2014 study noted that the higher percentage of tree canopy in a neighborhood corresponded to increased positive mental health status among populations age 55 and older. Spending time in nature has beneficial effects such as triggering natural Vitamin D production (important for our bones, blood cells, and immune system), lowering cortisol levels (a factor in inflammation, blood pressure, and sleep cycle regulation), and reduced demands on our cardiovascular systems -- likely leading to lower heart rate, blood pressure, and lower rates of heart disease.

A 2022 observational study of 78,000 persons (ages 40-75 years old) over seven years suggested that they were 51% less likely to develop dementia when walking at least 9,800 steps per day (about 5 miles) and 25% less likely to develop dementia when walking at least 3,500 steps per day (about 2 miles).

A healthier body and mind more importantly allow for greater sensitivity to the Holy Spirit's teaching, promptings, and the witness of God's second book—nature. So, if you find yourself at one of our camps, enjoy! If not, try to take daily walks in as much of a camp-like environment as you have access to, and experience several benefits simultaneously—with one simple activity. ■

Michael Quion, M.D., is the health ministries co-director for Michigan Conference.



From the Battlefields of War to the Front Lines of Evangelism



▲ DENIS KAISER

At 19, Henry Schultz marched off to war. On July 29, 1862, he enlisted in the Union Army and was mustered into Company K of the 96th Illinois Infantry. He fought for nearly three years until being mustered out on June 10, 1865.¹

One battle during the American Civil War, however, changed his life forever. At Chickamauga, the bloodiest battle in the Western Theater, Henry was wounded in the “left breast and arm” and lay on the battlefield for ten agonizing days before being captured by Confederate forces. During this time of intense suffering, he made a solemn promise: “If [God] would spare his life, he would serve Him the rest of his days.”

God answered his prayer. Henry survived, returned to Illinois, and worked as a tax collector. But his journey of faith was just beginning.

Around 1874, Seventh-day Adventist ministers C. L. Boyd and A. J. Cudney arrived in Stromsburg, Nebraska, preaching the Sabbath message. A devoted Lutheran, Henry was urged by his pastor to refute them. Determined, he studied the Bible—but what he found shook him.

“Brother Schultz took his Bible, and after studying for a week or more, was so overcome with the absence of authority for Sunday sacredness that he threw his Bible down and buried his face in his hands. His good wife said to him, ‘What is the matter?’ He said, ‘If we are going to go by the Bible, we shall have to keep Saturday, for there is not a word in it about Sunday.’ ‘Well,’ said she, ‘I want to go to heaven, so I’ll obey the Lord.’”

That day, Henry and his wife, Sarah, chose to follow God’s Word. They soon joined the Adventist Church, where Henry became an elder.

One year later, Henry attended an Adventist camp meeting in Iowa, where he received a license

to preach. His wife, Sarah, managed the farm and family with tireless devotion, known for her kindness and generosity. On Sept. 24, 1878, Henry was ordained at a camp meeting in Seward, Nebraska. He preached among English-speaking communities for seven years and, by 1882, had become president of the Nebraska Conference.

As German immigrants poured into America, Adventist leaders saw a growing need for ministry. Though Henry had been born in Germany, he had left at age 9 and barely remembered the language. Through dedicated study, he regained fluency and began preaching in German, organizing a church in Columbus, Nebraska.

For over 50 years, Henry Schultz served the Adventist Church as a pastor, evangelist, and administrator. He spent two decades leading the work among German-speaking believers. Even in retirement, he continued planting churches and sharing the gospel.

Henry and Sarah Schultz left a legacy of unwavering faith. From the battlefields of war to the front lines of evangelism, Henry kept his promise to God—a promise that still inspires us today. ■

¹ For more information and source references, see Denis Kaiser, “Schultz, Henry (1843–1926),” *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists*, January 28, 2020, accessed March 06, 2025, <https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/article?id=GAGL>.

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



Unidos en la Misión – Pentecostés 2025

¡Mirad cuán bueno y cuán delicioso es que habiten los hermanos juntos en armonía!. Salmos 133:1

Me acuerdo muy bien una situación que en mi juventud me llevo casi al punto de dejar de evangelizar. Cuando vine a estudiar a la Universidad de Andrew en 1971 decidí no solo estudiar, sino también unirme a un ministerio de la universidad en la cual tenía como propósito ir a las diferentes iglesias los sábados para compartir nuestra fé con Cristo por medio de cantos y nuestros testimonios personales. Por la tarde íbamos alrededor de la iglesia para compartir literatura adventista. El primer año fue algo tan inspirador para mí así que con gozo decidí unirme a este ministerio el siguiente año. Se unieron nuevos jóvenes al ministerio quienes yo noté tenían una perspectiva diferente de como trabajar. El director del ministerio insistía que teníamos que trabajar como se había hecho así que por un tiempo seguimos visitando iglesias como de costumbre. Pero luego empezó las discusiones fuertes. Me sentí incomodo porque pensé que no podíamos compartir nuestra fe si estamos divididos. Una noche antes de acostarme tomé tiempo para leer los Salmos y me encontré por primera vez este verso – ¡Mirad cuán bueno y cuán delicioso es que habiten los hermanos juntos en armonía! En la próxima reunión de grupo, leí este verso para nuestra meditación y a partir de allí decidimos orar más por la presencia continua del Espíritu Santo.

La Biblia nos enseña que el derramamiento del Espíritu Santo en el día de Pentecostés aconteció cuando los discípulos “estaban todos unánimes”. Piénselo bien. El ambiente para predicar de Cristo parecía difícil. Cuando Cristo fue crucificado, los apóstoles se escondieron por miedo. Luego de tres días vieron al Salvador resucitado. Pasaron 40 días con El y al despedirse, Cristo les dio un orden que parecía imposible cumplir – que prediquen “en Judea, Samaria y hasta lo último de la

tierra.” ¿Cómo podrían hacer eso en el tiempo de un imperio tan cruel con Roma y con el Sanedrín dispuestos a azotarlos. Otro desafío que tenían, era que parecía imposible predicar en otros países porque los discípulos sabían hablar un solo idioma. Al fin Cristo les dijo que no se dejen llevar por las circunstancias – manténganse unidos orando por el Espíritu Santo y lo imposible se hará realidad. Y así fue.

Hoy día las circunstancias parecen difíciles para predicar el evangelio. La administración en este país está actualmente haciendo cosas que en nuestra vista humana nos desanima y nos asusta. Aun así, yo creo que Dios está listo a repetir otro Pentecostés en 2025. La División Norteamericana está promoviendo la iniciativa evangelística llamada Pentecostés 2025, con el fin que cada iglesia se envuelva en la predicación del evangelio. ¿Qué se necesita hacer? Dios nos desafía hacer lo mismo que los discípulos – que nos unamos con amor como hermanos en Cristo y hacer lo que Pablo amonesta en 1 Tesalonicenses 5:17 - “orar sin cesar”. Al hacer esto, sin duda Dios dará lo que más necesitamos - el Espíritu Santo. ■

Carmelo Mercado es el vicepresidente de la Unión del Lago.



▲ Carmelo Mercado





Drilling Faith and Filling Pews

FROM DENTISTRY TO CHURCH PLANTING



In 1985, Rod Wiley was a driven dentist, fresh out of dental school, eager to build a successful practice. With his wife, Donna, and their growing family, life seemed perfect as he dedicated himself to his work, achieving remarkable success with over 100 new patients a month.

However, Donna began noticing that while they were physically together in church, Rod's mind was elsewhere—immersed in his practice.

Reflecting on their life, Donna realized something was missing. On a trip to Andrews University, she felt compelled to purchase a new Bible at the nearby Adventist Book Center, yearning for a deeper connection with her faith. As she read Genesis through Exodus, her perspective transformed. "I realized that God, who created the world, could recreate me," she said. This personal spiritual awakening soon influenced Rod, who saw Donna's transformation and began reassessing his own purpose.

Nine years into his career, Rod experienced an unexpected moment in his office when a staff member, struggling with personal challenges, sought guidance. Without hesitation, Rod suggested turning to God, which led to an impromptu Bible study with several office staff and their families. What began as a small gathering of four people quickly grew to 12, and this experience ignited a passion in Rod beyond dentistry.

During a mission trip, then-Illinois conference president, Jim Brower, suggested they consider planting a church. Initially resistant, Rod and Donna eventually felt a calling to embark on this journey. Juggling their expanding dental practice, which grew to employ eight dentists, they found themselves with more time to dedicate to their newfound mission.

In January 1995, they held their first Sabbath service in the waiting room of their dental office. As their congregation expanded, they sought a permanent location. After much searching, they found an abandoned school building up for auction. Despite financial and logistical challenges, their faith led them to take a leap. The congregation secured the building for \$150,000—an incredible deal as it was later

appraised at \$850,000. This acquisition not only provided a dedicated worship space but also solidified their commitment to church planting. Over time, multiple baptisms resulted from their ministry, including several of their dental office staff and patients who had been deeply moved by their faith-based approach to business and life.

One particularly moving moment came when Rod noticed that one of the Sabbath school teachers had never been baptized. Curious, he approached the man after class and asked, "What does it take for you to be baptized?" The teacher paused, thought for a moment, and replied, "I guess I just need to make the decision." This conversation led not only to his baptism but also to the baptism of his entire family.

Another blessing came when they learned that repurposing the building for religious use qualified them for a significant tax break. This unexpected provision reaffirmed their belief that God was guiding their efforts every step of the way.

Over the past 30 years, Rod and Donna's journey has reshaped their lives. Their office became an extension of their ministry, with worship sessions for staff, prayers with patients, and even baptisms among employees. Their small church also embraced global outreach, including raising \$4,000 this past Christmas to free a family from indentured labor in Pakistan.

The Wileys credit their success to their conference's unwavering trust and encouragement, allowing them to navigate challenges while focusing on their mission. "Compassion and personal transformation are what grow a church," Donna emphasized. ■

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

ILLINOIS CAMP MEETING

Communing with Christ Amid Crisis

One of my favorite sections from *Desire of Ages*, in the chapter entitled, “Calvary,” features this line: “In those dreadful hours He had relied upon the evidence of His Father’s acceptance heretofore given Him.

He was acquainted with the character of His Father; He understood His justice, His mercy, and His great love.” In the midst of the crisis of those final hours, Jesus communed with the Father in a way that carried Him through the crisis. And as she ends that section, she observes, “By faith, Christ was victor.” Communing with God amid a crisis provides the opportunity for us to be reminded of the evidence of God’s acceptance. Communing with God reminds us of how we have been able to become re-acquainted with His character. In those moments of life, we are reminded of His justice, His mercy, His love. Communing, as Jesus demonstrated a few hours before, involves not only seeking deliverance from the crisis but reminds us of the ample evidence of God’s full leading up to this moment.

Jesus did not bury His head from what had arrived on the doorstep of His life. The intensity of the crisis drove Him to recall, not the failures of those who fled in His moment of crisis, but the full goodness of the Father. He wasn’t finding scapegoats for this unjust moment. He recited the full goodness of God. His life had been a life of divine evidence. Communing with the Father in the midst of the darkness lifted His eyes to the full goodness of the Father.

As we gather for our 2025 Family Camp Meeting, our hope and desire are that communing with the Father amid the uncertainties of the day, even the dark moments many are facing in their personal lives, will be a time of praise. As one of our themes are during this year, Communing with the Father (some would use the word, “prayer,” here) helps us remain Christ and not crisis centered. My hope and prayer for each person who attends is that each will be reminded of His acceptance, His character, His justice, His mercy, and His great love. Crisis consistently presents itself. Christ even more consistently manifests Himself. May our time together result in that peace that passes our very, very, very limited understanding of this magnificent God. His goodness runs after us. May we know it in our bones as Elder Jerry Page presents the messages.

John Gryns is the Illinois Conference president.



SPEAKERS



▲ Bill Kasper



▲ Jerry & Janet Page

July 30-Aug. 2

Camp Akita
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INDIANA CAMP MEETING

The Sanctuary Story

JOURNEY TO THE HEART

Of the many rich and hope-filled teachings of Scripture, the beauty of Jesus' ministry on our behalf in the heavenly sanctuary is often overlooked or misunderstood. What a blessing our 2025 camp meeting assembly will be, as we focus on this wonderful truth.

To help us further focus on our theme, Messiah's Mansion will be on site for the full week of camp meeting. Guided tours of this life-size Mosaic sanctuary replica will be conducted, allowing our community and camp-meeting attendees to see the plan of salvation brought to life with the visual aid of the sanctuary structure and furniture.

Held on the campus of Indiana Academy, this year's camp meeting will also highlight such topics as prayer, outreach training, healthy living, grief recovery, the blessings of the Sabbath, and positive mental health.

Children's programming, designed for toddlers through teens, will provide enriching Bible presentations and plenty of recreation and fellowship. Additionally, family-fun activities are scheduled for each day.

We will receive another rich blessing on Sabbath, June 7, with a musical concert by the Indiana Conference Choir and Orchestra.

On Sabbath, May 31, our Hispanic single-day camp meeting, called Día de la Hermandad (Fraternity Day), will take place in the Indiana Academy gymnasium.

Our weeklong camp meeting event will begin on Monday evening, June 2, and conclude on Sabbath evening, June 7.

Additionally, our third annual one-day Haitian gathering will meet at the Cicero Church on Sabbath, June 7.

What a unique week of fellowship, encouragement, and inspiration this time will be! Make plans today to join us.



SPEAKERS



▲ John Bradshaw



▲ Jo-Ann Davidson



▲ Richard Davidson



▲ Elie Henry



▲ Julia O'Carey



▲ Eli Rojas



▲ Vic Van Schaik



▲ Janice Schmidt



▲ Throstur Thordarson



▲ Dan Vis

June 2-7, 2025

Indiana Adventist
Academy, 24815 IN-19,
Cicero, IN 46034



MICHIGAN CAMP MEETINGS

He Must Increase

In John 3, the Scriptures depict the disciples of John the Baptist reporting that the people are beginning to follow Jesus instead of John. In response, John the Baptist humbly acknowledges his role in God's plan, stating, "He must increase, but I must decrease." His words are a strong calling for God's people to strive for a heart fully surrendered to God's will.

Our conference president, Jim Micheff, will open camp meeting with his message Friday evening. Our main speaker for the first Sabbath through Tuesday evening will be John Bradshaw, president of It Is Written. Each morning of camp meeting will begin with an early morning worship by Don MacLafferty, the founder and president of In Discipleship, a family ministry designed to help parents lead children to Christ.

Our speaker for the mid-morning meeting will be Oleg Lotca, president of Streams of Light International. Pavel Goia, editor of Ministry Magazine and associate director for the General Conference Ministerial Association, will be the

main speaker for Wednesday evening through the second Sabbath and will close out camp meeting.

Our prayer and desire are that camp meeting will be a spiritual blessing to each one. As we devote a few days to seek the Lord together, may the hearts of old and young be encouraged and strengthened in the service of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*Our Hispanic Camp Meeting will take place at Camp Au Sable May 23-25 and our Upper Peninsula Camp Meeting will take place at Camp Sagola Sept. 5-7.

Please visit the Michigan Conference website for more information: www.misda.org.

Justin Ringstaff is executive secretary for Michigan Conference.



SPEAKERS



▲ John Bradshaw



▲ Pavel Goja



▲ Oleg Lotca



▲ Don MacLafferty



▲ Jim Micheff

Michigan Camp Meeting**June 13 – 21**

Great Lakes Adventist Academy
 7477 Academy Rd.
 Cedar Lake, MI 48812
 517-316-1500
 Misd.org

Hispanic Camp Meeting**May 23-25**

Camp Au Sable
 2590 Camp Au Sable Rd.
 Grayling, MI 49738

Upper Peninsula Camp Meeting**Sept. 5-7**

Camp Sagola
 2885 M-69
 Crystal Falls, MI 49920



WISCONSIN CAMP MEETING

Let It Rain

The 2025 Wisconsin Camp Meeting theme is “Let It Rain,” aligning with the North American Division initiative known as Pentecost 2025.

In the Bible, the latter rain concept symbolizes the profound experience of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the sanctified church of God. This phenomenon is associated with a period of spiritual revival and the proclamation of the true gospel message to all humanity, marking a climactic phase in human history that precedes the second coming of Christ.

Our expectation of this significant experience is grounded in the biblical passage of Joel 2:28-29:

“And it shall come to pass afterward
That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh;
Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
Your old men shall dream dreams,
Your young men shall see visions.

And also on My menservants and on My
maidservants
I will pour out My Spirit in those days.”

The speakers for both weekends include John Wesley Taylor, president of Andrews University; Titus Naftanaila, president

of the Wisconsin Conference; Lee Venden, a renowned revivalist, pastor, and published author; and Tim Madding, director at the North American Division Evangelism Institute.

During the middle of the week, we are pleased to announce a lineup of distinguished speakers, including Rodney Palmer, chair of the Department of Religion and Biblical Languages at Andrews University; Steve and Karen Nicola, esteemed grief educators and coaches known for their grief recovery workshops and seminars; Dr. Eddie Ramirez, director of Healthy Lifestyle Medicine; and Amir Gulzar, secretary/treasurer of the Wisconsin Conference.

The Wisconsin Camp Meeting 2025 will host a variety of events, including a concert featuring Mary Grace, a baptism ceremony, and the annual 5K Run/Walk known as the Halleluiah Hustle, among other training events and seminars. We look forward to your attendance and participation.



SPEAKERS



▲ Lesa Budd



▲ Amir Gulzar



▲ Tim Madding



▲ Eddie Ramirez



▲ Steve & Karen Nicola



▲ Rodney Palmer



▲ Titus Naftanaila



▲ John Wesley Taylor



▲ Lee Venden

June 20–28, 2025

920-484-6555

W8368 County Hwy E,
Oxford, WI 53952



A group of children are gathered in a museum, looking at a large mammoth skeleton. The children are wearing colorful shirts, and the museum has a high ceiling with fluorescent lights. The text "ANDREWS UNIVERSITY SUMMER EXPERIENCES" is overlaid in large white letters.

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY SUMMER EXPERIENCES

THE CRAYON BOX CHILDREN'S LEARNING CENTER JUNE 9—AUG. 14, 2024

Andrews University, Marsh Hall

www.andrews.edu/services/crayonbox/summercamp/
summercamp@andrews.edu | 269-471-3350

EXPLORE ANDREWS: EARLY COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

JULY 27—AUG. 15

Andrews University,
8975 M-139, Berrien Springs, MI
49104

[www.andrews.edu/
exploreandrews/earlycollege/](http://www.andrews.edu/exploreandrews/earlycollege/)
explore@andrews.edu |
269-471-3382

THE CRAYON BOX CHILDREN'S LEARNING CENTER (CAMP KINDNESS AND CAMP CARDINAL)

The Crayon Box is offering two educational day camp experiences for children entering Grades K–5. Camp Kindness is geared toward children entering Kindergarten–Grade 2. Camp Cardinal is geared toward children entering Grades 3–5. The theme for 2025 is “God Does Marvelous Things.”

Each day will include age-appropriate team-building activities, worship, and a camp council, where children will be encouraged to take ownership over the day's activities. Camp Kindness will feature an alphabet countdown, and each day will have a letter theme counting down back to school.

The first five weeks of camp will focus on the theme “I Am Fearfully and Wonderfully Made” and remind children how special they are because they are made in God's image. The last five weeks will focus on the theme “God is the Center of Everything” and remind children of all the amazing things God has made.

“A camp favorite is our Michigan Tasting, where we taste Michigan-made foods, including grape juice from a local vineyard, corn flakes, locally grown blueberries and Eggo waffles,” says Kristy Conklin, camp director. Each week will also include a special spotlight event, such as visits from local zoos and animal sanctuaries, a water slide with the local fire department, or on-campus field trips to some of Andrews University's departments and attractions. Both camps will oversee their own gardens that they will plant, maintain, and harvest.

The camp will be held from 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, with before-camp and after-camp care available.

EXPLORE ANDREWS: EARLY COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

The Andrews University Early College Experience is an in-person summer program for rising high school juniors and seniors as well as incoming freshmen. The initiative is part of the Explore Andrews program, which is designed to help students find a desired academic plan as well as career and life goals through intentional support and personal advising.

“Come join us for three weeks of learning and fun on the campus of Andrews University. Each student will take one 3-credit-hour college course in addition to participating in seminars, activities, and local travel,” says Aaron Moushon, assistant dean for Undergraduate Education and Explore Andrews Program director.

“Students can choose from one of the following general education courses: College Writing, World Civilizations, Communication Skills, Discipleship and Scripture.”

Applications are open now. The deadline to apply is June 30, 2025. More information can be found on the Explore Andrews website.



ILLINOIS SUMMER CAMP

CAMP AKITA



SUMMER CAMP DATES

Mission Akita: May 21-28

EMW: May 25-30

Homecoming 2025: June 5-8

Certification Week: June 15-22

Base Camp: June 22-29

Cub/Junior Camp: June 29-July 6

Tween Camp: July 6-13

Teen + Specialty Camp: July 13-20

Family Camp: July 20-27

Pastor's Retreat: July 27-30

Camp Meeting: July 30-Aug. 3

Camp Strike: Aug. 3-7

There's something about the first Sunday of the summer camp season. The atmosphere is supercharged with excitement as counselors scurry around putting the final touches on their cabins, lifeguards get ready for swim tests, and the lodge fills with the smell of chocolate chip cookies as the kitchen pulls out the first batch of sweet treats for check-in time. Uniforms donned, banners raised, and flags flying high-- we're ready. This is what we've planned for...what we've trained for. It's time for all our best laid plans for this 10-week journey to be carried out.

Flash forward a week later. It's Wednesday morning: girls cabin 4 is having a meltdown because the girls can't remember their power passage routine; boys cabin 1 is running late because the bathroom door locked from the inside again; and the honor cabin raised the flag upside down. We make it to Camp Council only to find a family of raccoons have made their home under the stage and are not particularly pleased with the rhythms of making melodies, so they begin to screech. Campers are screaming, counselors are trying to keep everyone back, and the camp director is looking for a way to restore order to this morning worship service. This was NOT how the day was supposed to go.

Flash forward to week six. It's Sunday again. This time, the last set of youth campers are boarding the bus to head home. Bags are loaded in the back; attendance is complete. The last round of hugs is underway, and tears are flowing from both the kiddos and the staff. Just as the bus begins to pull away, we hear the roar of "We Are Soldiers," the unofficial Camp Akita battle cry, erupt through the windows. That poor bus driver... it's going to be a long 3-hour drive back to Hinsdale. As the bus disappears through the tree line, we get back to the grind. We know this part. Clean, welcome, serve, repeat.

Now, flash forward to week 10. The last Sunday of the season. We ask our staff how they saw Jesus throughout the summer, and responses are surprising. The commonality amongst all the answers is this: Even in the moments of chaos or amid a storm, we could see Jesus, because He was always the anchor. Even when the uniforms were wrinkled, the banners fell, and the flag was upside down. Not a single moment was wasted because it was always Jesus holding things together and moving on our behalf. He was always there.

When campers arrive at Akita, our hope for them is that they would come into an encounter with Jesus that gives them a deep knowing that He will always show up. Even when our plans fail. Even when our best efforts aren't enough...He's more than enough. This summer, we hope our campers experience that Jesus: the one who can do exceedingly and abundantly more than we could ever imagine! ■

Stacey DePluzzer is associate youth director for Illinois Conference.

CAMP AKITA

1684 Knox Rd. 1200 N, Gilson, IL 61436

www.campakita.com | youthdept@ilcsda.org

309-876-2060



INDIANA SUMMER CAMP

TIMBER RIDGE CAMP

SUMMER CAMP DATES

Single Moms Camp: June 11-15

Blind Camp: June 15-22

(sponsored by Christian Record Services)

Cub Camp: June 22-29 (Ages 7-10)

Junior Camp: June 29-July 6 (Ages 10-13)

Tween Camp: July 6-13 (Ages 13-15)

Teen Camp: July 13-20 (Ages 15-17)

Family Camp: July 20-27 (Families)

Many years ago, when I was 18, I spent my first summer as a staff member at Broken Arrow Ranch in Kansas. I was a shy young man. When I was hired, the camp director recognized I might not be good counselor material. He told me that I was going to be his assistant, not assistant director, but an assistant that would do any odd job that needed to be done.

That was a position I kept until registration day for our first week of camp. The director came to me in a panic and said, "Charlie, I don't have enough boy counselors!" My reply was "Wow, that's too bad." His next words sent terror deep into my heart. "Charlie, I need you to be a counselor. Go to Shawnee cabin. You will have campers in five minutes."

In a moment, my life was changed. I spent four summers as a counselor. God called me during my second summer to do camp ministry for the rest of my life! This is a decision I have never regretted. I still love summer camp. I love the activities, campfires, and most importantly, I love the chance to make a difference in campers' lives. God uses camp to change lives.

Each summer, we train our staff to understand three important principles:

1. Be a committed follower of Jesus and have a strong desire to be a role model to campers and pray for opportunities "to make attractive the joys of following Christ."
2. Don't let anything get in the way of being Jesus to our campers.
3. Be adaptable to situations that come up in your own life and work at camp.

Always look for chances to make others' lives better.

When summer camp staff embrace these three principals, they become life changers for Jesus. So many lives are changed at summer camp each summer. Campers and staff make decisions that change the direction of their lives here on earth and for eternity. ■

Charlie Thompson is the Indiana Conference Youth & Young Adult director.

TIMBER RIDGE CAMP

1674 Timber Ridge Rd, Spencer, IN 47460

www.indysdayouth.org/summercamp

812-829-2507



LAKE REGION SUMMER CAMP

CAMP WAGNER

CAMP WAGNER DATES

June 15-22, 2025 (ages 8-16)



Are you ready for an unforgettable summer experience filled with adventure, fun, personal and spiritual growth? Camp Wagner invites inner-city youth to escape the hustle and bustle of daily life and experience the beauty of nature in a safe, encouraging, and exciting rural environment!

Camp Wagner is a home away from home for so many. Kids get the chance to step away from screens and city streets and step into a world of fresh air, outdoor exploration, and lifelong friendships. It is always amazing to see when the simple yet splendid display of God's hand in nature captivates all attention. A night sky filled with stars so numerous, big and bright you can hear gasps of wonder and excitement. Or the silence around the camp at night that many campers often never experienced in the hustle and bustle of the big cities.

Camp Wagner has been a unique space that creates a change of pace and environment for many of our campers. One of the major factors that motivate the staff is we get to partner with God and be conductors of His grace and mercy. Junior Camp has proven itself as place where many of our young people make decisions in baptism to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Junior Camp this year is titled "War of a Lifetime." We strive to make the Bible come alive so our campers can take ownership for their personal walk with God, while still having an amazing time. This year's camp will be full of fun activities such as skating, playing laser tag, driving go-karts, swimming and other fun activities. Sign up for summer camp is open for children ages 8–16; the dates are June 15–22, 2025. Please visit www.lrcyouth.com for more information. ■

Earl Baldwin Jr. is the youth director for Lake Region Conference.

CAMP WAGNER

19088 Brownsville St, Cassopolis, MI 49031

More information at www.lrcyouth.com





MICHIGAN SUMMER CAMPS

CAMP AU SABLE & SAGOLA

CAMP SAGOLA DATES

Junior Camp (ages 8-12): July 13-20

Teen Camp (ages 13-17): July 20-27

CAMP AU SABLE DATES

Adventure Camp (ages 8-10): June 8-15

Junior Camp (ages 10-13): June 15-22

Tween Camp (ages 12-14): June 22-29

Teen Camp (ages 14-17): June 29-July 6

Family Camp I: July 6-13

Family Camp II: July 13-20

Family Camp III: July 20-27

In my first year as a summer camp counselor, it was safe to say that I had no idea what I was doing. Sure, I went through counselor orientation and training, but I really had no idea what to expect until the campers arrived. And yet, week by week, it all worked out. Thankfully, God gives lots of grace, especially to tired counselors who are just trying their best.

For many kids (and staff as well), Camp Au Sable is a place of adventure, new experiences and, hopefully, deeper connection with God. I grew to love all the girls who came through cabin 1A, but during Tween Week, there was one who caught my attention. She seemed intimidating and almost aloof, but as we got to know her more and she settled in with the other girls, she became one of the kindest and sweetest members of our cabin. At the end of the week, after the Friday night play, she shared with the head counselor and I that she came from a very hard family background, and that camp was one of the places she knew she would be safe and loved. It warmed my heart to know that we had helped her know the love of God, extended through the staff.

Every summer at camp is crazy and unexpected in its own ways, but God is good. He provides grace even when we lack and helps bind each week of campers and counselors into family. I look back on that week as one of the times I saw God's hand the clearest. It is at camp that many campers and staff alike are led to a deeper understanding of His love for them, which I think is a beautiful ministry. I hope that years from now, the girls from cabin 1A will remember their experiences this summer, and I pray that we all remain under the hand of God. ■

Madelynn Brower is a freshman at Southern Adventist University where she is a communication major with an emphasis in writing and publishing.

CAMP AU SABLE

2590 Camp Au Sable Drive, Grayling, MI 49738

www.campausable.org | office@campausable.org

989-348-5491

CAMP SAGOLA

2885 State Hwy. M-69, Crystal Falls, MI 49920

[www.gabmorgan@yahoo.com](mailto:gabmorgan@yahoo.com) | 313-333-6129



WISCONSIN SUMMER CAMP

CAMP WAKONDA

SUMMER CAMP DATES

June 5-8: Summer Camp Directors Retreat
June 8-17: Summer Camp Staff Training
June 17-20: Camp Meeting Pitch
June 20-29: Camp Meeting
June 29-July 4: Cub Camp

July 6-11: Tween Camp
July 13-18: Teen Camp
July 20-27: Family Camp
July 27-30: Hispanic Family Camp
July 30-Aug. 3: Hispanic Camp Meeting



“**W**hat was your favorite part of this week?” I asked my cabin of six campers as we walked down towards the waterfront. It was Friday morning, the last morning of Cub Camp. Parents would be arriving soon to take their cub campers home. “I really liked the play” one said. “Singing Fruit of the Spirit!” another shouted excitedly. “Mr. Kevin I am really excited to go home but I’m also kind of sad that camp is over already.” “Me too, William,” I said. Don’t get me wrong, I was looking forward to a Sabbath of rest with my fellow staff, but there was a sense of sadness that this group of cub campers, I had spent the last week with and getting to know, were heading home.

If you talk to any counselor during the middle of Teen Camp, they are likely going to be sick or exhausted, sometimes both. Working at camp isn’t a sprint or a marathon, more of a triathlon. It can be exhausting, not just physically and mentally, but especially spiritually. We are constantly facing push back from all directions. Dealing with sickness, burnout, and exhaustion has been a problem for multiple staff before. However, many of those staff choose to return year after year.

I had no intention of returning to Wakonda after 2016 as a staff member. I’m blessed to say that I will be returning for my third official year this summer. When I talk to people about my time at Wakonda, it’s easy to talk about all the different things I enjoy. I mention the friends, the activities, and even the silly little camp songs. However, the main reason I find myself consistently returning to is the impact. Seeing a camper make the decision to give their heart to Jesus is something so special, that I just can’t quite explain. It has been amazing to see the impact camp has had over my last 2 years, not just on the campers, but also on the staff. It’s easy to forget that camp is often times just as much a ministry to the staff as it is to our campers. I often look back on my memories as a camper and think about how my counselor and other staff helped me find my way to that decision to be baptized. I am so thankful I now can do the same for our campers.

You never know what sort of impact you may have on a camper while simply helping them climb onto a saddle, chatting at the rock wall, or singing “Fruit of the Spirit” at an evening program. Camp Wakonda will always hold a special place in my heart. The friendships and memories, but most importantly, the decisions that I made at camp have been some of the most important in my life. There are many reasons why I love Camp Wakonda, but I will leave you with the one I believe is the most important to me: I love Camp Wakonda, not just because it is a place set apart, but because it is where I learned that God made me set apart. ■

Kevin Wilkinson enjoys just about anything outdoors, especially hiking and skiing and action filmography. He is also involved in Wisconsin’s young adult ministries and has served as one of the conference’s public campus missionaries.

CAMP WAKONDA

W8368 County Hwy E, Oxford, WI 53952

www.wakonda.org | zpayne@wi.adventist.org





▲ (From left to right) Dr. Barbara McKinney, president of the Loma Linda University School of Medicine Alumni Association; Dr. Monica Reed, president and CEO of UChicago Medicine AdventHealth; Dr. Tamara Thomas, dean of the Loma Linda University School of Medicine.

Regional Health Care CEO Awarded “2025 Honored Alumna” by Loma Linda University

On Sunday, March 2, Monica Reed, president and CEO of UChicago Medicine AdventHealth was named as one of six honored alumni by Loma Linda University School of Medicine during its Annual Postgraduate Convention and Loma Linda University Homecoming gala at the Riverside Convention Center in Riverside, California.

The honored alumni are chosen through a nomination process by their peers. The nominated individuals are then reviewed by a committee and the final list is sent to the previous presidents of the Loma Linda University Alumni Association for selection.

“[This award] is a great honor as it is a recognition of alumni not by industry but rather by their peers, who recognize and

respect the work that the alumna has done,” shared Calvin Chuang, executive director of the Alumni Association for Loma Linda University School of Medicine. “Dr. Reed joins an exclusive group of alumni that have been awarded as honored alumni in the Alumni Association’s 102-year history.”

The award ceremony adds a unique and unforgettable touch to the event,

transforming it into a memorable experience for both attendees and honorees. This prestigious black-tie gala brings together alumni and graduating medical students in celebration. During the ceremony, Loma Linda proudly recognized Dr. Reed’s exceptional contributions as a clinician, honoring her remarkable dedication and more than 30 years of service at AdventHealth.

During her acceptance speech, Dr. Reed shared how her time at Loma Linda University was pivotal to her life. “Not just because I was learning how to treat disease and studying all the things that we do, but because it was also an opportunity for me to really reflect upon ... what it means to ‘make men and women feel whole,’” she said. “That spiritual foundation in Christ and understanding what it means to deliver medical ministry has been a part of my career for over 30 years—whether it was as physician, medical news reporter, author or the 20 years I’ve spent as a health care administrator. It has always been my calling to treat people as human beings and to do everything I can to maximize that feeling of wholeness.”

“Dr. Reed’s outstanding contributions and dedication to whole-person care have made a significant impact on our organization,” shared Andrew Jahn, president and CEO of AdventHealth’s multi-state division, in a LinkedIn post celebrating Dr. Reed’s award. “She continues to live out our leadership framework – leading herself, leading others and leading meaningful results. She is an inspiration in transformational leadership, and we are honored to have her as part of our team.” Watch Dr. Reed’s full award video and acceptance speech at <https://bit.ly/42bP1sk>. ■

Elizabeth Camps is stakeholder communications manager at AdventHealth



UChicago Medicine

Advent Health

Hyve Conference Features Business Students and Entrepreneurs

Andrews University hosted the third annual North American Hyve International Conference from March 27–29, a gathering where students, entrepreneurs, ministry leaders and businesspeople networked with fellow innovators and pitched their ideas. Through various workshops and programs on campus, practicing entrepreneurs shared their experiences and advice on how to cultivate a strong business in a way that glorifies God.

The collaborative efforts of Hyve International, led by founder and President Jesse Zwiker, and Andrews University's Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship, directed by Matias Soto, produced a meaningful weekend of fellowship, education and professional development. Both leaders served as speakers during the weekend and coordinated with event volunteers to ensure a smooth experience for all participants.

"It exceeded my expectations," said Gael Rutayisire, international business and French student, of the conference. "I met a lot of people, investors, start-ups and they know what they want."

One highlight of the weekend was the Hyve Inter-Collegiate Pitch Competition where students from various Adventist universities competed to receive funding for their entrepreneurial endeavors. The winners included Adventist Movies by Leonardo Aguilera (Andrews University) in first place with a \$5,000 prize, Fortify Storage by David Kapiniak and Samuel Brewster (Burman University) in second place with a \$2,000 prize, and Hint of Michigan by Alex Butnaru and Evan Keyes (Andrews University) in third place with a \$1,000 prize.

David Asscherick, an ordained Seventh-day Adventist minister and director of Light

Bearers Ministry, delivered a passionate sermon about Boaz, who he described as an excellent example of what it means to be a godly person in business. Boaz was an honorable businessman who knew his workers personally and went out of his way to show care for a new employee—Ruth. Asscherick also pointed out that the era of the Judges, when the story of Ruth and Boaz takes place, was one of the darkest times in Israel's history. Despite this—in part due to Boaz's faithfulness as an honorable business owner and God-fearing man—the union between Ruth and Boaz produced a bloodline leading to David, Israel's greatest king, and Jesus Christ, the king of the universe.



Soto emphasized the value that Hyve has, especially for young Adventists who hope to balance entrepreneurial success and their faith. "Doing business and entrepreneurship does not have to be completely devoid of their religion or their spiritual connection with God," he said. "They can be combined so that you could do business with a purpose."

Andrews students actively participated in the Hyve Conference, both as entrepreneurs and as volunteers, supporting registration booths and ensuring that guests were cared for throughout the weekend. Kato Golooba-Mutebi, finance student, noted, "The importance of an event like Hyve and why we brought it to Andrews was to also bring it to a place where we are also trying to work on the future. I think Hyve is building the future of Adventist business." He added that he foresees a future where, with the help of Hyve, Adventist startup companies and entrepreneurs will become more notable and accepted across the business industry as they serve others with purpose.

Andrew Francis is a student writer with University Communication at Andrews University.



▲ The Hyve Conference's Startup Pitch Showcase took place on Saturday evening, March 29.

Lydia Ruckie

GLAA Launches Year by Mobilizing an “Army of Youth” for Gospel Mission

When students returned to Great Lakes Adventist Academy (GLAA) after Christmas break, they found their chapel transformed. Pews were replaced with rows of tables, each seat lined with books and materials. It looked less like a place of worship and more like a tactical training ground — fitting, considering the mission at hand.

The academy began 2025 with a week-long discipleship and evangelism training program led by Pastors Mark Howard and Kameron DeVasher of the Emmanuel Institute. The goal? To train, equip, and send out an “army of youth” ready to share the gospel in their communities and beyond.

“Our goal is more than just spiritual inspiration,” said GLAA Principal Delwin Garcia. “It’s intentional discipleship and practical training. Soldiers aren’t just recruited — they’re trained for battle. And our students are being trained to fight a spiritual one.”

Garcia, drawing on his 20 years in Adventist education, believes in the potential of young people to lead. “They are driven, passionate, and resilient. If we want to reach the world, it starts with them,” he said. “As Ellen White wrote, ‘With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained...’ — that’s exactly what we’re doing here.”

For junior Elena Potter, the experience was both powerful and personal.

“I walked in not knowing what to expect and walked out feeling more confident in my faith and how to share it,” she said.

Each day started with personal devotions, followed by school-wide worship. The training sessions covered practical topics like leading Bible studies, engaging in spiritual conversations, and understanding the church’s core doctrines. Breaks between sessions included music led by DeVasher on the ukulele — a favorite moment for many students.

“They made it fun and engaging,” Potter said. “And even the serious stuff felt doable because of how they taught it.”

Afternoons were hands-on. In small groups, students practiced giving Bible studies to staff volunteers acting as “study interests.” Though initially hesitant, Potter said the practice built her confidence.

“I was nervous — teaching people isn’t really my thing,” she admitted. “But by the end, I actually felt ready to do it for real.”

That readiness was put to the test each evening as students ventured into surrounding neighborhoods for community outreach. Equipped with surveys, tracts and the support of their peers, they knocked on doors and offered Bible studies and prayer.

“I’m introverted, so the thought of talking to strangers was scary,” Potter said. “But after a few houses, I felt God helping me. People were kind and open. Praying with them was my favorite part.”

The spiritual impact was tangible. Thirty individuals accepted Bible studies and 50 more responded positively to the services offered. Evening worships became times of testimony and praise as students shared stories from the field — some humorous, some awe-inspiring.

“One group kept dropping their GLOW tract at a door, and because of that delay, they ended up meeting the homeowner face-to-face. That was the only survey

they got that night,” Potter recalled. “It was like God timed it perfectly.”

Garcia said the event aligned with a larger vision cast earlier in the school year: to disciple students in Adventist beliefs, equip them for outreach and train them to lead.

“This wasn’t just a one-time event,” Garcia emphasized. “We’ve effectively mobilized a trained, Spirit-led group of young people who will now collaborate with their churches and impact their communities.”

He added, “And the best part? This model is reproducible. Other academies can do this too. The Spirit is moving — we’re just following.”

As for Potter, the week left her inspired and ready for more.

“God really used us,” she said. “And I know this is just the beginning.” ■

Debbie Michel is editor of the Lake Union Herald.



▲ Delwin Garcia helps a student work through the best practices for field ministry.



▲ Emmanuel Institute training sessions with Pastors Mark Howard and Kameron DeVasher were specifically scheduled during the first week of the semester in order to set the tone for the semester to follow.

Illinois Conference Hits Historic 14,000 Member Mark

The Illinois Conference of Seventh-day Adventists reached 14,000 members for the first time, ending 2024 with a net increase of 144 new members.



▲North Shore pastors Felipe Soares, front, and Jonathan Burnett, back, smile after one of the 21 baptisms, November 2024. It is believed to be the most baptisms in one day since Mark Finley held a series of meetings at the church more than 10 years ago.

This comes after an energetic month of baptisms in November, when more than a hundred people were baptized during Hispanic Evangelism Week and an additional 21 were baptized at the North Shore church on Nov. 23, 2024.

Illinois Conference Executive Secretary Michael Campos points out that these numbers represent something greater. “It’s meaningful because it represents 14,000 individual stories and life journeys, each one a testament to God’s Grace,” he said. “It also speaks to the commitment of a community of believers that wants to see more lives transformed by knowing Jesus.”

For context, Illinois Conference reported 285 members two years after its founding in 1870, but it took 23 years before that number reached 1,000. The conference reached 13,000 members in 2010. ■

Matthew Lucio serves as Illinois Conference’s assistant to the president for communication.

Wisconsin Conference Reaches Historic 8,000-Member Milestone, Eyes Spiritual Growth

The Wisconsin Conference of Seventh-day Adventists has reached a historic milestone, surpassing 8,000 members for the first time in its history. As the smallest conference within the Lake Union territory and the 12th smallest among the 59 conferences in the North American Division, this achievement marks a significant moment for the state-wide church.

“This is more than just a number—it’s a testament to God’s power working through our churches,” said Titus Naftanaila, president of the Wisconsin Conference. “We have seen lives transformed, communities impacted and the Holy Spirit moving in ways we never imagined.”

Reaching this membership milestone required dedicated discipleship, prayer and evangelistic efforts across Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Conference consists of 64 churches, 12 companies and 11 mission groups, all of which have contributed to this significant growth. Naftanaila emphasized that while reaching 8,000 members is a major accomplishment, the focus must remain on deepening spiritual commitment.

“The real question is not just how many members we have, but how strong our relationship with Christ is,” he said. “God calls us not simply to fill pews but to experience genuine revival and transformation.”

Naftanaila urged the conference to shift its focus beyond numerical targets and instead embrace “transformative and courageous initiatives.” He pointed to 2 Chronicles 7:14 as a guiding principle, calling for humility, repentance and a renewed commitment to faith: “If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”

The Wisconsin Conference’s success mirrors biblical narratives of God accomplishing great things through small groups, as seen in the stories of Joseph, Gideon, David and the 12 disciples. Naftanaila believes the key to future growth lies in fostering an environment where faith thrives, lives are changed and spiritual renewal takes root.

“We are preparing the soil, planting seeds and trusting God to bring the harvest,” he said. “Our goal is not just to grow in numbers but to grow in faith and impact.” ■

Debbie Michel is the Herald editor.



Mission Integration Trip Ties AdventHealth Leaders to Battle Creek Legacy

Every AdventHealth hospital leader has two roles: chief executive officer and chief spiritual officer. While the daily demands of the first role could easily overshadow the second, AdventHealth believes it's the latter that determines the organization's ultimate success.

A group of 17 AdventHealth CEOs had the opportunity to learn this lesson firsthand in Battle Creek, Michigan, where, beginning in 1866, the Seventh-day Adventist Church began its commitment to extend the healing ministry of Christ through health care services to the public. The CEOs, all in the early phase of their tenures, were there as members of the inaugural class of AdventHealth’s Chief Executive Leadership Program (CELP).

“The visit to Battle Creek was to ground the CEOs in our mission to extend the healing ministry of Christ,” says Michael Paradise, executive director of the AdventHealth Leadership Institute. “They were able to feel



▲ While in Battle Creek, the AdventHealth CEOs toured the sanitarium, the historic village and the gravesites of the White family and Joseph Kellogg at Oakhill Cemetery.

and experience the health care legacy that differentiates us as an organization.”

The visit to the Battle Creek Sanitarium and Historic Adventist Village was part of a three-day intensive focused on sustaining the mission through communication and influence. It was the second of three intensives spread throughout the year that are themed around leading self, leading others and leading results.

“AdventHealth truly believes that leadership matters,” Paradise says. “This organization is trying to stay grounded in mission because of the threat of mission drift, which says you are only one generation away from losing sight of what matters most in the organization.”

A Working Tour

Although the sanitarium and village are open to tourists, the CEOs were not there as sightseers. During the three-hour drive from Chicago to Battle Creek, the CEOs participated in discussions based on readings they had been assigned in advance. While in Battle Creek, they toured the sanitarium, the historic village and the gravesites of the White family and Joseph Kellogg at Oakhill Cemetery. They also participated in a prayer service and “sense-making” discussions on site and again the following day centered around experiential questions, such as:

What is the CEO’s responsibility to be intentional about the “healthstyle” principles of the Seventh-day Adventist health tradition in leading self and leading others?

Is the healthstyle tradition started at the Battle Creek Sanitarium just window

shopping at your entity? How do CEOs guard against this?

How did the lack of alignment about mission as the core motivation relate to Battle Creek Sanitarium’s demise?

While the positive lessons learned at Battle Creek were expected, the discussion around what led to the closing of the sanitarium in 1942 was unexpected but just as beneficial. In particular, the criticality of a single person, in this case John Harvey Kellogg, to the organization’s survival demonstrated the importance of succession planning today and that individual CEOs are just one link in the Adventist health care legacy.

“The entire experience re-grounded me in the special gift and mission we have been given to carry forward,” said Dallas Purkeypille, CEO of AdventHealth South Overland Park in Kansas. “It really reinforced the responsibility we each have to ensure this not only remains a part of our organization but is expanded. It is our duty.”

Vladimir Radivojevic, CEO of UChicago Medicine AdventHealth Glen Oaks, in Illinois commented, “The experience at Battle Creek tied our work back to our heritage and made it both personal and relevant.”

From Learning to Life

To ensure that the knowledge gained during CELP, including the Battle Creek experience, is translated into practice on the ground, each CEO works on two action documents. They review and revise their entity’s Christian Service Plan, which outlines how the entity will emphasize spirituality within its operations.



▲ The group of 17 AdventHealth CEOs had the opportunity to learn this lesson firsthand in Battle Creek, Michigan, where, beginning in 1866, the Seventh-day Adventist Church began its commitment to extend the healing ministry of Christ through health care services to the public.

“They revise it with intentionality, not just as something to check off,” Paradise says. “This experience inspires them to be intentional about keeping mission at the top of their priority list.”

They also are asked to write the job description for their chief spiritual officer role, which will be unique to each entity. Each description is reviewed by AdventHealth corporate leaders, members of the leadership institute team and by the other CEOs in the cohort. After revising the descriptions based on the feedback, the CEOs are expected to use them to frame their daily activities in leading self, others and results.

“As the chief spiritual officer, they are responsible for the culture and atmosphere of extending Christ’s healing ministry to their entire organization,” Paradise says. “Mission is our motivator and culture is our differentiator. How does it show up on your campus? How does a nurse experience the difference? How does a patient feel the difference? It has to happen through the culture, and that is something the CEO owns. It is the biggest lever a CEO can pull. It can be our competitive advantage, too. This program helps turn mission into practical culture.” ■

Michele Conklin is a freelance writer for AdventHealth.



▲ Strong Tower Radio and Michigan area churches dedicated the WHSR 88.7 FM station Jan. 18, 2025. This station is one of the nine Federal Communication Commission (FCC) construction permits granted to this non-profit Seventh-day Adventist lay-led media ministry.

Strong Tower Radio Expands Network with New Owosso Station and Beyond

Strong Tower Radio, a Seventh-day Adventist lay-led media ministry, celebrated the dedication of its newest station, WHSR 88.7 FM, in Owosso, Michigan, on Jan. 18, 2025. The event marked a significant milestone for the nonprofit organization, which now operates 20 radio stations, one television station and global streaming platforms.

The Owosso station is one of nine Federal Communication Commission (FCC) construction permits granted to Strong Tower Radio in November 2021. This latest addition serves the region from Bay City to Lansing and from St. Johns to Flint, exceeding initial coverage projections despite marginal reception in some areas.

The journey to expansion began in 2007 when Strong Tower Radio launched its first station in Cadillac, Michigan. Over the years, the ministry grew beyond expectations, adding 15 stations, including one in Illinois. With the FCC's 2021 application window, the ministry secured permits for nine additional stations, significantly broadening its reach.

The first of the nine new stations, WWJR 89.3 FM in Tower Hill, Illinois, began

broadcasting on Sept. 5, 2024. Originally planned as a 1-kilowatt (kW) signal, the station now operates at 5.6 kW, covering a 50-by-120-mile area of south-central Illinois.

On Nov. 29, 2024, Strong Tower Radio launched its second new station, WJCG 89.9 FM in Greenville, Michigan. Despite engineering challenges and setbacks with tower approvals, the station now reaches the Ionia state prison—a primary goal of the project's donors—and fills critical coverage gaps between Grand Rapids, Lansing and Harrison.

The third new station, WHSR in Owosso, officially went on air in January 2025. It was soon followed by WGTN 90.3 FM in Manistique, Michigan. Designed to fill a coverage gap in Michigan's Upper Peninsula,

WGTN connects listeners between Escanaba and Newberry.

The most recent station to go live, WSHG 91.7 FM in South Haven, Michigan, began broadcasting on Jan. 7, 2025. We are prayerfully hoping the remaining four additional stations—Bridgeman (WLWP 89.1 FM), Port Sanilac (WGPN 88.7 FM), Houghton (WHFJ 88.9 FM), and Iron Mountain (WUPC 89.1 FM)—will begin operations before the June 2025 FCC deadline.

What has God wrought with a little faith? From a single station to a growing network, the Strong Tower Radio ministry now shares its message across Michigan, Illinois and beyond through radio, television and digital platforms. With each new station, the mission to broadcast the three angels' messages reaches more lives, fulfilling a vision of global impact. Stay tuned. ■

Tom Mejeur is production and marketing director of Strong Tower Radio.

Ron Whitehead Moves from Volunteer to Fulltime Youth Director at Lake Union Conference

After 29 years serving as a volunteer youth director for the Lake Union Conference, Ron Whitehead will officially transition to a full-time role. Whitehead, who previously balanced his responsibilities as executive director of the Center for Youth Evangelism (CYE) at Andrews University with his volunteer service, will now fully dedicate his energies to youth, young adult and children ministries within the union.

"I'm excited because this union cares about youth and young adults," Whitehead said. "This union has a vision beyond itself."

Whitehead emphasized that the change allows him to shift from global responsibilities associated with his role at CYE—which included planning for events such as the International Camporee, WeCare Disaster Response, Cruise with a Mission—to more

locally focused ministry. "My focus now isn't the world, or missions or seminary or fund-raising or running a world camporee. I can focus on strengthening all our Lake Union conferences."

History of CYE

The Youth Resource Center began on the campus of Andrews University in 1979. By the time Whitehead joined in 1996, the organization had outgrown its original space and was renamed the Center for Youth Evangelism.

Then-Lake Union President Don Schneider suggested relocating to the upper floors of the old Lake Union building, now Griggs Hall. Schneider also recommended Whitehead serve as a volunteer part-time Lake Union

Youth director, initiating a mutually beneficial relationship which thrived for decades. Over the years, CYE coordinated several international camporees, five of them within the Lake Union territory.

As Whitehead steps into this focused role, he's enthusiastic about the team he'll join. "I am excited about this transition because of the people I work with in the union office," Whitehead explained. "I know all the youth professionals here—we're friends and colleagues. I'm also good friends with the conference administrators. I love the culture of this union. It's mission focused. It loves excellence."

Whitehead articulated his primary goal: "If I can help this generation know how much they're loved by God and how to love back this God who emptied heaven for us—if I can help their spiritual lights turn on and glow, if I can help them disciple each other in love and recognize how this Adventist message is so unique—then I'll have succeeded."

At the end of the day, he said, "I don't want to just be busy; I want to be effective."

Ken Denslow noted Whitehead's significant contributions to the mission of discipling youth and young adults in the Lake Union. "I am thrilled that he will now be able to focus 100% of his ministry attention on the children, youth and young adult program of our union. I know that he will be laser focused on developing strategies and avenues to bring young people closer to Jesus." ■

Debbie Michel is editor of the Lake Union Herald.

“If I can help this generation know how much they're loved by God and how to love back this God who emptied heaven for us...then I'll have succeeded.”





Katie Fellows

▲ Lake Union President Ken Denslow chaired the executive committee meeting on March 5, addressing both daily operations and long-term strategies for fulfilling the Seventh-day Adventist Church's mission. This marked Denslow's final meeting as chair, before his April retirement.

Lake Union Governance Meeting Highlights Evangelism and Financial Outlook

On Wednesday, March 5, 2025, the Lake Union executive committee convened in Berrien Springs, Michigan, for the first of its three annual governance meetings.

The 37-member committee includes representatives from five conferences tasked with overseeing church initiatives in the Great Lakes region. Committee members include local conference administrators, church employees, lay leaders and the presidents of Andrews University and UChicago Medicine AdventHealth.

Lake Union President Ken Denslow chaired the meeting, addressing both daily operations and long-term strategies for fulfilling the Seventh-day Adventist Church's mission. This marked Denslow's final meeting as chair, before his April retirement.

Key actions included the election of Lake Union Executive Secretary Elden Ramirez as the incoming president and the appointment of Ron Whitehead as the full-time youth director.

Additional highlights from the meeting:

President's Report

Ken Denslow's devotional was based on

Ezekiel 37, focusing on themes of revival and unity. Denslow referred to Ezekiel's vision of a valley of dry bones, symbolizing renewal and revival through divine intervention. He emphasized the importance of seeking spiritual revival in the church.

A video presentation provided an update on Project Amigo and the recent mission trip to Peru, conducted in partnership with Maranatha International, which included constructing a new church.

Secretariat Report

Executive Secretary Elden Ramirez reported that membership within the Lake Union Conference totaled 90,809 at the beginning of 2025. Churches and schools across the Lake Union continue active involvement in outreach and evangelism.

The North American Division's (NAD) Pentecost 2025 initiative, which initially aimed for 3,000 evangelistic events, has expanded to over 5,225 planned initiatives

across the division. Total funding for these initiatives amounts to \$41,584,770, with \$15,593,550 provided by the NAD.

Within the Lake Union, 503 evangelistic initiatives are scheduled for 2025, representing an 86% participation rate from local churches and schools. These initiatives have a total budget of \$3.6 million, including \$1.4 million contributed by the NAD.

Financial Overview (as of December 2024)

Lake Union Treasurer Glynn Scott reported the following financial information:

- Tithe was \$91.6 million, a 3.72% decrease compared with December 2023. This decrease is attributed to extraordinary one-time tithe contributions received in 2023. After adjusting for these special contributions, the decrease in tithe was 1.01%.
- Total income reached \$16.7 million, exceeding budget expectations by \$590,000 due to higher general and investment income.
- Expenses amounted to \$16.1 million, under budget by \$207,000 due to lower-than-expected program costs, salaries and travel expenses.
- The operating gain for December 2024 was \$668,000.

Scott noted appreciation for the continued financial contributions from Lake Union members, emphasizing the impact of these resources on the conference's mission and ministry initiatives. ■

Debbie Michel is editor of the Lake Union Herald.



Katie Fellows

▲ Executive Secretary Elden Ramirez reported that membership within the Lake Union Conference totaled 90,809 at the beginning of 2025.



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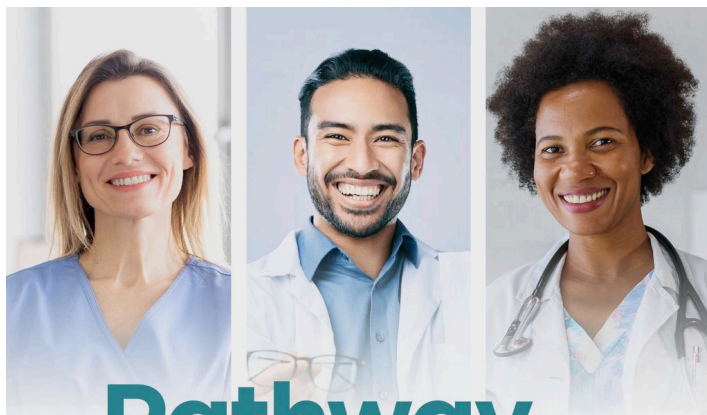
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Pathway to Health is a humanitarian service of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

pathwaytohealth.org/register

Sabbath Sunset Calendar

	May 2	May 9	May 16	May 23	May 30	June 6	June 13	June 20	June 27
Berrien Springs, Mich.	8:12	8:20	8:27	8:35	8:43	9:18	9:21	9:24	9:24
Chicago	7:50	7:58	8:05	8:11	8:17	8:22	8:26	8:29	8:29
Detroit	7:59	8:07	8:15	8:23	8:30	9:06	9:09	9:12	9:13
Indianapolis	8:40	8:47	8:53	8:59	9:05	9:10	9:13	9:16	9:16
La Crosse, Wis.	8:09	8:17	8:25	8:32	8:38	8:44	8:48	8:50	8:51
Lansing, Mich.	8:40	8:47	8:55	9:02	9:08	9:13	9:17	9:19	9:20
Madison, Wis.	8:00	8:08	8:15	8:22	8:28	8:34	8:38	8:40	8:41
Springfield, Ill.	7:54	8:01	8:07	8:13	8:19	8:24	8:27	8:30	8:30

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LAKE UNION CONFERENCE ATTORNEYS FELLOWSHIP ON SABBATH, MAY 17 AT 4P.M.

A TIME TO MEET AND CONNECT WITH
FELLOW ATTORNEYS IN OUR UNION

AT THE LAKE UNION CONFERENCE
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**GUEST SPEAKER:
TODD MACFARLAND**

General Conference
deputy general counsel

Light supper at 5 p.m.

RSVP BY MAY 9

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WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

1. How often do you typically read the *Herald* magazine?

- ☐ Every issue ☐ Most issues
☐ Occasional issues ☐ Never read an issue

2. How much of each magazine do you read?

- ☐ All of it ☐ Most of it ☐ Some of it
☐ None of it

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

- Feature articles which focus on a particular theme or topic for that issue
- Perspectives (editorial, Lest We Forget, Conversations with God, Conexiones, One Voice)
- Evangelism (Sharing Our Hope, Telling God's Stories, Partnership with God, On the Edge)
- Lifestyle (Family Focus, Alive & Well)
- Current Matters (AdventHealth, Andrews University, other News stories, Calendar of Events, Mileposts, Classifieds)

3. What type of articles would you like more of?

4. What article(s) do you always read?

5. What article(s) do you never read?

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

- ☐ Shorter ☐ Longer ☐ Remain same

Welcome to the *Lake Union Herald* readership survey. We are asking for a few moments of your time to make sure we hear your opinions and suggestions so the *Herald* magazine can best serve your interests. Your participation is entirely voluntary. By answering these questions, you're helping us gain a clear understanding of what you expect to see in these pages, as well as how best to engage with you on social media, which helps us produce content that is a true reflection of interests and concerns to our Lake Union members.

6. On a scale of 1–10, how valuable is the content to you?

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

8. What do you like most about the *Herald* magazine?

9. What is it that you like least about the *Herald* magazine?

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

11. If there were additional content from the *Herald* magazine available online only, how likely are you to go to the website and read it?

- ☐ Not at all likely ☐ A little
☐ Moderately ☐ Very likely

12. Which social media platforms do you use most to engage with faith-based content?

- ☐ Facebook ☐ Instagram ☐ X (Twitter)
☐ TikTok ☐ Snapchat ☐ other

13. What type of digital content do you find most engaging? (Select up to two)

- ☐ Short devotional videos ☐ Sermon clips
☐ Testimonies and personal faith stories
☐ Bible study resources ☐ Podcasts
☐ Infographics/Bible verses
☐ Live Q&As or discussions

How can The *Herald* improve its digital and social media presence?

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

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor	No opinion
Content						
Cover						
Ease of read						
Layout & Design						
Photography						
Writing						

Of what conference are you a member?

- ☐ Indiana ☐ Illinois ☐ Michigan
☐ Lake Region ☐ Wisconsin ☐ None ☐ Other

What is your age? ☐ under 25 ☐ 25–34

☐ 35–49 ☐ 50–64 ☐ 65–79 ☐ 80+

What is your gender? ☐ Male ☐ Female

Please cut out the page and mail complete survey by August 31, 2025, to: *Lake Union Herald*, PO Box 287, Berrien Springs, MI 49103

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MILEPOSTS

FANCHER, Carol (Wotring), age 81; born August 29, 1942, in Adrian, Michigan; died on March 25, 2024, in Ukiah, California. She was a member of the Pioneer Memorial Church in Berrien Springs, Michigan. She is survived by her son, Keefer “Doug Fancher” Kane; and daughter, Jen (Fancher) Collins. A memorial inurnment was conducted by Pastor Jen Collins, with

inurnment at Rosehill Cemetery in Berrien Springs, Michigan.

PICKETT, Donna J. (Hutchens), age 67; born July 20, 1957, in Sheridan, Indiana; died on January 17, 2025, in Indianapolis, Indiana. She was a member of the Spencer SDA Church in Spencer, Indiana. She is survived by her husband, Steve A. Pickett; sons, Micah Pickett,

Daniel (Julia) Pickett; and two grandchildren. A memorial was conducted by Steve Pickett on February 9, 2025, with a private service in Indiana.

YASAITIS, Stan J., age 64; born May 8, 1960 in Janesville, Wisconsin; died on Aug. 11, 2024, in Milwaukee. He was a member of

the Milwaukee Central Church in Milwaukee. He was survived by his wife Beatriz; sons, Daniel Castro Yasaitis, Stanley Joseph Yasaitis II; daughter, Avecita Rosa Yasaitis; father, John Yasaitis; mother, Adele Templin; brothers, Tom Yasaitis, Mark Yasaitis. A memorial service was conducted on Aug. 24, 2024 by Pastor Bill Dudgeon.

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. Conference addresses and phone numbers are listed in the masthead on the inside front cover.

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Books: TEACH Services offers used Adventist books at www.LNFBBOOKS.com or new book releases at www.TEACHServices.com or your local ABC. Authors let us help you publish your book with editing, design, marketing and worldwide distribution. Call 706-504-9192 for a free evaluation.

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Considering Rural Living?

Explore Greeneville, Tennessee! Located near the Smoky Mountains, Greeneville Adventist Academy has an accredited SDA 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; 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

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/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.

Union Adventist University is seeking qualified applicants for Research and Instruction Librarian. This position develops and provides reference and library instruction to diverse groups of students, faculty, staff, and community visitors, using modalities suited to the individual, classroom, or online environments. Generous benefit package includes tuition assistance to dependents. Apply at uau.edu/employment.

Union Adventist University seeks a committed SDA candidate for tenure track faculty position in instrumental music beginning June 2025. Responsibilities include overseeing the instrumental program, directing instrumental groups, advising undergraduate music majors, and teaching undergraduate courses and instrumental lessons. Master's degree in music required, doctoral degree in music preferred. Applicants should complete an application at <https://uau.edu/employment/> and upload a cover letter and resume or CV, and provide names and contact information of 3 references. For further information, email Bruce Forbes, Academic Dean, at bruce.forbes@uau.edu.

Union Adventist University is seeking qualified applicants for Director, Recreational Facilities. This is a full-time, salaried position with excellent benefits including tuition assistance. The Director administers all aspects of the newly built Reiner Wellness Center and other sports complexes on campus including a pool, providing quality customer service to employees, students, and community customers. Bachelor's degree required, Master's preferred and required certifications as listed on the job description. Please see the job description and apply at uau.edu/employment

Union Adventist University is seeking applicants for University Chaplain. This is a full-time, exempt position. The Chaplain for Campus Ministries is viewed as the key person to promote

students' faith development by their engagement in worship discipleship and service, and to build a vibrant faith community for the University. Please see full job description and instructions for application at uau.edu/ employment.

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 to ocean and skiing. If interested, please check out our current openings at: puc.edu/campus-services/human-resources/current-job-postings.

We are seeking certified teachers to join us at Sycamore Academy, an online school serving Grades K-12. Work part time from home, providing live teaching and tutoring sessions in a Zoom environment. For more information, call 817-645-0895.

ASAP Ministries is seeking a mission-minded Senior Accountant to work closely with the Finance Director in overseeing financial operations at our Berrien Springs, Michigan office. This position requires attention to detail and a solid understanding of accounting principles. For more information, see our listing at www.asapministries.org/employment or email HR@asapministries.org.

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CALENDAR OF OFFERINGS

MAY

- 3 Local Church Budget
- 10 Disaster & Famine Relief (GC and NAD)
- 17 Local Church Budget
- 24 Local Conference Advance
- 31 Local Church Budget

JUNE

- 7 Local Church Budget
- 14 Women's Ministries (NAD)
- 21 Local Church Budget
- 28 Local Conference Advance
- 28 Southern Asia-Pacific Division (SSD)

We know God's beauty is all around us—and we'd love to see how you enjoy it! Whether it's a peaceful hike, a backyard gardening moment, cuddles with your furry companions, or a joyful picnic with loved ones, we want to celebrate those snapshots of God's handiwork in your everyday life.

SUBMIT YOUR FAVORITE PHOTO WITH A QUICK CAPTION OF YOU ENJOYING NATURE WITH YOUR LOVED ONES

— big smiles, muddy paws, sunrises, laughter and all — and help us showcase the joy of living in His creation for a special feature in our October issue!

Deadline: July 15, 2025
Submit to: creation@lakeunion.org



ANDREWS UNIVERSITY

GENERAL EVENTS

May 2-4: Spring 2025 Graduation

May 14-15: Andrews Research Conference: Early Career Researchers in STEM and Health Sciences

June 9-Aug. 14: The Crayon Box Children's Learning Center: Camp Kindness and Camp Cardinal

June 23: Mission: Invent Exhibition and Awards Ceremony

July 21-23: Leadership Conference, Virtual

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.

May 6, 7 p.m.: Andrews Academy Band & Bells Spring Concert

May 8, 7 p.m.: Andrews Academy Choral & Orchestra Spring Concert

May 13, 7 p.m.: Ruth Murdoch Elementary School Spring Instrumental Concert

May 20, 7 p.m.: Ruth Murdoch Elementary School Spring Vocal Concert

ILLINOIS

May 3: Hispanic Women's Retreat, Location TBD

May 16-18: Adventurer Family Camp, Camp Akita

June 4-11: Mission Akita, Camp Akita

June 5-8: Homecoming 25th Anniversary Celebration, Camp Akita

June 14: Youth Rally

INDIANA

May 2-4: Pathfinder Fair, Timber Ridge Camp

May 16-18: Adventurer Family Weekend, Timber Ridge Camp

May 23-25: Indiana Academy Graduation Weekend

May 31: Hispanic Fraternity Day, Indiana Academy

June 20-22: Hispanic Youth Retreat, Indiana Academy

LAKE REGION

May 3: Motor City Youth Federation, Detroit

May 17: Michiana Youth Federation

May 23-25: Young Adult Retreat, Blair Lake, Michigan

May 24: Retiro Espiritual para Mujeres, TBA

May 24: Men's Ministries Rally (Chicagoland)

June 7-13: Semana de Oracion, varios lugares

June 15: Adventurer Fun Day, Camp Wagner

June 21: Retiro de Pastores, Chicago

June 22: SAL – Seminario Adventista Laico, online

MICHIGAN

May 2-4: Marriage Retreat, Camp Au Sable

May 4: Empower Literature Ministries Workshop, Conference Office

May 16-18: Pathfinder Fair, Camp Au Sable Northwoods

May 23-25: Great Lakes Adventist Academy Graduation Weekend

WISCONSIN

May 2-4: Hispanic Men's Retreat, Milwaukee

May 2-4: Pathfinder Fair, Camp Wakonda

May 11-15: Camp Wakonda Work Bee

May 17: Adventurer Fun Day – South

May 23-25: Wisconsin Academy Graduation Weekend

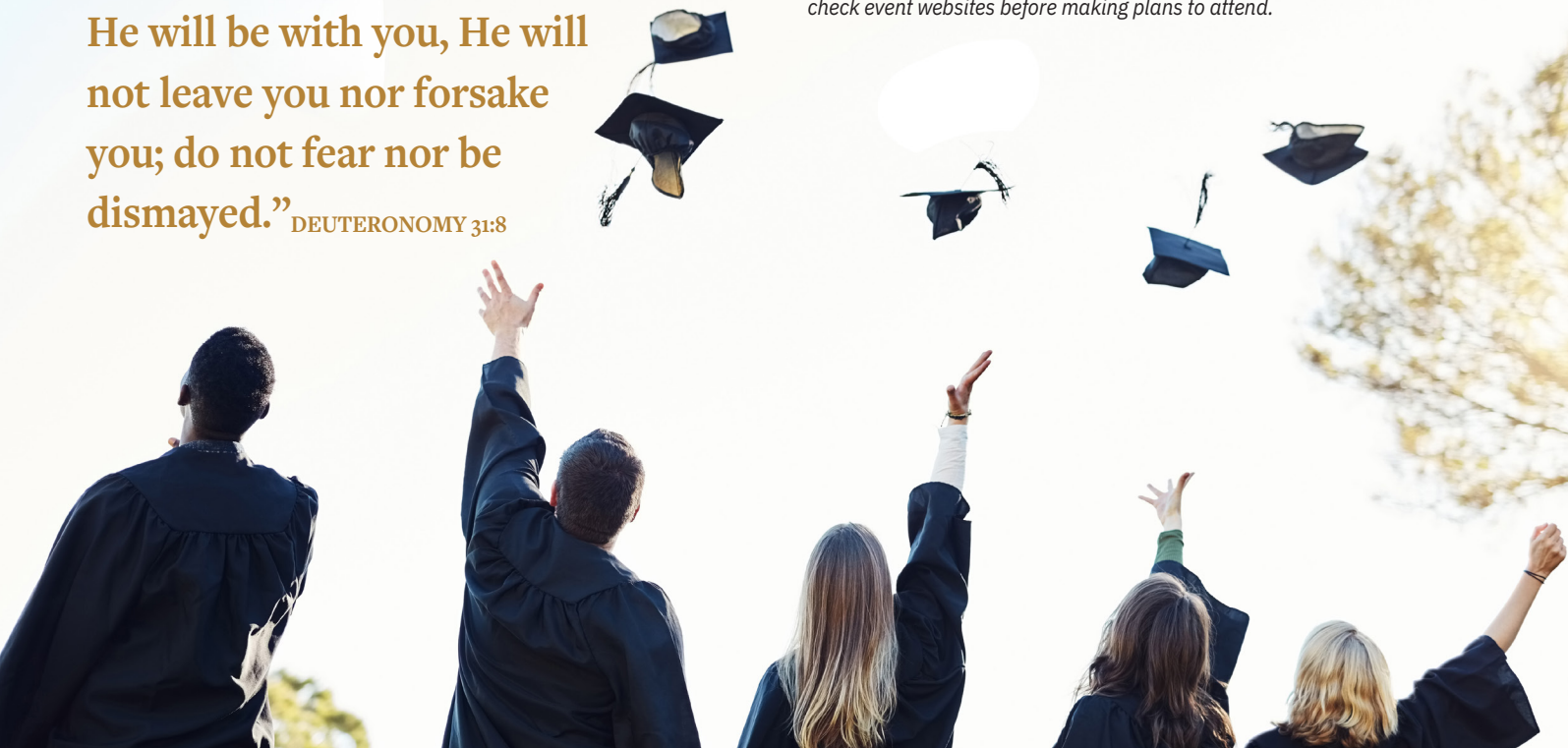
May 31: Hispanic Brotherhood Day, Milwaukee

LAKE UNION

May 17: Lake Union Attorneys Fellowship, Lake Union Conference, Berrien Springs

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

**And the LORD, He is the
One who goes before you.
He will be with you, He will
not leave you nor forsake
you; do not fear nor be
dismayed.”** DEUTERONOMY 31:8



Lake Union Schools

Illinois

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

Indiana

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

Lake Region

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

Michigan

A.S.P.I.R.E. Academy » Michigan Conference
Adelphian Junior Academy » Holly
Alpena Berean Christian School » Alpena
Andrews Academy » Berrien Springs
Ann Arbor Elementary School » Ann Arbor
Battle Creek Academy » Battle Creek
Bluff View Christian School » Bessemer
Cedar Lake Elementary » Cedar Lake

Charlotte Adventist Christian School » Charlotte
Eau Claire Elementary School » Eau Claire
Edenville SDA Elementary School » Edenville
First Flint Elementary School » Flint
Gobles Junior Academy » Gobles
Grand Rapids Adventist Academy » Grand Rapids
Grayling Elementary School » Grayling
Great Lakes Adventist Academy » Cedar Lake
Greater Lansing Adventist School » Lansing
Hastings Elementary School » Hastings
Holland Adventist Academy » Holland
Ionia Elementary School » Ionia
Ithaca SDA School » Ithaca
Kalamazoo Junior Academy » Kalamazoo
Marquette SDA School » Negaunee
Metropolitan SDA Junior Academy » Plymouth
Mount Pleasant Elementary School » Mount Pleasant
Niles Adventist School » Niles
Northview Adventist School » Cadillac
Oakwood Junior Academy » Taylor
Pine Mountain Christian School » Iron Mountain
Ruth Murdoch Elementary School » Berrien Springs
The Crayon Box » Berrien Springs
Tri-City SDA School » Saginaw
Troy Adventist Academy » Troy
Troy Adventist Academy Preschool » Troy
Village Adventist Elementary School » Berrien Springs
Wilson Junior Academy » Wilson

Wisconsin

Bethel Junior Academy » Arpin
Frederic Adventist Christian School » Frederic
Green Bay Adventist Junior Academy » Green Bay
Hillside Christian School » Wausau
Milwaukee SDA School » Milwaukee
Milwaukee SDA School – South Campus » Milwaukee
Milwaukee SDA School – Waukesha » New Berlin
Otter Creek Christian Academy » Altoona
Petersen Adventist School » Columbus
Three Angels Christian School » Monona
Wisconsin Academy » Columbus
Wisconsin Inspire Academy » Wisconsin Conference

Education statement

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



Defending the Rights of Literature Evangelists



▲ JENNIFER GRAY WOODS

Can cities prohibit literature evangelists from going door-to-door distributing religious books or is this activity legally protected?

Our church has a long history of sharing the gospel through literature evangelism ministry reaching back to the beginnings of the Adventist movement. This ministry has gone by different names and may still be referred to by some as colporteur or canvassing. It involves individuals going door to door to peoples' homes, outside of shopping centers, or sometimes at parks or other places where they can reach and share the gospel through religious books and magazines. And every year, there are young people in the Lake Union who spend their summers as literature evangelists to witness and earn money. For many, taking part in this ministry not only allows them to witness to others, but as they connect with others and share their faith, it also strengthens the faith of the literature evangelist.

Unfortunately, literature evangelists have faced pushback from time to time in cities that require restrictive permits or enact ordinances that overly burden when, where, or how literature evangelism activities can take place. Because of these restrictions and the negative views of some toward literature evangelism work, individuals have been faced with threats and even arrested at times.

Fortunately, the courts have frequently protected the rights of individuals to share religious literature door-to-door and in public places. The Supreme Court has affirmed the right of individuals to sell religious books and to solicit contributions when it is part of a religious activity. And while cities are allowed to impose certain time, place and manner restrictions those restrictions must meet certain safeguards. For example, city ordinances should be content neutral (meaning they shouldn't treat religious speech less favorably than non-religious

speech). Additionally, an ordinance shouldn't be so restrictive that its application prevents people from meaningfully expressing themselves, so prohibiting door-to-door evangelism at 5:00 p.m.-- a time when many people are home-- would likely not be seen as reasonable. Requiring a fee to obtain a permit or enacting ordinances where city officials have discretionary authority to allow or refuse individuals the right to share religious information have generally been found to be unconstitutional.

Our church, through its Office of General Counsel, has defended a number of literature evangelists who have faced challenges over the years. Because our church continues to monitor and defend the rights of our literature evangelists, we have been able to continue the work of sharing the gospel in this way that has brought many into the church. ■

Jennifer Gray Woods is the Lake Union legal counsel, as well as its Public Affairs and Religious Liberty director.



Where Are You Standing?

Have you ever considered that the Presence we've grown accustomed to—even taken for granted—might be humbling and amazing to someone else?

After the Sabbath service during one camp meeting, my late husband Greg and I were standing in the cafeteria's long line, a perfect place to strike up conversations with those nearby. We encountered a couple who we quickly suspected weren't Adventists. Their comment about wondering what "haystacks" might taste like gave them away immediately.

Soon we overheard their conversation behind us and recognized God's open invitation to engage with them—to learn who they were, where they came from, how they met Jesus, and how they'd heard about Seventh-day Adventists.

Turning with a smile, we greeted them. We discovered their names were *John and Susan, and they warmly smiled back. We asked simple questions about their lives—about family (did they have children?), their jobs, their interests, and eventually, how they first learned about Adventists. It's fascinating how interesting people's lives can be if we just pause long enough to listen and genuinely care.

Susan was a radio talk show host—and not one with a calm voice. She explained with animated honesty how aggressively she "sparred" with callers who dared challenge her controversial daily topics. (Greg always called it "dueling with words.") She admitted she'd used swear words listeners had to look up in the dictionary, something she wasn't proud of, clearly.

John and Susan joyfully shared how Jesus had transformed their lives, changing them profoundly from the inside out. They radiated happiness over this new direction—so much so that Susan even quit her job.

They asked if we wanted to hear what God had done for them just that morning. We assured them we definitely wanted to hear their story. Here's what they shared:

"We live about two hours from Camp Wakonda. Our church friends kept talking about camp meeting—how wonderful it was, how great the speakers were, the number of people attending, and the peace they felt there. They encouraged us to come, at least for Sabbath, mentioning that the church would share a nice potluck lunch.

"We decided we'd attend camp meeting, but this morning, both of us woke up feeling strange and irritable. We fought with each other, blaming one another for making us late, and didn't even want to talk, let alone share the same space.

"Then John suddenly said, 'You know what's happening, don't you, Susan? The devil doesn't want us to go.'

"So we decided we should go anyway, despite being late and still upset. Our drive there was in complete silence.

"But the moment we drove into Camp Wakonda, parked our car, and stepped out, both of us immediately felt like we had stepped onto holy ground."

John repeated quietly, almost to himself, "It felt like we were standing on holy ground."

John and Susan have since moved away. I wonder if they still enjoy attending camp meetings? Does it still feel like "holy ground" to them?

How does it feel where you stand? ■

Lesa Budd is the Wisconsin Prayer Coordinator.

**Names changed*



▲ LESA BUDD



When Jesus Walked into My Home

My first vivid memory of my dad is from 2016. I was 10 years old, and it was a school night. That night, I decided to sleep on the couch because my parents were fighting in their bedroom. I thought that if my mom needed help, I could protect her by being close. Looking back now, I know there wasn't much I could have done against my dad—but it shows just how bad things had gotten.

I remember my mom yelling, and my dad just laughing. My heart was beating fast, and there was this buzzing in my head all night because I was so worried about her. Thankfully, nothing too serious happened that night. I didn't have to be anyone's superhero.

That fight was the biggest one I remember, and it's the night we found out my dad hadn't stopped drinking—even though he said he had years before. My mom ended up kicking him out. I'm not sure how long he was gone, maybe a couple of months, but I do remember the feeling after he left. It felt like the weight of the world had been lifted off my shoulders. It felt safe again, like finally he couldn't hurt my mom anymore.

Eventually, my dad came back. Not long after, we moved up north—and that's when everything started to change. For the first time in my life, my dad stopped hitting my mom. I still don't fully understand how he changed so quickly, but one thing I do know is that God really worked on him. The change I saw in my dad was nothing short of a miracle.

Even though the physical abuse stopped, my parents still fought a lot. Their arguments

were so loud the whole neighborhood could hear. That continued up until around the winter of 2022.

Then, in January 2023, something big happened between them. It put my dad in a position where he had to choose: either treat my mom the way she deserved to be treated or lose her. Since then, I've seen my dad make a complete 180 in how he treats my mom—and how he treats us, his children.

He went from being this aggressive, scary father I feared, to a gentle, kind dad that I genuinely enjoy being around.

These past few months, I've watched my parents fall more and more in love every single day. And even though it was painful to witness the hurt they caused each other, I would go through it all again if it meant getting to see my dad fall in love with Jesus and truly accept Him into his heart—and, on top of that, fall in love with my mom and treat her the way she always deserved to be treated.

The verse that comes to mind when I think about my dad's transformation is:

"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh." Ezekiel 36:26 (NIV)

This verse is exactly what happened in my dad's life. God softened his heart, gave him a new spirit and turned pain into something beautiful. ■

Elizabeth Rios-Sanchez is a senior at Wisconsin Academy.



Oranges for Dinner

She was a small girl – tiny frame, shy voice. She loved pink, her stuffed animal, and always wanted to hold someone's hand. She had beautiful brown eyes, a delightful smile, and a gentle nature. Little Amina was the sweetest girl I had ever met.

I met her on the first Sunday of summer camp, where she was placed in my cabin. That night, after the campers slept, I learned Amina was the youngest daughter of a refugee family fleeing unrest in Congo. Imagining all she had endured, I felt compelled to love her as much as I could in our seven days together.

As the week went on, she continued asking for oranges at every meal, sitting silently during worship and holding my hand everywhere. I longed to make her feel safe, but the other campers did not share my sentiment. They noticed her differences—how she looked, what she brought, what she ate—and treated her as an outsider. They made cruel remarks about her language, the way she only ate oranges, and how she always needed to hold a counselor's hand. I was shocked at their ignorance and unwillingness to understand her. It broke my heart and twisted it with anger. I saw Amina's struggle, yet they had already decided how to treat her without even knowing her. That moment deepened my awareness of how discrimination, whether from ignorance or choice, has life-long effects.

Discrimination, inequality, and injustice have persisted throughout history. If we want solutions, we must start with how we treat people. George Saunders' *The Semplica-Girl Diaries* highlights this through Eva, a young girl horrified by the accepted practice of renting impoverished women as decorations. While others justified it as normal, Eva resisted and freed them, showing how injustice thrives when people accept it instead of challenging it.

Much of society thinks like Eva's father—over-looking injustice because it is common. But justice means refusing to let oppression become normal.

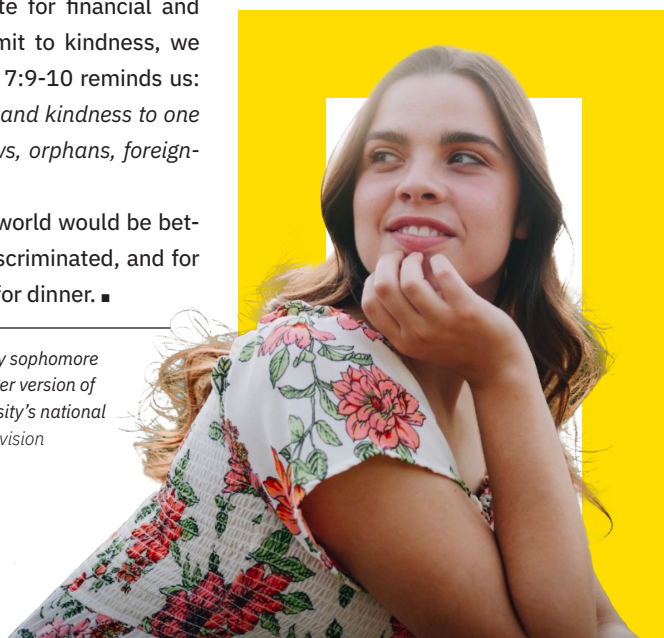
It starts by recognizing that those suffering are humans, deserving of kindness. Economic and social inequalities also widen due to discrimination. In *Born on Third Base*, Chuck Collins illustrates privilege as the wind at a cyclist's back—those with it move forward effortlessly, while those without struggle against it. Many seeking a safer home or better opportunities face lower wages and harsher conditions simply because of their background.

I caught a glimpse of this when I discovered I wouldn't be paid for my summer camp job due to my visa status. It felt unfair—I worked tirelessly, led a cabin 24 hours a day, and pushed through exhaustion. But I realized that for many, this wasn't just a summer hardship; it was their reality. Racial wage disparities persist, widening the wealth gap. Once again, society looks past the person and determines worth by skin color.

So how do we fight inequality? By recognizing the struggle, treating people with empathy and choosing justice over convenience. If we educate younger generations about race, class and economic disparities, advocate for financial and educational equity, and commit to kindness, we can shift the norm. Zechariah 7:9-10 reminds us: "*Judge fairly, and show mercy and kindness to one another. Do not oppress widows, orphans, foreigners, and the poor.*"

If society lived by this, the world would be better—for the oppressed, the discriminated, and for little Amina, who ate oranges for dinner. ■

Fiorella Oudri is an Andrews University sophomore and pre-physical therapy major. A longer version of this article was published in the university's national award-winning student publication, *Envision* magazine.



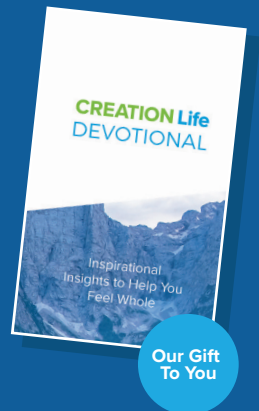


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