

SERVING SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS IN THE LAKE UNION SINCE 1908

HERALD

SEPTEMBER 2025

FAITH JOURNEYS



One of the loveliest sights for me at the 2025 General Conference Session in St. Louis was the visible presence of young people. Stationed at information kiosks, they answered questions all day long. “How do I get to the dome?” “Where can I find food?” “How can I connect to the Wi-Fi?” No matter the question, they pleasantly responded with confidence and a smile.

But they didn’t stop there. I noticed youth serving in other ways, too. Some worked in departments such as communication, roaming around with cameras, posting to social media, and even stepping up to microphones during press briefings. One 19-year-old Andrews University journalism student caught my attention during a daily news conference. Andrew Francis asked church leaders bold, thoughtful questions, including this one to the newly elected General Conference secretary: “You once worked at the Institute of World Mission at Andrews University. How do you hope to encourage young people to commit to mission when many in my generation are disengaged from church life?”

Rick McEdward acknowledged the complexity of the question. He emphasized engaging young people early through experiences that are holistic and rooted in faith, not just short-term mission trips.

Another question posed by Andrew to Treasurer Paul Douglas addressed the financial and enrollment challenges facing Adventist higher education. Douglas called it a “very difficult question” and stressed the need for open conversations and a willingness to make tough decisions. “We can’t be afraid to ask and answer hard questions,” he said.

That may be the best lesson of all. Questions matter. And during the GC Session, it was often questions from the young people that sparked the most thoughtful, vulnerable responses. Jesus certainly seemed to think questions were powerful. Scholars say the Gospels record Him asking between 173 and 307 questions. Even as a boy, He was found in the temple, sitting among the teachers, asking questions—and amazing them all (Luke 2:47).

To follow Jesus is to ask, to listen and to grow. The young people at GC reminded us of that truth. Let’s not be afraid of questions, even critical ones of our church. They might just be where the real learning begins.

Debbie

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ABOUT THE COVER: Andrews University student Ryan Wilson photographed by Katie Fellows for the feature story (see p. 20)

ON THIS PAGE:
Sabrina Valasque Saliba
photographed by Samantha Woolford-Hunt.
Her story is on p. 18.

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

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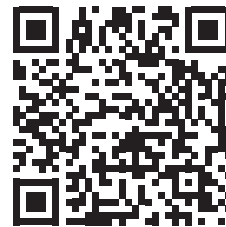
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World Changers: Faith in Action at Andrews University

In a fragmented and uncertain world there's something audacious happening at Andrews University. Walk the halls, visit the classrooms or spend time in the residence halls, and you'll quickly detect the pulse of our Andrews family: Young people who refuse to accept that their faith is merely personal, that their education is only about individual success, or that their future is confined to their comfort zones.



▲ JOHN WESLEY TAYLOR V

These are the world changers — not because they hold positions of power, but because they've discovered something transformative: That faith becomes real when it's lived out, that resilience grows strongest when it serves others, and that true impact often begins with the smallest acts of courage.

Each year, this special edition of the Lake Union Herald offers a window into the vibrant stories unfolding across our campus — stories of quiet strength, unexpected courage, and the relentless pursuit of a God-given calling. Each story a unique thread in the tapestry of divine purpose.

In this issue you'll meet students whose journeys to Andrews University were forged through adversity — hardship, disruption and personal struggles that tested their resolve. Yet they pressed forward. They're not simply survivors, but thrivers.

Their resilience speaks not only to their determination but also to the sustaining power of God's call. Their stories are modern-day echoes of Abraham's obedience, Ruth's courage and Esther's quiet resolve. They remind us that world-changing often begins with the faithful act of stepping forward, of trusting God to carve a way through obstacles.

World-changing doesn't commence at graduation. It begins in small acts of faith long before a diploma is earned. Meet an Andrews graduate whose calling led her back to the children's home where she had served as a student missionary, not just to visit, but now to lead. She is part of the growing legacy of Andrews alumni who take what they've learned in classrooms, chapels and labs — and offer it back to the world in meaningful, lasting ways.

But world change isn't confined to distant lands. It flourishes right here, making an impact locally. A Berrien Springs couple has transformed their kitchen table into a sanctuary for international students and children of missionaries. They cook meals, listen to stories and help strangers become family. For those far from home, their hospitality has been more than kindness — it's been a ministry of presence, offering rest, connection, and Christ-centered community. They understand that changing the world sometimes simply means changing someone's world — one meal, one conversation, one act of kindness at a time. It's a reminder that world-changing can begin with an open door and an open heart.



Our vibrant student body is the heartbeat of Andrews University. This year, for example, we've witnessed that energy through the Myanmar Student Association, a group shaped by their homeland's struggles who have woven mission and ministry into the fabric of their lives. In their first year, they've launched faith and service initiatives, including Mission Sabbaths where they lead church services and engage in community outreach. They remind us that resilience isn't just about bouncing back. It is about springing forward with greater purpose and deeper compassion.

Student voices capture the beautiful diversity of Andrews. One undergraduate shares her passion for raising awareness around disabilities. Her work reshapes campus conversations and reminds us that mission starts with seeing others the way Christ does. A seminary student, meanwhile, is using her training to launch a coaching business that brings biblical wisdom to young women navigating faith and life decisions. Her initiative bridges ministry and entrepreneurship, demonstrating that vocational calling and spiritual purpose can powerfully unite in mission. Both students show that Andrews is a crucible where faith-driven ideas become reality, where calling is lived.

What ties these stories together? Faith in action — living, breathing trust in God that moves

mountains. Resilience — standing firm when the path twists, knowing that God's plan will unfold. Pursuing one's calling — not as a distant dream, but as a daily experience.

Andrews is more than a university; it's a launchpad for mission, a place where minds are challenged and faith is deepened, a place where we answer the quiet call of God with integrity, courage and love.

Together, these stories paint a vivid picture of ordinary people doing extraordinary things because they believe that faith without action is incomplete, that education without service is insufficient, and that a life lived only for oneself is ultimately empty. They are not waiting for the world to change. They are changing the world for God!

As you read these stories, I invite you to consider your own calling. How might God be inviting you to serve, to give, or to lead — right where you are?

You don't need a stage to change the world. You simply need a heart surrendered to Christ, a willingness to act, and bold faith to take the next step.

The world needs more faith-filled, resilient, purpose-driven people willing to say *Yes!* to God.

The world needs World Changers! ■

John Wesley Taylor V is president of Andrews University.

▲ The Myanmar Student Association launched faith and service initiatives, including Mission Sabbaths where they lead church services and engage in community outreach.

Supporting Families with Diverse Needs



▲ JASMINE FRASER

“God has placed the parts of the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be ... those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable.” (1 Corinthians 12:18–22, NIV)

Recently, I recalled the anxious look I saw on a mother’s face as I served in a church some time ago. I remember how one of her children ‘misbehaved’ and created some challenges for the pastor. New to our church, she was the mother of five children, four of whom attended church with her that day. Later, it was confirmed that two of her children had limitations, which at times contributed to unacceptable behavior. Later, we also learned that this mother and her children had been to several churches within the vicinity. Each time one misbehaved, she was asked to leave and not return until they could behave appropriately. This explained her anxious response to her child’s behavior; she was afraid she would be asked to leave again, like all the other times.

While disruptive behavior in any place, particularly in worship settings, should never be condoned, it is important to note that certain limitations negatively impact individuals’ (especially children’s) behaviors and existential quality. Many in society embody physical, neurological and other limitations that require special attention that can potentially enhance their capacity to function adequately. Limitations do not make individuals of lesser value to society or the church. Scripture affirms the dignity, value and vital role of every person, indicating that even those with limitations are not exempt. In fact, their role in the body of Christ is just as vital as anyone else’s.

But while many systems in society are equipped to accommodate individuals with limitations, many churches are ill-equipped to respond adequately. Still, it is encouraging to know that some

churches are taking the initiative to understand and adequately respond to individuals with limitations. Referring to the mother and children mentioned earlier, despite the inconvenience caused by one child, they were not asked to leave. Over time, this family found stability and a sense of belonging in a church because of the pastor’s awareness and intentionality in responding to a child with limitations.

Becoming equipped to better attend to the needs of individuals with varying limitations calls for empathy, intentionality, tolerance and flexibility. Though the task of becoming equipped can be daunting, ministry leaders can begin by facilitating a welcoming and safe environment where parents with children, and other individuals with limitations experience acceptance, inclusivity and a sense of belonging. This begins with training leaders on how to welcome and interact with individuals with behavioral differences, and fostering a contextualized approach, instead of a one-size-fits-all, to discipleship. Contextualized discipleship may include mentorship, support groups and intergenerational worship events that allow the church to experience one another authentically, with individuals receiving and offering necessary support. Additionally, leaders can create opportunities for children and individuals with limitations to actively participate in worship and service duties within the church. ■

Jasmine Fraser is associate professor of discipleship and religious education in the Department of Discipleship and director of its PhD program in the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University.



Stop Worrying About Things You Can't Control

Your anxiety is a liar. Anxiety is fear mixed with worry with a side of feeling not good enough thrown in.

All of this is to say, we fear we're not good enough to protect ourselves or prevent bad things from happening to us, so we worry about an event, tomorrow, or how our life will turn out to be. Anxiety is a buildup of unexpended energy, and like lightning, anxiety can strike at any moment, anywhere. Anxiety is often a form of worrying about things we cannot control and being afraid things will not work out in our favor. Anxiety can, and often does, interfere with our ability to enjoy our life, and certainly prevents us from living in the present moment. It's hard to live in the present if your brain is constantly worried about the future.

As with all things we suffer with, God cares about our anxiety and invites us in 1 Peter 5:7 to cast "all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you." What does "casting our cares on him" mean anyway? The first step is recognizing our anxiety for what it is, a lie our brain tells us about who we are, whose we are, and our own self-efficacy. The next thing we should do is take active steps to replace those negative thoughts (lies) we are telling ourselves with alternative thoughts. Replace "I'm worthless, I will never be able to accomplish this, no one will love me if I don't succeed" with "apparently I don't think I can do this, I wonder what would happen if ..." When you find yourself thinking anxiously, try to isolate the thought driving the anxiety and purposely replace it with a more accurate, more actionable thought.

While you're noticing your anxious thoughts and replacing them with more accurate and actionable ones, you can also talk to someone about your anxiety. The cool thing about emotions is that talking

about your emotions with your friends, family or loved ones can help dissipate them. Expressing your feelings relieves stress. Stress, anxiety and fear can often drive us over the edge into anger. Long-term exposure to chronic stress and anxiety can cause devastating health problems.

Do things that help you feel better. Exercise. Eat well. Clean. Sleep. Live. Check in with someone. Call your friends. Change your location often. Get up and go to another room. Practice breathing exercises (Google, do them; they work). Meditate. Pray. Practice mindfulness (another thing to Google if you don't know how). Do something creative. Learn a new language. Earn that PhD online. Learn how to compost. Build a she-shed/man-cave. I know these are all things that are everyday activities, but I hope it also normalizes for people who struggle with anxiety that everyday activities can be daunting. Your anxiety is not hopeless and your emotions pass. Do what you can when you can and please, please, reach out to someone. You don't have to live in constant pain.

It is important to lean into the things you can control during these uncertain times and trust those things. You've done many harder things than this! ■

This article is not intended to take the place of medical advice or to diminish the effects of mental or personality disorders.

Brad Hinman, LPC, LMFT, AASECT is a certified sex therapist, director of Hinman Counseling Services and recently retired from teaching at Andrews University.



▲ BRAD HINMAN



Time to Commence the Sabbath



In the early days of the Adventist movement, believers sought to align every part of life with biblical truth — including the question of when the Sabbath begins.

Joseph Bates, a leading advocate for the seventh-day Sabbath, taught that it began on Friday at 6 p.m. and ended on Saturday at the same hour. Yet in 1847, views varied: some believed the Sabbath started at sunrise, others at sunset.¹

During a vision in Topsham, Maine, Ellen White heard an angel repeat the words: “From even to even shall ye celebrate your Sabbaths.” Bates took this as confirmation of his 6 p.m. position, and the practice remained unchanged for several years.

By June 1854, however, James White began to question whether their understanding was truly rooted in Scripture. He realized they had never studied the matter carefully but had accepted the 6 p.m. timing based largely on experience. He asked D. P. Hall to explore the issue, but when Hall was unable to do so, James turned to J. N. Andrews, who took up the challenge.

Andrews’ careful study led to a pivotal presentation at the Battle Creek Conference in November 1855. Drawing on compelling biblical evidence, his study showed that the terms “even” and “evening” pointed to sunset — not a fixed clock time. While 6 p.m. might approximate sunset at the equator, in many regions it varied significantly. His argument was so convincing that nearly everyone accepted the new understanding—except for two respected figures: Joseph Bates and Ellen White.

Ellen hesitated. Hadn’t her 1847 vision affirmed the 6 p.m. time? And if Andrews was right, why hadn’t God corrected them sooner? On November 20, 1855, she was taken off in vision again. This

time, she raised the question directly with the angel. The angel repeated the familiar phrase, “From even unto even, shall ye celebrate your Sabbath” (Lev 23:32). When she asked what it meant, the angel replied, “Take the word of God, read it, understand, and ye cannot err. Read carefully, and ye shall there find *what* even is, and *when* it is.”

Remarkably, rather than giving her a direct answer, the angel employed the vision to point her back to Scripture—showing that even Ellen White’s theological insight was to rest on the Word. Ellen then asked whether God had been displeased with their earlier observance. The angel reassured her that in 1847, they had not rejected the truth but had misunderstood it. God had waited patiently, allowing time for deeper Bible study and understanding.

This experience became a powerful affirmation of God’s grace and guidance. He does not condemn unintentional misunderstandings made in the pursuit of truth. Instead, He lovingly leads His people into greater light—at the right time, and through His Word. ■

¹ The information in this article is based on James White, “Time to Commence the Sabbath,” *Review and Herald*, February 25, 1868, 168; James White, “Time of the Sabbath,” *Review and Herald*, December 4, 1855, 78; J. N. Andrews, “Time for Commencing the Sabbath,” *Review and Herald*, December 4, 1855, 76-78; Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1 (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), 116.

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



Viaje de la Reforma 2026: Una Experiencia que Transformará tu Vida

¿Has soñado alguna vez que estás caminando por las mismas calles en las cuales hombres y mujeres valientes defendieron la verdad bíblica a pesar de la oposición más feroz? El próximo año tendrás esa oportunidad.



▲ Carmelo Mercado

El Departamento Multicultural de la Unión del Lago invita a la familia hispana adventista a participar en un inolvidable Viaje de la Reforma, del 12 al 22 de mayo de 2026.

Durante diez días recorreremos seis países llenos de historia que marcaron el rumbo de la fe cristiana. Visitaremos lo siguiente: Roma, Florencia, el Valle Valdense, Ginebra, Zúrich, Wittenberg y Praga. Cada ciudad nos hablará de sacrificio, fe y valor; cada visita será una lección viva acerca de cómo Dios obró en el pasado para preservar la luz del evangelio.

Nuestro libro de texto será El conflicto de los siglos de Elena de White, una obra que nos guiará para comprender mejor las luchas, victorias y desafíos de los reformadores. No será simplemente un viaje turístico, sino una peregrinación espiritual que nos ayudará a descubrir principios que podremos aplicar en nuestros tiempos de incertidumbre y desafíos.

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Viaje de la Reforma 2026: más que un recorrido, una experiencia que cambiará tu vida. ■

Carmelo Mercado es el vicepresidente de la Unión del Lago.





▲ The Hamels center their gatherings on providing a way for the students to become more familiar with their community through delicious food and friendly conversation.

‘Global Nomads’ Find Home Away From Home

Loren and Ann Hamel never know how many people will come to their home for the monthly Sabbath lunches they host for international students and children of missionaries.

The Hamels initially opened their home in Berrien Springs, Michigan, to a modest number of these students — whom they’ve termed “global nomads” — in the fall of 2023 and have watched their monthly gatherings grow significantly. They started the lunches as an opportunity for Adventist students to connect and grow in faith, and they estimate that around 60 people have congregated at their busiest meals. However, given the students’ unpredictable schedules and the myriad of activities and demands they face, there may be as few as 20 who show up.

The unpredictability of the global nomad gatherings is inseparable from their ethos, which is “completely missional,” says Ann, who holds a DMin in formation-al counseling and served as a psychologist with the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The

point of the gatherings is “to share the love of Jesus with those around us,” she says. “... We want to love like Jesus loves.”

Building local community

The Hamels center their gatherings on introducing global nomads to one another, providing a way for the students to become more familiar with their community through friendly conversation.

“One of the outcomes, we would hope, is that the students who are lonely and far from home would feel like they have people that were interested in them that were local,” says Gordon Doss, professor emeritus of world mission at Andrews University. Doss, alongside his wife, Cheryl, attends every gathering of global nomads, providing half the food and great amounts of necessary support for the lunches to be successful.

Zachary Kis, a junior at Andrews, says it has been “really, really great to have fellowship and meet new friends. ... I think it absolutely has impacted my time here.”

In the service of creating that fellowship, a typical global nomads lunch begins with icebreakers.

“We’ll start with having folks introduce themselves and their home country, and what they’re doing at Andrews, and where their parents are currently stationed,” says Dr. Loren Hamel, who until recently served as president of Corewell Health.

However, he says, he is most impressed by the global nomads’ answers to a very different prompt: “Tell us about a time recently that you experienced the presence of God or the presence of the Holy Spirit.”

“It’s amazing the way those folks feel led to Andrews, guided through their Andrews experience,” he says. “Any one of them could preach a sermon, almost, I think, on how God has led them. So, it’s very inspiring.”

Investing in students’ physical and spiritual welfare

Through their monthly gatherings, the Hamels seek not only to connect with global nomads but to be pillars of spiritual and physical support for students.

“Our home we committed to the Lord,” says Ann. “We pray that it will be a place where students, when they come, sense the presence of the Holy Spirit, and that their spiritual lives are nurtured, and they are able to grow here and make connections. ... We don’t need a house this big, but it’s — we use it to further God’s kingdom.”

The Hamels’ commitment to this service means they often use their home to serve global nomads in ways far beyond monthly lunches. For instance, because global nomads are students, many live in dorms, which means that “there’s no place for their families to stay,” says Ann. Thus, the Hamels open their home for these families to stay short-term.

However, the Hamels’ hospitality extends past the walls of their home: They seek to be active resources for the international students and children of missionaries who comprise the global nomads — many of whom do not have many connections in the area.

“When their parents live in Papua New Guinea or Beirut or Zimbabwe,” says Ann, “it’s really nice for

them to have an adult in the community that’s a resource for them.”

For instance, Hamels once found out that a student involved in the global nomads lunches was experiencing personal struggles and family difficulties so great that he was not prepared for an imminent flight. “Loren actually went to his dorm room and packed his things and put the things in the car and took him to the airport,” says Doss. “So, they are really invested.”

The students involved in the program have greatly appreciated the Hamels’ hospitality and energetic investment in their well-being.

Gaetan Rutayisire, who recently graduated from Andrews, sees both Hamels as role models. Ann, he says, “always has energy,” which she shows the students by enthusiastically greeting them. “It’s always nice to see,” Rutayisire says, “literally every time I walk in the house.” He looks up to Loren’s humility. “He’s so accomplished,” Rutayisire says, “but humble enough to ... involve himself with young people like us.”

The Hamels are indeed greatly involved in the lives of global nomads. Nathan Gulzar, a recent Andrews graduate, says students feel comfortable reaching out to the Hamels for support, sometimes texting a message such as “Hey, I’m going through this. Can you help me?” The gatherings, Gulzar says, have been “really a blessing” to him.

Other students, as well, can’t help but appreciate what they see as the divine working through the Hamel family.

“The existence and the proliferation of the global nomads,” says Kato Golooba-Mutebi, an Andrews senior, “is just a reflection of the kindness of the Hamels as well as the Jesus that exists in them.”

However, for the Hamels, the monthly gatherings of global nomads are simply a continuation of a long-established Berrien Springs tradition.

“Creating a sense of Christian community, creating a sense of support, loving on the students while they’re here, is something that has a long, rich history in this community,” says Loren. “This is, you know, our version of that.” ■

Nate Miller is a writer and musician based in Berrien Springs, Michigan.



▲ **Top:** Ann and Loren Hamel (center, covered with blankets) say they want their home to further God’s kingdom.

▲ **Bottom:** Often, the Hamels are joined by others such as Cheryl Doss (standing) and her husband Gordon, in hosting the students.

Mission and Ministry the Focus for Andrews' Myanmar Club

Spiritual ministry and mission are the driving forces for Andrews University's newest student club: the Andrews University Myanmar Student Association (AUMSA).

Launched at the start of the 2024–2025 academic year, AUMSA has distinguished itself through its mission-focused initiatives, with members contributing positively across the Lake Union and in the nation of Myanmar.

Khai-Khai Cin, a Master of Divinity student at Andrews University, was the founder and first president of AUMSA during the 2024–2025 school year.

Despite dozens of Myanmar students attending and graduating from Andrews over its 150-year history, AUMSA is the first club to focus on Myanmar or Burmese culture, said Cin. After he learned other students were interested in starting a Myanmar club, he worked with his peers and the Office of Student Life to develop AUMSA and its three core values: empower, belong and serve. The goal was to balance providing Myanmar students with community and a "sense of belonging on campus" alongside the vision "to make sure there is inclusivity and diversity," broadening the scope of people involved in AUMSA through social and spiritual events.

These core values and focus on ministry have defined the club in its inaugural year. "The best [way] we can represent our culture is by our actions," said sophomore Pau Mung, AUMSA's religious vice president last year. "Obviously, there's the way you dress and outward appearance. But the best [way] we can represent [Myanmar] culture is how we talk to people, how we treat people, the way we act around people, or how we represent God."

AUMSA has hosted several vespers programs on the University campus, including one featuring University President John Wesley Taylor V as the guest presenter. The group has also worked with Pioneer Memorial Church to present for Sabbath School. AUMSA's mission-focused initiatives



additionally included a fundraising drive to support victims of the 7.7-magnitude earthquake that struck Myanmar in March 2025.

Perhaps the most impactful examples of AUMSA's mission-focused ministry are its Service Sabbath trips throughout the Lake Union. Service Sabbaths are University-wide events overseen by Andrews' Center for Faith Engagement (CFE). They give students an opportunity to contribute socially and spiritually to neighboring communities, typically in the afternoon after church services. Cin and AUMSA took Service Sabbaths a step further by making them day-long affairs.

"We try to reach ... all the Myanmar refugee church plants [within the Lake Union]," Cin explained. "Most of the Myanmar churches [have] refugees or immigrants, so we are here to reach out to them and have that sense of community and belonging for our students."

Both Cin and Mung come from immigrant families and, having dealt with the pressures of assimilation in the United States, understand the importance of continual support from one's cultural community. This is something they want AUMSA to provide to both its student members and the churches they visit.

AUMSA visits churches in Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois and Indiana. On Service Sabbath church visits, AUMSA is responsible for Sabbath School, the main service and the Adventist Youth afternoon program.

AUMSA has made eight Service Sabbath trips to seven different churches, visiting congregations as far as over three hours away. Cin views these opportunities as beneficial for the students — who gain experience in ministry and have opportunities to connect with more people from Myanmar — and for the churches—who receive the blessing of the ministry and services put on by the youth.

The group visited Battle Creek Zomi Seventh-day Adventist Church in Michigan twice this school year and had an overwhelmingly positive impact, said Tiji Pau, a member of the congregation.

"They were mingling with our teens right away, and they were like friends right away. We were impressed by their testimonies and preparedness," said Pau. "We would love to have them again in the future, because when they came,

they were role models for our young children to serve for the Lord."

AUMSA's Service Sabbath trips draw both members and non-member students, some from other cultures and ethnicities. The group has also received support from its faculty club advisors, Joel Raveloharimisy, director of the Community & International Development program, and Jacob Gibbs, University associate chaplain.

Gibbs offered guidance and ideas for the club's ministry efforts. He also assisted the club by driving the University bus and preaching for one of their Sabbath services in Battle Creek, Michigan. He admires the club's focus on their mission to help refugee churches in the Lake Union. "The mission focus comes from a burden for people," he said. "The club blesses the people that they are connected to. I would like to see all clubs learn to have a mission that focuses on people outside of Andrews University."

Another highlight of AUMSA's first year was participating in the annual AUnited Weekend Showcase from March 7–9, 2025, an event which allows different student clubs to display their culture to the Andrews community. Although AUMSA had only a few dozen members, theirs was one of the highlight performances in the Saturday night fashion show, displaying intricate and authentic cultural expression, including apparel and music.

Mung, who was involved in planning many of the Service Sabbath programs, wants to continue to build upon the previous year's progress. "I would love to get more social events, like playing volleyball outside, for example. But we are going to be still very mission minded." As a future pastor, he has enjoyed the opportunity to connect with his culture while practicing ministry.

Mung will serve as AUMSA president during the upcoming 2025–2026 school year. "I'll try my best to empower the members and officers to show God's character by their fruits."

After just one year, AUMSA has represented God, Andrews University and the diversity of Myanmar culture to many in impactful ways. ■

Andrew Francis is a senior communication and behavioral science major at Andrews University and a blossoming journalist who loves reading and sports.



"THE CLUB BLESSES THE PEOPLE THAT THEY ARE CONNECTED TO. I WOULD LIKE TO SEE ALL CLUBS LEARN TO HAVE A MISSION THAT FOCUSES ON PEOPLE OUTSIDE OF ANDREWS UNIVERSITY."





JOURNEY TO ANDREWS

At Andrews University, students come from all over the globe – but their paths to Berrien Springs are as unique as they are. Each journey reflects a personal pursuit of purpose, shaped by faith, resilience and a desire to grow. In this feature, we highlight three students whose stories reflect the heart of Andrews’ mission: to seek knowledge, affirm faith and change the world.

By Kaara Harris

Design by Samantha Woolford-Hunt



THE IMPOSSIBLE DREAM

During the COVID pandemic, David Suralta saw the fragility of life. As his sick father was rushed to the ICU, David prayed, “Lord, one day I will die. But before that day comes, what do You want me to do?”

Photography courtesy David Suralta

The moment changed him. “It made me realize how important it is to wake up every day with purpose,” David says.

He sought God’s guidance in choosing a school. His major, music composition, wasn’t common and the programs available in his country, the Philippines, held classes on Saturday — something he wanted to avoid.

“God answered my prayers by opening doors ... and leading me to Andrews,” he recalls. “As I learned more, I saw that Andrews offers a strong education and a great learning community. I knew this was the right place for me.”

Still, getting there “felt like an impossible dream,” David says. His father was a taxi driver, and his mother worked as a helper. Their loan applications were rejected by five banks. Though his mother was discouraged, David leaned on his faith; he prayed, fasted and spent time in daily devotion. “Little did I know, this was the greatest investment I could make,” he says.

A month later, a neighbor offered a loan for tuition. “It felt like a miracle,” David says, “but it came at a heavy cost.” The family put their house up for collateral and agreed to pay 20,000 pesos (\$360 U.S.) per month in interest.

“I prayed to God, knowing that if I couldn’t pay, my parents would lose their home. Despite the risk, I trusted God and believed He had opened this door for a reason.”

Under immense stress, David moved forward, scheduling a visa interview and traveling to Manila for the appointment. But on July 18, 2024, his application was denied.

“I didn’t know what to do. I felt defeated and thought my dream had ended.” Instead of returning home, however, he stayed in Manila, hoping for another chance. David saw God show up again. In a city 486 miles — and a plane or ferry ride away — from home, a stranger offered him free housing and food.

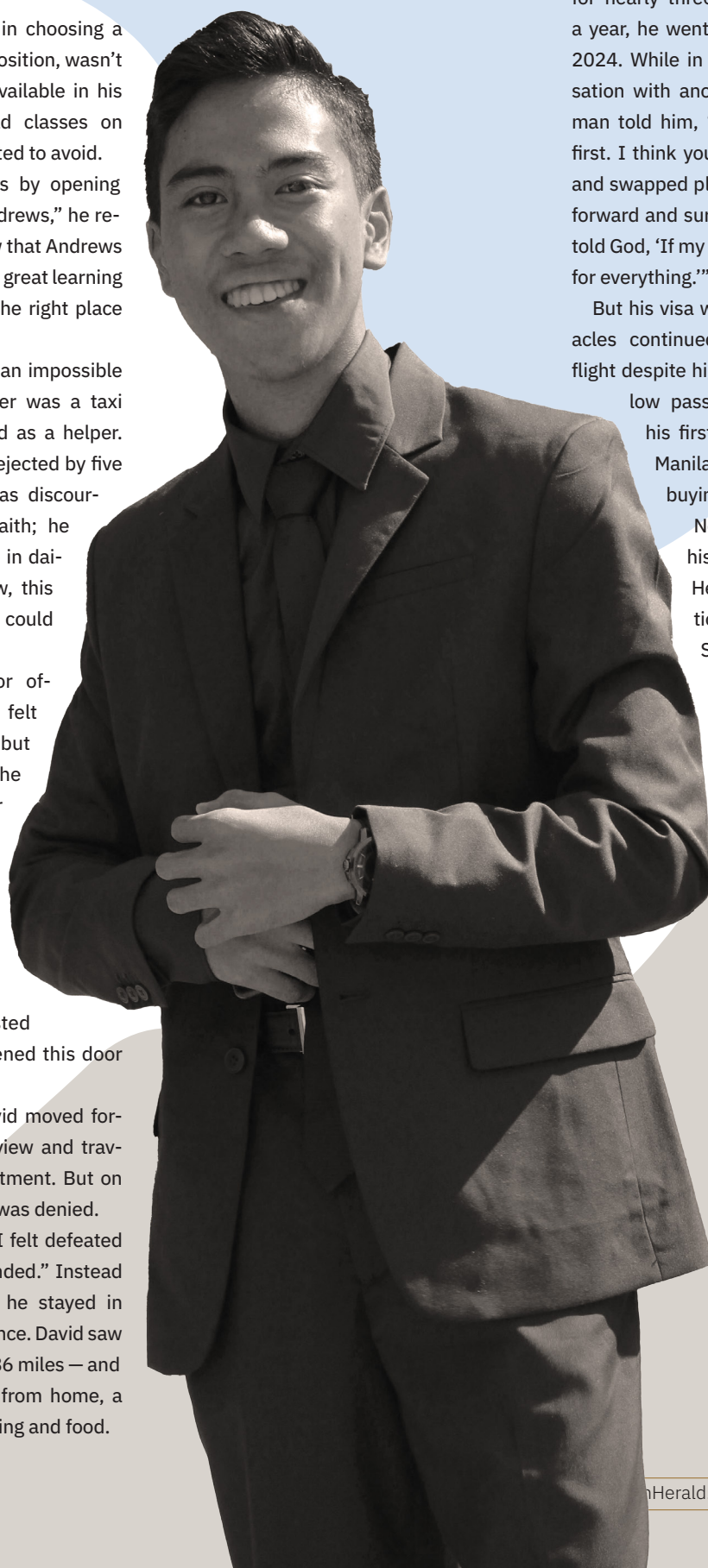
Told the odds of a second interview so soon were slim, David fasted and prayed for nearly three weeks. Instead of waiting a year, he went for his interview on Aug. 8, 2024. While in line, he struck up a conversation with another person. Afterward, the man told him, “Son, I think you should go first. I think you can be a leader someday,” and swapped places with David. He stepped forward and surrendered to the outcome. “I told God, ‘If my journey ends here, thank you for everything.’”

But his visa was approved — and the miracles continued. He found a last-minute flight despite high, peak-season fares. A fellow passenger helped him navigate his first international flight — from Manila to Taiwan to Chicago — even buying him meals.

Now, David walks every day in his once “impossible” dream. He is studying music composition, sings with the University Singers, and works as a video producer for Andrews University’s Global Campus.

Reflecting on his journey to Andrews, he says, “I realized that when you surrender everything to the Lord, He makes a way.”

“God answered my prayers by opening doors ... and leading me to Andrews.”



AYES FROM GOD

Sabrina Valasque Saliba was studying biology at Middle East University in Lebanon when her boyfriend mentioned he planned to study physical therapy at Andrews University.

Photography by Samantha Woolford-Hunt



Curious, she looked it up. “Pretty interesting,” she thought.

Sabrina was drawn to the idea of studying abroad in an Adventist environment. While researching potential academic majors, someone mentioned medical laboratory science — a field that included her love for microbiology. After shadowing a medical lab scientist, she knew: This was it. Andrews became her top choice. She applied and was accepted. But then came the hard part.

“My mom told me, ‘OK, Sabrina, you were accepted. But now let’s talk finances,’” she says. “I didn’t know how I’d pay for it because we didn’t have that kind of money.”

With two younger sisters already in an Adventist school, the financial burden was real. So, Sabrina turned to God.

“Before I started the process, I said, ‘Lord, if it’s not for me to go, please don’t give me hope. Close all the doors so I don’t get excited.’ But by then, I knew ... He was allowing me to go.”

Sabrina received a scholarship and also found a sponsor. She canvassed that summer to raise funds, and her parents provided the rest. “Every month was a miracle. My sponsor was helping, my parents worked hard — it was miracle after miracle.”

The next step was securing a visa; people told her the process would be easy. Confident in God’s leading, Sabrina also believed the process would be smooth — until it wasn’t.

Her interviewer asked three questions then said, “I’m sorry, I can’t give you your visa today.”

It was July 19, 2024, less than a month before the new student orientation at Andrews. Sabrina and her family were devastated. That evening, her father, an Orthodox Christian, walked into a somber home.

“He said, ‘Why are you crying? Didn’t you put this in God’s hands? He will lead you,’” Sabrina recalls. “I felt like those words, coming from him, were words from God.”

With time running out, Sabrina considered her options. A recent rule change allowed her to reapply for a visa within three days instead of three months — but the earliest



interview date available was Aug. 28, two weeks too late.

She considered a different approach: Apply for the visa in Serbia, while visiting her boyfriend’s family, and then travel to the U.S. if approved. Flights from Lebanon to Serbia were expensive as war with Israel intensified. Still, she booked her ticket from Lebanon and prayed for clarity.

The Wednesday before departure, her mother said, “If you’re denied again, that will be a no from God—not from any human. But if you get a yes, then that’s a yes from God.”

The next day, after praying, Sabrina saw a new interview date pop up on her phone: Friday — the very next day. Later that night, the airline called: her flight to Serbia had been canceled.

The visa interview this time felt different, Sabrina recalls. “She asked a lot of questions — ‘Why Andrews? What do you want to see there?’”

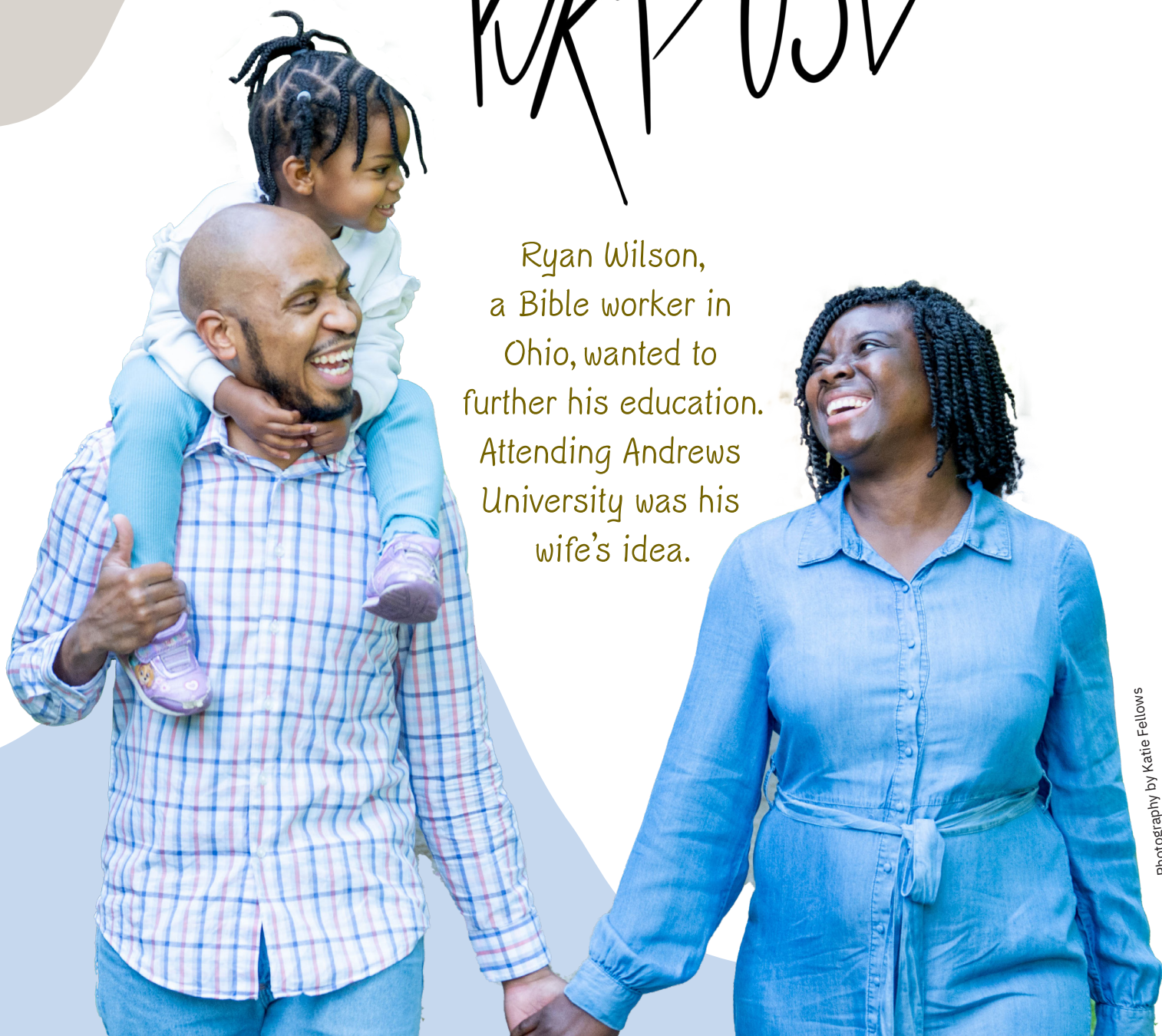
At the end, the interviewer smiled. “Congratulations. I hope you succeed in your journey there.”

“I was in shock,” Sabrina says of the approval and the flurry of events leading up to it; but it left her more sure than ever: “This was a yes from God.”

“Why are you crying? Didn’t you put this in God’s hands? He will lead you.”

IN PURSUIT OF PURPOSE

Ryan Wilson,
a Bible worker in
Ohio, wanted to
further his education.
Attending Andrews
University was his
wife's idea.



“Growing up, it was one of her dream schools,” Ryan says. The couple and their three children decided to move to Berrien Springs so both parents could continue their studies.

The move marked more than a change in location for Ryan — it was another step in his lifelong pursuit of purpose. The path hasn’t always been linear.

“I’m a late bloomer,” he says. After dropping out of high school in tenth grade, he cycled through jobs in insurance, hospitality, retail and truck driving.

While teaching, preaching and doing community outreach as a Bible worker, he encountered a recurring theme: “Everywhere I went, people would ask me, ‘Are you a pastor? Have you ever thought about being a pastor? How many years in school before you become a pastor?’”

Raised between faith traditions — his father’s mother was Seventh-day Adventist, his mother and maternal grandmother were Pentecostal — Ryan recalls, “We had one grandmother that would take us to church on Saturday, one grandmother that would take us to church on Sunday.”

Despite attending church and even an Adventist academy, confusion, lack of authenticity, and familial dysfunction led to Ryan’s disillusionment with Christianity. By his teen years, he was an atheist and had dropped out of high school.

He spent years working and chasing pleasure, but it left him empty.

“I didn’t have a purpose,” he says. “If the only reason for living is self-gratification but the things you think will satisfy you don’t, then there’s no reason for living.” But he also remembers “this feeling, this thought ... how about you give this God thing another look?”

One night, flipping through TV channels, he landed on a preacher on TBN. “[He’s] saying God has a purpose for my life ... he says, seek and you shall find. So I say, ‘Lord, if you have a purpose, it would be nice to know it.’”

Later, his roommate said he could see Ryan as a radio talk show host. “I interpreted that as a place of influence, a voice,” Ryan says. “I had this eureka moment where I saw my life flash before my eyes. It’s as if God was saying, ‘Even before you believed in Me, I was preparing you for what I have for you. Follow Me.’”

Though Ryan wavered at first, God’s clear intervention snapped him out of indecision. He studied the Bible, attended church and helped where he could. Later, at an evangelism training school, he discovered his passion and met his future wife, Faith-Ann. After a couple of years as a Bible worker, though, a conflict at church left him discouraged. He walked away and started driving trucks.

But like Jonah, he couldn’t outrun his calling. One night a stranger struck up a conversation with Ryan as he was pumping gas. As Ryan turned to leave, the man said, “There’s

something that you love and that’s what you should be doing.”

That moment confirmed what Ryan already had sensed: life on the road was unfulfilling. He left trucking and rededicated his life to God. He was soon hired as a Bible worker in Ohio.

Now, as a first-time college student, Ryan is balancing studies with family life. At 35, he’s older than most of his classmates but has found his place as a theology major.

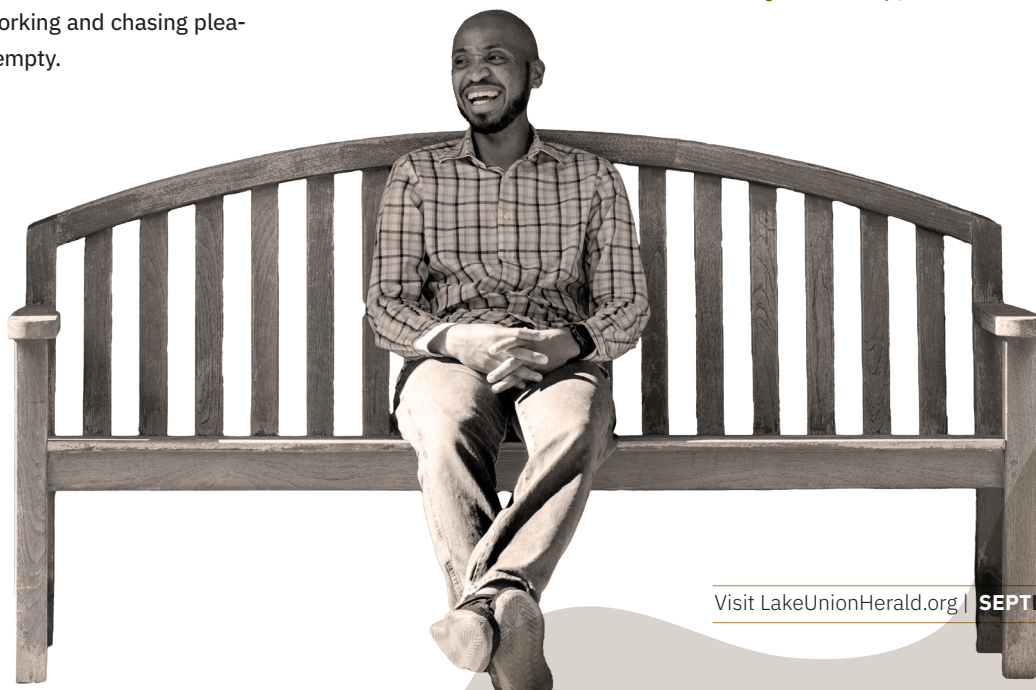
“I find that the best career is where passion and proficiency meet,” he says. “Nothing really gives me that passion like theology — talking to people about God, studying the Bible.”

He seeks what will equip him to better follow the path he’d been searching for and that God had long called him to.

Purpose is “not just a one-time thing or a destination,” Ryan says. “It’s part of the whole journey.” ■

Kaara Harris is an assistant professor of journalism and communication at Andrews University.

Purpose is “not just a one-time thing or a destination,” Ryan says. “It’s part of the whole journey.”



HEART FOR HONDURAS

By Tamara Wolcott Watson

Design by Samantha Woolford-Hunt



▲ Amanda Correa with four boys from Hogar de Ninos during her first year as an undergraduate volunteer.



▲ Here, Amanda celebrates two children who graduated high school and later attended university through her Crezco program.

Amanda Corea grew up watching her father go away for mission trips during spring break. When Amanda reached high school, she was excited and ready for her turn to serve. Little did she know that during her senior year of high school she would find her calling while on a mission trip to Hogar de Niños, a children's home with REACH International based in Honduras.

She felt in her heart that this location was different as she formed deeper relationships with the children.

A second change during senior year happened as her English teacher assigned a project asking for career details. Amanda wasn't sure what to do. She knew she loved mission trips, so the teacher suggested she shadow workers in the General Conference or ADRA offices since she lived in Maryland. So, she observed someone for a day who suggested a degree in community and international development at Andrews University, which is exactly what Amanda chose.

The summer before attending Andrews, Amanda visited Hogar de Niños three times. Her first year at Andrews was tough. "I was

an overworked, over-productive, perfectionist high school student," says Amanda. She chose to serve as a student missionary her second year of college. She returned to Hogar de Niños, learning more about who she was, and even extending her service by a few months.

Upon returning home, Amanda was depressed, missing Honduras and experiencing reverse culture shock. This happens when "those who have made a home in a new culture likely don't feel like they're coming home. Not only does their home culture seem more foreign, but things at home also are not as they left them" (Cook 2019, para. 10). Amanda's father said she could

help from anywhere which eased her tension but eventually, she chose to take general education courses online and return to Honduras. She taught English for 40 hours a week when she was not in class and helped around the children's home. "Sometimes it was cooking breakfast at 4:00 in the morning," said Amanda. "Sometimes it was taking care of the little boys, waking them up, putting them into bed, making sure they were taking showers and doing the homework."

Amanda was determined to be there for the children. She didn't want to be someone who came for a few months and left; the children needed consistency. After her mission year she returned to complete her Andrews

"IT'S NOT JUST ACADEMIC GROWTH, IT'S ALSO SPIRITUAL GROWTH."



▲ In 2024, Amanda and several alumni and volunteers from Hogar de Niños attend the wedding of an alum who is now a professional graphic designer in Mexico.



▲ In 2023, Amanda attends the university graduation of a former children's home resident in Peru. He is now a working professional in Honduras.

degree but would return to Honduras to attend high school graduation during Thanksgiving break. Overall, she returned to Honduras three to four times per year including Christmas break and summer. Amanada graduated from Andrews in 2013; she earned a master's in psychology, and worked in Adventist academies as a chaplain and campus ministries director which provided time to still volunteer at the home and equip her heart for service.

One day a friend from church asked what happens to the Hogar de Niños children after high school. Amanda had wondered the same thing and had seen children return to the streets or go back to abusive families. She started raising money and sending students to Adventist schools in Peru, Mexico, and Costa Rica. Amanda went a step further and started Crezco, a nonprofit to help them attend college, through personal donations and support of her church. It became an official nonprofit in 2022. "Crezco, which in Spanish means 'I grow', because it's a whole growth experience," says Amanda. About 18 students have already graduated from college and there are 13 currently studying. Amanda adds, "it's not just academic growth, it's also spiritual growth. It's mental and emotional growth." Last Christmas, five Crezco graduates returned to Hogar de Niños to assist over Christmas, even buying the home a new refrigerator.

For years Amanda balanced the Crezco foundation, off times at Hogar de Niños, full time work, and pursuing higher education. "I knew at some point that God was gonna send me here," Amanda says. One day God did, and she went full time with Hogar de Niños in 2023. There are about 30 children at the home with Amanda as the only live-in adult. There is help from a cook and maintenance worker during the week.

Amanda knows God is important, so she is awake most days at 4 a.m. trying to find her own worship time. She provides devotions in the morning and night with the children but as a single mom of 30, her hands are full. They have been reading Guide's greatest stories in the mornings and studying the books of Samuel at night. Finding balance is key, working out and taking care of her mental health and grabbing a quick prayer for patience when she can.

GOD IS POWERFUL AND HE'S MIRACULOUS

FAMILY IS MORE THAN BLOOD, IT IS WHO INVESTS IN YOU.

Amanda oversees the home's operations, for example allocating funds for upcoming school projects and supplies. She buys the groceries and coordinates the homework for students in grades 1-12. These students are behind due to trauma which turns homework into a challenge. Asking someone to come and volunteer means inviting someone into their home and Amanda doesn't take this lightly. She says Hogar de Niños used to take anyone as a student missionary, but they have changed this policy as some of the volunteers were hurting the children, who generally range from age 3 to 19. Missionaries who seek to serve at the home are now required to be at least 22 years old, have a working knowledge of Spanish, and commit to a minimum of six months. Amanda has witnessed the impact

numerous volunteers have had on the children which prompted her to fully engage, commit to a lifetime, and make new rules.

Amanda refers to the children in Hogar de Niños as brothers and sisters. She is the big sister, and the children who were at the home when she arrived are "the originals." She says they grew up together. She found ways for them to attend college and signed financial papers; she would often visit them in college and if she couldn't bring them home during the holidays she would go be with them. "I want to break these negative cycles and that's not going to happen if we don't make active steps and intentional steps," she says "God is powerful and he's miraculous," says Corea. "I have seen many miracles in my own personal life through this place, and he's incredible.

But Satan knows that, and so you need to make it intentional." God uses and prepares the willing, but mission work is a spiritual battlefield, says Amanda, adding that those who want to serve as missionaries need to be "open to learning new cultures, new things, a new way of seeing God."

"God has allowed me to be able to see, try to always see people for their context in that moment," adds Amanda. "Family is more than blood, it is who invests in you."

Amanda asks for prayers and if God impresses you to do more, she would be grateful. To learn more about the Crezco foundation, visit the website at <https://crezcofoundation.org/> ■

Tamara Wolcott Watson is an assistant professor of communication at Andrews University.





▲ Team members Rally: UChicago Medicine AdventHealth team members and volunteers

AdventHealth Partners with the Illinois Conference for Youth Rally

On June 14, 2025, over 150 youth and young adults gathered at the Hilton Chicago conference center for the annual Chicagoland One-Day Youth Rally to worship, inspire and fellowship.

For over 20 years, this rally has been a cornerstone for the community, serving as a platform for worship, community engagement and leadership development opportunities. This year, UChicago Medicine AdventHealth partnered with the Illinois Conference Youth Department of Seventh-day Adventists to sponsor it, enhancing its reach and impact.

Recognizing the importance of this event Roberto Gonzalez, associate youth director for the Illinois Conference and organizer of the rally, sought to expand its reach and contacted UChicago Medicine AdventHealth for a partnership. “Partnering with UChicago

Medicine AdventHealth has been an incredible blessing. Their involvement offers our youth a firsthand look at how faith and health ministry intersect,” said Gonzalez. “This exposure not only broadens their understanding but also opens doors for them to consider careers in health care as a form of service.”

In addition to sponsoring the rally, UChicago Medicine AdventHealth team members and executives played an active role by leading breakout discussions and facilitating the AdventHealth Career Experience. These sessions encouraged youth to reflect on their purpose, emphasizing the importance

of serving others and serving God. Maddie Hann, a current health care student at Andrews University who volunteered at the event, shared her thoughts. “What especially stood out to me was how dedicated they were about encouraging the next generation of Adventist youth in their faith and future.”

Attendees were able to truly envision themselves in a variety of health care roles through several engaging and innovative tools. The virtual reality CPR training lab simulator offered an immersive experience, allowing attendees to have hands-on practice. Community health building boards encouraged collaborative learning and problem-solving and the Interactive Career Mirrors enabled attendees to see themselves as AdventHealth caregivers, helping them visualize their own potential and inspiring them to see health care as a calling.

“The AdventHealth Career Experience offers a meaningful opportunity for young people to explore their calling to serve others and grow into their full potential as followers of Christ. Through immersive, hands-on learning and exposure to cutting-edge health care technology, participants gain valuable insights into medical careers while deepening their faith and strengthening their commitment to compassionate service,” said Andres Flores, director of people and culture strategy at UChicago Medicine AdventHealth.

Through Texas Conference Pastor Salomon Espinosa’s powerful message on God working in each person’s life, the uplifting worship led by the Andrews University praise team, and the AdventHealth Career Experience, attendees were truly inspired and encouraged to pursue God’s calling for their lives. ■

Andrea Cardenas is the stakeholder communications specialist at AdventHealth.



UChicago Medicine

Advent Health

Andrews University Welcomes Chaplain Jonathan Fetrick



After a thoughtful search process, Andrews University welcomed new University Chaplain Jonathan Fetrick to the Center for Faith Engagement team. He began his new position in July 2025.

Fetrick served for the past eight years as pastor of the Wisconsin Academy Church, where he focused on mentoring young people into spiritual leaders. Prior to that, he served for 11 years in the Washington Conference, both as a pastor and youth pastor. There, he helped cultivate vibrant spiritual communities, prepared young adults for church leadership and saw youth engagement triple within a three-year span. His experience in leading large-scale mission trips reflects his heart for service and the global mission of the church.

An Andrews alumnus, Fetrick holds a Master of Divinity and is currently completing a Doctor of Ministry, focusing on discipleship strategies in collegiate settings. He also obtained a bachelor's degree in theology, with minors in biblical languages, preaching and history, from Southern Adventist University. His vision for chaplaincy is one of collaboration — coming alongside students, faculty and staff to equip them as faithful disciples who disciple others.

In his new role, Fetrick will be responsible for enriching the spiritual life, faith

development and pastoral care of the University community. Collaborating with a dedicated team of spiritual leaders, he will work to build a vibrant community of faith, foster whole-person growth and further the mission of Andrews University.

Fetrick and his wife Michelle, also an Andrews alum, are excited to return to the campus where their journey together began, along with their four children. Fetrick looks forward to leading the Center for Faith Engagement team, sharing, “I am passionate about connecting students with God’s mission, message and people.”

“Please join me in extending a warm welcome to Chaplain Jonathan Fetrick and his family as they join us here at Andrews University,” says University President John Wesley Taylor V. “We look forward to the energy, experience and spiritual passion he brings to this role, and we are confident he will be a powerful and compassionate presence among us.” ■

Office of University Communication, Andrews University



Darren Heslop

▲ Jonathan Fetrick will serve in the Center for Faith Engagement at Andrews University as University Chaplain

“I AM PASSIONATE ABOUT
CONNECTING STUDENTS WITH GOD’S
MISSION, MESSAGE AND PEOPLE.”



▲ Newly elected officers, right to left, Richard McEdward, Erton Köhler, Paul Douglas wave to the audience during the July 12 worship service, as outgoing president Ted Wilson and his wife Nancy look on.

New President and Executive Secretary of General Conference Voted; Treasurer Re-Elected

The top leaders of the General Conference Session were elected during the 62nd GC Session in St. Louis. On July 4, 2025, Erton C. Köhler was elected to the office of the president; on July 6, Richard E. McEdward was elected secretary and Paul Douglas was re-elected treasurer.

The nominations came to the floor after prayerful deliberation by the Nominating Committee, composed of delegates from each of the church's global divisions and attached fields. The committee's recommendation was then presented to the delegates in attendance, who voted to confirm their nomination during the business session at the Dome in America's Center.

Erton Köhler: Mobilizing the Church for the Unreached

While serving as GC secretary, a post he was elected to in 2021, Köhler has

championed a bold and prophetic call for the global church to refocus its mission. Under his leadership, the church launched the Mission Refocus initiative.

Through Mission Refocus, Köhler has led the Adventist Church in identifying and adopting 30 high-priority mission areas, including ten countries, ten major urban centers, and ten unreached people groups from the 10/40 Window, urban regions, and secular territories. In his vision, every church entity, regardless of size or location, is invited to participate in a global culture of collaboration, service and mission accountability.

With his new role as GC president, Köhler is expected to continue advancing this mission-driven framework, mobilizing members to become disciple-makers, aligning church operations with frontline ministry, and strengthening the church's prophetic voice in a rapidly changing world.

Born in southern Brazil, Köhler grew up with a desire to follow in the footsteps of his father, who served as an Adventist pastor. He completed a bachelor's degree in theology at the Adventist Teaching Institute (now Brazilian Adventist University) in 1989 and graduated from the same school in 2008 with a master's degree in pastoral theology. He is currently pursuing a Doctor of Ministry from Andrews University.

Rick McEdward: A Life of Cross-Cultural Mission and Leadership

Richard E. McEdward brings decades of mission experience, cross-cultural leadership, and theological expertise to his new role as secretary of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Prior to his election, McEdward served as president of the Middle East and North Africa Union Mission (MENAUM), where he led strategic outreach efforts in one of the most challenging regions in the world for gospel ministry.

McEdward's commitment to mission is deeply rooted in his upbringing and personal journey. Born in Seattle, Washington, he spent his formative years in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, where his family lived as expatriates. Those early experiences living among diverse communities helped cultivate in him a deep sense of empathy and purpose in sharing Christ's love across cultural and religious lines.

He holds a bachelor's degree from Walla Walla University, a Master of Divinity from Andrews University, and a doctorate in missiology from Fuller Theological Seminary. His professional ministry includes service as a pastor, church planting coordinator in Sri Lanka and the Southern Asia-Pacific Division,

and associate director of the Institute of World Mission at Andrews University.

McEdward later joined the General Conference, where he served as associate director of the Office of Adventist Mission and director of the Global Mission Centers for World Religions. In 2016, he was elected to lead MENAUM, based in Beirut, Lebanon, where he supported frontline workers and helped expand strategic mission presence in urban and unreached areas.

Paul Douglas: Stewardship in Service to the Mission

Paul Douglas brings a lifetime of denominational financial leadership to the role, including decades of service in the General Conference Auditing Service (GCAS), where he most recently served as executive director before being elected as GC treasurer in 2021.

Throughout his tenure, Douglas has championed integrity, simplicity and faithfulness in the church's approach to finance. He is known for his ability to communicate complex financial realities in spiritually grounded terms, helping leaders and members alike understand the sacred responsibility of resource management.

Douglas works closely with treasury teams across the globe, providing training, accountability frameworks, and strategic planning to ensure the church is financially prepared to carry out its end-time calling.

Born in Jamaica to Cuban parents, Douglas discovered his love for numbers and purpose for ministry at a young age. He earned an MBA from California State University–San Bernardino, a certificate from Cornell University's Strategic Leadership Program, and is completing his PhD in accounting from Bayes Business School in London. He is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and a Chartered Accountant in Jamaica. ■

Compiled from Adventist News Network reports. More information available at www.adventist.news

North American Division Administration Team Re-Elected

On Monday afternoon, July 7, 2025, delegates at the 62nd General Conference (GC) Session, in St. Louis, voted in favor of the nomination of G. Alexander Bryant as president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America.

Bryant, the division's current president, began his presidency in July 2020, when the GC executive committee elected him to replace the late Daniel R. Jackson, who retired on July 1, 2020. Bryant was elected by the General Conference in session in 2022.

Following his election, Bryant shared a few remarks. "I'm very humbled at the opportunity to serve the church here in the North American Division and [by] the confidence that the people, the nominating committee, my [NAD] caucus, and this entire body have placed in me," he said. "In the [NAD], our theme has been *Together in Mission*, and I believe the Lord wants us to double down on that," he continued. "We look forward to every entity in our North American Division territory ... working together to help finish the work so we can go home and see our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

Bryant has served as North American Division president and world church vice president since 2020. From 2008 to 2020, he served as executive secretary of the NAD and associate secretary of the General Conference, after being elected to those positions at the GC Annual Council in Manila, Philippines. Before his tenure at the NAD, he held several leadership positions in the Central States Conference. In 1990, the conference voted him in as temperance director, youth/Pathfinders/National Service Organization director, and superintendent of education. In 1997, he was elected president.



Ronald Pollard

▲ **Caption:** Left to right: Judy R. Glass, G. Alexander Bryant and Kyoshin Ahn, the three NAD officers, pose for a photo after division secretaries and treasurers were voted in on July 8, 2025.



During the morning business meeting on July 8, NAD executive secretary Kyoshin Ahn and treasurer Judy R. Glass were elected to serve another term when session delegates voted to approve the nominating committee recommendations for all 13 division secretaries and treasurers. Ahn and Glass are set to serve the 2025–2030 term.

Ahn has served as NAD secretary since his election in August 2020. He previously served as the NAD's undersecretary from 2016 to 2020 and associate secretary from 2013 to 2016. Over the past two decades, Ahn has assisted in planting churches for Korean congregations division-wide, trained local church clerks, led seminars and conducted evangelistic campaigns.

His pastoral ministry began in 1995 in the Potomac Conference, where he served until 2001. From June 2001 to October

2005, he served as president of the Korean Churches Association in North America. Before joining the NAD, from 2005 to 2013, Ahn held the role of executive secretary for the Illinois Conference.

Meanwhile, Treasurer Glass grew up in northwest Minnesota on her family's farm and graduated from Maplewood Academy in Hutchinson, Minnesota. She attended Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska, graduating with a bachelor's degree in business with emphases in accounting and management.

She started her church career early, completing an internship with GCAS in the Southwestern Union while in college. Her first job after graduation was a brief stint at the Minnesota Adventist Book Center. Glass subsequently spent 15 years in education working at Great Lakes Adventist Academy, College View Academy, and Spring Valley Academy.

Glass began working as the chief financial officer (CFO) for NAD Retirement Plans in 2006, the first to hold this position. While working for Retirement Plans, she completed her MBA. She subsequently worked as the CFO for AdventSource, where she served for 11 years before rejoining the NAD in 2019.

Glass, who was elected in June 2023 and became division treasurer on August 1, 2023, is the first female treasurer of the NAD.

The NAD is the church's largest division in territory, spanning nine countries and territories and 14 time zones. The NAD has more than 1.3 million members in almost 7,000 congregations, worshipping in more than 50 languages, across Bermuda, Canada, Guam, Micronesia and the United States. ■

Compiled from articles written by Christelle Agboka, North American Division communication department. More information available at nadadventist.org/news

On the Brink of Quitting, Pathfinder Leader Finds Renewed Calling After GC Session

Henry Lowery was on a Detroit basketball court in May when his phone rang. The Lake Region Conference Pathfinder Coordinator was on the line, asking if his Pathfinder drum corps could perform during the General Conference Session in St. Louis, on Sabbath, July 12.

Lowery didn't hesitate. "I got with the other leaders that same day to see if they could support it," he said. "They said 'yeah, that's something we could do.'"

But it was an opportunity he almost missed.

Just weeks earlier, he told his pastor and other leaders at the Burns Church that he planned to step down from leading the club. "I told the church this was going to be my

last year because it felt like a lot," said the 28-year-old. In addition, the club ministry seemed stagnant. Once boasting more than 20 Pathfinders, the club now had only six members. He had revived the Burns Falcons almost two years earlier, but he just didn't see the growth he wanted. "I thought maybe it was time for someone else."

FROM ANGER TO A MISSION

Lowery knows better than most how Pathfinders can transform a life. Growing up in Detroit without his father, he struggled with deep anger. "I used to get in fights all the time, probably weekly," and was even suspended from public school "for a couple months while they decided if they were going to expel me from the whole district."

Things began to shift when he enrolled at Peterson-Warren Academy and joined Pathfinders. "My Pathfinder director Rick Fuller and my teachers Arthur and Alice Strawbridge all poured into me," he said of the Adventist teachers at the K–12 school in Inkster, Michigan. "Their guidance let me let go of a lot of that anger. I always think, what if they hadn't been there? Where would I be now?"

STARTING A DRUM CORPS BY FAITH

So, when youth at Burns Seventh-day Adventist Church kept asking for a drum corps, Lowery couldn't turn them down. "They kept coming to me saying, 'Everybody's had a drum corps, we've never had one,'" he



Courtesy Henry Lowery

▲ Members of the Motor City Drum Corps along with Lake Region Executive Pathfinder Coordinator Ruphos Brown flank General Conference President Erton Köhler.

recalled. “I told them, ‘Even if we got drums, we don’t have a leader.’”

But they kept asking.

Lowery decided to take a leap of faith, learning to play the drums on his own. “I spent a summer [2023] watching practice videos, learned three cadences on all the different drums. I just wanted our kids to have all the experiences they could. I never want them to go without.”

THE RUSH TO GET READY

When the call came in May, it took some months for the trip’s funding to materialize. With financial help from the North American Division, Lake Union and Lake Region Conferences, they had about three intense weeks to get ready. Lowery’s club and another from Inkster, a community club of mainly non-Adventist youth, practiced four hours at a stretch, driving 40 minutes each way to merge. They loaded drums on buses, lined up chaperones and squeezed rehearsals around Vacation Bible School, board meetings and other church work. “Finding time was the hardest,” said Lowery who also serves his church as an elder. “We still had all our other obligations going on.”

By the time they pulled out of Inkster around 9 p.m. the Thursday before their Sabbath performance, everyone was exhausted. They rolled into St. Louis at dawn Friday, spent the day waiting in the exhibition hall and still didn’t know exactly how they’d perform. Organizers were still working out details of the program. “We didn’t even get a chance to do a real walk-through,” he explained.

A MOMENT THAT REIGNITED HIS PURPOSE

Lowery didn’t think the kids understood how big it was until the day of the performance, and they saw the crowd of several thousand in the cavernous dome at America’s Center. “Even backstage taking pictures with the world church president [Erton Köhler], it didn’t really hit,” he said. “But once they got out there, they understood.”

The weekend did more than thrill the kids. It gave Lowery a new purpose. At the Black Adventist Youth Directors Association (BAYDA) youth service at the Northside Church in St. Louis where motivational speaker Eric Thomas preached, every song and message seemed aimed right at him.

“It all hit my objections, telling me don’t give up,” he said. “It was like God saying, ‘not yet. This is why you’re still here.’”

Seeing his young drummers on that giant stage sealed it. “These kids never would’ve had this chance if I gave up,” said Lowery. “Who knows what other moments would be missed?”

So for now, the IT freelancer who keeps his schedule flexible so he can pour into Pathfinders isn’t going anywhere. “Sure, I’d like to make more money, start a family, all that,” he said. “But as I pray, I hear God saying not yet. This is where you need to be right now.” ■

Debbie Michel is editor of the Lake Union Herald.



Katie Fellows

▲ Henry Lowery, third from right, leads the Detroit Burns Falcons Pathfinder Club. On Sabbath, July 12, he joined the Motor City Drum Corps in performing opening and closing numbers for the “Parade of Nations” at the General Conference Session in St. Louis.



The Choir that Said ‘Yes’ to Singing at GC

When Abigail Koo saw the General Conference’s call for music applications, the theme “I Will Go” struck a chord. “It just fit right in with our mission,” the Emmanuel Missionary Choir director recalled. “Our mission was to train the young people to go forward with the gospel, with their songs.” They submitted a recording of “Here I Am, Lord,” a piece based on Isaiah 6:8.

After months of silence, an email arrived last fall: the group made up of children ages 5 to 19, mostly from the Living Word Fellowship Church in Berrien Springs, Michigan, was invited to sing at the session. The children would end up presenting four songs: one on Friday morning, a medley of two songs on Sabbath morning during the offering, and one during the Sabbath afternoon mission spotlight.

“It was our prayer that the World Church would see that this calling is for all of us, young and old,” Koo said. “And seeing the young children answer to it would be encouraging to everyone around the world.”

UNSHAKEN BY THE STAGE

Thirteen-year-old Elizabeth Cho was a ball of emotions the morning of their first appearance. “We were all nervous, but excited to perform in front of all those people,” she said of singing before the crowd of 40,000 in America’s Center. “A lot of people would hear and see and remember us.”

Still, she held on to Koo’s instructions. “Ms. Abigail was telling us we’re not performing for anyone out there but for God—to do our best and have fun for God.”

The bright lights and massive screens made that challenging. “It was hard to not to

look up at the big screens to see our faces and not giggle,” Elizabeth admitted.

Ten-year-old Evie Caro also remembered the intensity of the 6:30 a.m. call time but recognized the sacrifice of sleep was worth the effort. “I like having the thought we might be helping a lot of people who might be in the audience,” she said.

ROOTS AND REMEMBRANCE

Some choir members have been singing with Koo for years. Loissy Marley, a recent high school graduate who joined in her sophomore year, was one of the original members. In fact, she joined because her younger sister Ellsy was in the choir but came to appreciate how the experience shaped her in more ways than one. “Choir has taught me how to make friends and understand different people—especially from singing at elderly homes,” said Loissy. “There are different ways to share God’s word. We can do it through music.”

For Loissy, the experience was also bitter-sweet. Ellsy passed away in November 2023 at age 7, and Loissy was reminded how much her sister would have loved the General Conference experience. In the meantime, the lyrics she sings mean more than ever. “The songs give me hope about the Second Coming. I keep the lyrics in my heart and always remember them.”

LOOKING AHEAD

Meanwhile, Koo, a trained musician who worked in the mission field with displaced Myanmar and Cambodian refugees, says the GC session was not a peak. “This is really the beginning,” she said by telephone a few days after returning from St. Louis. “I want to take the children to rural places in the mission field, where there are marginalized people. We are extremely privileged in the United States. We can be the voices for the children that don’t have what we have.” ■

Debbie Michel is editor of the Lake Union Herald.



▲ Since 2022, the Emmanuel Missionary Choir has grown from 19 to 47 members, representing 16 nationalities including Korea, Indonesia, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Brazil, Romania, Peru, Russia, Israel, Pakistan, Venezuela, Mexico, Taiwan, Samoa and the United States.

The Weight of Every Note

KEN LOGAN AT THE ORGAN FOR GC SESSION

In the hush of early morning, long before most delegates file into the cavernous America's Center for the General Conference Session, Ken Logan is already seated at the organ. He begins most days at 7:15 a.m., offering a prelude that acts as a bridge to worship. It is a quiet ritual that soon swells into something far larger, a soundtrack for the more than two thousand delegates expected each day.

For Logan, this global meeting that runs July 3–12 is a dance of notes and intuition. His work shifts with the pulse of the session, from the flow of worship at 8:30 a.m. to transitions into prayer, then on to the long business meetings that run from 9:30 a.m. to noon and again from 2 to 5 p.m. At 1:15 and 6:15 p.m., he weaves in “bridges,” lifting spirits or steadying nerves.

Between these moments, Logan is rarely idle. Sequestered in a small backstage office, he practices on a silent keyboard, scans the day's agenda, and watches for subtle signals. “It's a challenge,” he says. “I don't know exactly when I'm coming on. I might be playing during a vote, especially if it's long enough to warrant music. Or I'll help fill the time if someone's drafting an amendment to be shown on the screens.”

Todd McFarland, the church's parliamentarian, is his chief point of contact, mostly through hand gestures, nods, and the simplest cues. “It's very low tech,” Logan laughs. “But I'm always watching. Being ready is part of the job.”

THE PRIVILEGE OF SUBTLE POWER

To watch Logan is to see someone keenly attuned to the unseen atmosphere of the room. This is his fifth time serving as principal organist at the General Conference Session, stretching back to his first appearance in 2005, also in St. Louis.

It is easy to think of church music as merely an adornment, but Logan, who has served as organist for Pioneer Memorial Church for the last 29 years, sees it as something closer

to moral craftsmanship. His song selections during voting, often fraught and occasionally tense, are never random.

During the contentious 2015 vote on women's ordination, Logan chose carefully. “I needed to emphasize unity. So, I played ‘How Firm a Foundation’ and ‘The Church Has One Foundation,’ hymns that reminded us who we are together, without taking a side.”

He knows how music can shade interpretation. “You can absolutely take a side musically,” he says. “If someone has just given a passionate speech, that might not be the moment to play something about forgiveness. It could come off as saying that person needs to be forgiven for speaking.”

Sometimes he aims to soothe. “When there is back and forth, tension, I try to create calm. Vigorous, even dissenting discussion is important. But there is also a moment to cast a sense of unity over the hall.”

Other times, he is deliberate about stirring hearts. “When do you play ‘Give Me the Bible’? It is very neutral but also a statement. It is saying something to the delegates.”

THE QUIET CALCULUS OF INFLUENCE

From his small backstage perch, Logan remains in a constant state of watchfulness, ready to respond to a subtle glance from McFarland or to the rising temperature of debate on the floor. In those moments, his choices, a gentle line of “He Leadeth Me” or a quiet echo of “My Father Is Rich in Houses and Lands” when treasury was featured, ripple out in ways most delegates may not even consciously register.



James Bokovoy



James Bokovoy

▲ To watch Ken Logan is to see someone keenly attuned to the unseen atmosphere of the room. This is his fifth time serving as principal organist at the General Conference Session.

“There is a lot of intentionality,” he says. “I'm not just up there playing; I'm asking what we need musically, now, in context.”

It is a kind of stewardship, as weighty in its own way as any spoken vote or parliamentary rule. “It's a privilege to be part of it,” he says. Then, in a coordinated fashion, he slips back into his organ shoes, ready once more to watch, wait and shape the soul of a global church with nothing more than music in service to God. ■

Debbie Michel is editor of the Lake Union Herald.



▲ Dave Sherwin takes the General Conference President Erton Kohler's headshot for the *Adventist Review*, while editor Justin Kim and Dave's wife Jane look on.

Snapshot of the Man Behind the Official Portraits

The freshly elected leader stepped into the makeshift photo studio with tears still running down her face, smudging her makeup.

Moments earlier she had been voted into a key leadership position at the General Conference Session, a moment that changed her life in an instant. Dave Sherwin greeted her with the calm patience that comes from decades of understanding how tender these first moments can be.

As lead photographer for the *Adventist Review*, Sherwin is responsible for capturing all the official portraits of newly elected leaders, often just minutes after their lives have been upended by a vote. It is a role that demands both technical skill and a gentle respect for the weight of the moment.

This year's gathering in St. Louis marks the eighth time Sherwin has covered the global session, a journey that began in 1985 when he was fresh out of college and working entirely with black and white film.

DARKROOMS TO DIGITAL

Back then, he and a colleague took turns rushing from the floor to the darkroom, often working all night to process rolls of negatives. Partway through the session, editors decided to publish their first color cover. Sherwin had to catch a taxi to go an hour away to a one-hour photo lab, wait for prints, then hurry them back so the *Review's* bulletin could be shipped to Maryland for printing.

"That first color cover came out really nice," he said. "It was simpler times in some ways but also a lot crazier."

Today, Sherwin's work is fully digital, with images reviewed on the spot and delivered to editors in minutes. Preparing for this session started long before he arrived in St. Louis. From his home base in Berrien Springs, Michigan, he planned what he would

take: monitors, lighting gear, backdrops and nearly a van full of equipment. He packed five computers to guard against failures — a precaution that proved necessary when one machine crashed early in the session.

NEVER A ROUTINE DAY

Most days start around 7 a.m. with worship alongside the *Adventist Review* team. Afterward, photographers huddle with editors to plan assignments. Sherwin's studio becomes a revolving door for leaders, spouses and families. His wife Jane is often at his side to help keep track of studio appointments. In 2022, he took nearly 150 headshots and expects a similar pace this year, though he will finish up missing portraits at the end-of-year meetings at the General Conference's Maryland headquarters.

The job is rarely predictable. During a recent lunch, a message came in urgently requesting a photographer. One of Sherwin's team members jumped up, left his plate on the table and ran off with his camera to catch the moment before returning to finish his meal.

"That happens all the time," Sherwin said matter-of-factly. "We try to plan, but a lot of it is just being ready to grab your gear and go."

Beyond portraits, he finds time to roam the floor and capture candid scenes from business meetings to cultural processions.

"I love the photojournalism side of this," he remarked. "Getting out there and seeing people, catching real expressions, that's the best part. The long business sessions are tough. We can get pretty bored waiting for something to happen. But when there's a key vote or [on Sabbath] when delegates parade through in their dress clothes, it gets exciting fast."

PERSONAL ROOTS AND GLOBAL FAMILY

Sherwin grew up in Pakistan where his father served as a missionary. For him, these sessions are also a kind of reunion. As he hurries through crowded hallways loaded with cameras and lenses, he is often stopped by someone calling his name.

"It's like a giant family gathering," he said fondly. "I'm too busy to have long talks, but it's special to see people from all over the world."

Perhaps the most rewarding thing is mentoring younger photographers. Two of his former students from Andrews University, where he taught for decades until his retirement in May, are now working professionals, and part of his team this year.

"I know what they can do. I trust them," he said as he proudly glanced over at them processing their photos. "It feels good to see them out here doing what they love too."

Sherwin laughed when summing up the daily swings of the job. "You go from tearing your hair out to being bored out of your mind. But I wouldn't trade it. I still love taking pictures." ■

Debbie Michel is editor of the Lake Union Herald.



▲ Dave photographing GC Treasurer Paul Douglas

"YOU GO FROM
TEARING YOUR HAIR
OUT TO BEING BORED
OUT OF YOUR MIND.
BUT I WOULDN'T
TRADE IT. I STILL LOVE
TAKING PICTURES."

Lake Union Welcomes New Executive Secretary

On May 28, 2025, the Lake Union Conference Executive Committee voted to elect Ted Huskins as executive secretary of the Lake Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, effective July 1, 2025.

Huskins, an ordained minister of the Seventh-day Adventist Church from Asheville, North Carolina, brings 29 years of denominational ministry experience to this role. He currently serves as executive secretary of the Atlantic Union Conference, a position he has held since 2022.

His prior leadership includes serving as both president and executive secretary of the Northern New England Conference. Earlier in his ministry, he spent 18 years in pastoral service within the Carolina Conference.

"I first met Elder Huskins during his time as executive secretary of the Northern New England Conference and later had the opportunity to serve alongside him on several North American Division committees during his tenure as conference president and, most recently, as executive secretary of the Atlantic Union," said Lake Union President Elden Ramirez. "His thoughtful leadership, pastoral heart, and commitment to mission have been evident throughout every role he has held. I'm grateful the Lord has led him to serve the Lake Union in this important capacity."

Reflecting on this new chapter, Huskins shared, "God's providence and leading never cease to amaze. We are humbled and excited to join the efforts of the Lake Union as we embrace Christ's call to proclaim the everlasting Gospel in each of our four states and five conferences. We can feel your prayers and please know that each of you remain in ours."

Huskins is married to Cynthia Carland Huskins. Together, they are blessed with five adult children and two grandchildren.

We warmly welcome Elder Huskins and his family to the Lake Union and look forward to the spiritual leadership, administrative insight and Christ-centered mission he will bring to our territory.

Debbie Michel is editor of the Lake Union Herald.



Courtesy Ted Huskins

MILEPOSTS

OBITUARIES

HOLM, Lori A. (Herferth), age 62; born March 26, 1963, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin; died April 9, 2025, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She was a member of the Southside Seventh-day Adventist Church in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She is survived by her sisters, Donna Smith Hurd, Cindi (Ken) Wright, Lisa (Dave) Burrows; and other relatives, Jared (Jodi) Wright, Lauren Gregory, Cedric Wright, Melanie Burrows, Sage Gregory, Carter Wright, Cedar Gregory, Nessa Wright and her favorite pups Oliver and Baer. A private inurnment was conducted by Pastor Carlos Ancheta on April 15, 2025, at the Wisconsin Memorial Park in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. A card of sympathy or a gift in memoriam can be sent to: Lisa Burrows, 3822 E Plankinton Ave, Cudahy WI 53110

KNISS, Christopher "Chris" T., age 56; born June 22, 1968, in Paw Paw, Michigan; died May 7, 2025, in Paw Paw, Michigan. He was a member of the Paw Paw Seventh-day Adventist Church in Paw Paw, Michigan. He is survived by his daughters, Abby Kniss, Ashlee Kniss; and brothers, Jason Kniss, Michael Kindig. A memorial inurnment was conducted by Pastor Sean Reed on May 16, 2025, at the Paw Paw Seventh-day Adventist Church. The inurnment was at Oak Grove Cemetery in Lawton, Michigan.

KUBO, Sakae, age 98; born May 8, 1926, in Honolulu, Hawaii; died April 16, 2025, in Bakersfield, California. He was a member of the Chico Seventh-day Adventist Church in Chico, California. He is survived by his wife, Hatsumi (Sakai) Kubo; sons, Wesley (Tracy Elder) Kubo, Calvin (Sally Wall) Kubo; daughter, Charlene Kubo (Bruce) Bainum; ten grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren. A private memorial inurnment was held in Berrien Springs, Michigan. A card of sympathy or a gift in memoriam can be sent to: Hatsumi Kubo, 8419 Northshore Dr, Bakersfield CA 93312

PARSHALL, Dennis L., age 94; born March 17, 1930, in Tomahawk, Wisconsin; died March 16, 2025, in Irma, Wisconsin. He was a member of the Tomahawk Seventh-day

Adventist Church in Tomahawk, Wisconsin. He is survived by his wife, Darlene (West) Parshall; sons, Don, Tom, Kevin (Robin), Jeff (Amanda), Jon; daughter, Sheri (Kevin) McCutcheon;

14 grandchildren; and 14 great-grandchildren. A funeral interment was conducted by Pastor Eric Anderson on March 28, 2025, at the Merrill Memorial Cemetery in Merrill, Wisconsin.

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.

CALENDAR OF OFFERINGS

APRIL

- 6 Local Church Budget
- 13 World Budget (Emphasis: Radio Ministries) (GC)
- 20 Local Church Budget
- 27 Local Conference Advance
- 27 Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division (SID)

Sabbath Sunset Calendar

	Sept. 5	Sept. 12	Sept. 19	Sept. 26
Berrien Springs, Michigan	8:11	7:59	7:47	7:34
Chicago	7:16	7:04	6:52	6:40
Detroit	7:58	7:46	7:34	7:21
Indianapolis	8:08	7:57	7:46	7:34
La Crosse, Wisconsin	7:32	7:20	7:07	6:54
Lansing, Michigan	8:05	7:52	7:40	7:27
Madison, Wisconsin	7:24	7:12	6:59	6:47
Springfield, Illinois	7:22	7:11	6:59	6:48

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Move with an award-winning agency—Apex Moving

+ Storage partners with the General Conference to provide quality moves for you. Call us for all your relocation needs. Contact Marcy Danté at 800-766-1902 or visit our website: apexmoving.com/adventist.

Research shows excessive

TV watching causes kids to have trouble paying attention and thinking clearly. But when they listen, their imagination is actively engaged. So, fuel their imagination! Kids grow better with radio. Encourage them to listen at: LifeTalkKids.net

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.

Adventist Mental Health

Counselor: Jarod Thomas.

Find hope and healing through compassionate, confidential, Christ-centered therapy. I help adolescents and adults in Michigan & Illinois overcome challenges and reach their goals via telehealth. Specializing in clergy care. Accepting Aetna & Blue Cross/Blue Shield. Call (331) 296-0879 or email jarod@finishwellgroup.com.

Ministry Opportunity!

Small health food store and plant-based café looking for new owner/manager. Products include bulk flours/grains/nuts/seeds/legumes and supplements/essential oils. Space for health education classes. Located in Southwest Virginia. Near Adventist church. For more information, contact Sally: info@startanew.me.

3 bdrm/2 bath house for rent.

7 miles from AU. All appliances and clothes washer/dryer provided. No garage. No pets, no smoking permitted. Max 4 occupants. \$1,500/mo plus security deposit. Tenant pays for electric, internet and garbage service. Email hilderbrandt@andrews.edu for information.

EMPLOYMENT

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 history professor to teach various courses in global non-western history, cultural history, political science and/or ancient/classical history in the Politics, History, and International Relations program. PhD in history preferred; master's degree required. This is a full-time, exempt position. Please see the job description and apply at uau.edu/employment.

Union Adventist University is seeking applicants for director of records/registrar. This is a full-time, exempt position. The registrar ensures the integrity, accuracy and security of all academic and educational records and helps to ensure compliance with federal, state, and other regulatory agencies. Excellent benefit package including tuition assistance. See job description and apply at uau.edu/employment.

Union Adventist University is seeking applicants for EMS

coordinator in the International Rescue and Relief (IRR) Program. This is a full-time exempt position with excellent benefits. The EMS coordinator is responsible for developing and managing the EMS component of the program and includes both teaching responsibilities and program administration. EMS Instructor Certification is required. Please see the job description and apply at uau.edu/employment.

Union Adventist University

seeks applicants for Doctor of Physical Therapy Program director to provide leadership to the program and oversee all aspects of the DPT Program including responsibility for communication, program assessment and planning, fiscal management, faculty evaluation/professional development, curriculum development, accreditation, and other duties. This is a full-time exempt position with excellent benefits including tuition assistance. See the full job description and apply at uau.edu/employment.

Union Adventist University

seeks applicants for SALT (Soul-winning And Leadership Training) Program director to provide administrative oversight and ensure the strategic development of the program in harmony with It is Written. This position also includes faculty

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teaching responsibilities. A master's degree in religion/ministry/theology is required. This is a full-time exempt position with excellent benefits including tuition assistance. See the full job description and apply at uau.edu/employment.

Union Adventist University seeks applicants for SALT (Soul-winning And Leadership Training) Program outreach coordinator/registrar to be responsible for planning the program's outreach, assisting the director with programming, training, interviewing and advising students and other duties. This is a full-time exempt position with excellent benefits including tuition assistance. Please see the full job description and apply 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.

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 asapministries.org/employment or email HR@asapministries.org.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Andrews Academy invites alumni to a reunion from October 17–18, 2025 (third weekend in October). Honor classes this year end in 0 & 5. The honor classes in 2026 will end in 1 & 6, and in 2027, they will end in 2 & 7. Honor Classes: 1945, 1950, 1955, 1960, 1965, 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005, 2010, 2015, 2020. The class of 1975 will celebrate their golden (50th) reunion. The class of 2000 will celebrate their silver (25th) reunion.

September

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY

GENERAL EVENTS

Sept. 18–21: *SciFEST* **Sept. 25–28:** *Alumni Homecoming Weekend*

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.

Sept. 7, 7 p.m.: *Howard Center Presents: Phil Keaggy*

Sept. 27, 8 p.m.: *Alumni Gala Concert*

Sept. 28, 7 p.m.: *Howard Center Presents: Cerus Quartet*

ILLINOIS

Sept. 6–20: *Pentecost 2025*

Sept. 19–21: *Pathfinder Fall Skills Camporee, Camp Akita*

Sept. 27: *Chicagoland Convocation, location TBA*

INDIANA

Sept. 5–7: *Adventurer Family Weekend, Timber Ridge Camp*

Sept. 14: *Education Fair, Indiana Academy*

Sept. 12–14: *Pathfinder Camporee, Timber Ridge Camp*

Sept. 19–21: *Public Campus Ministry's Retreat*

Sept. 19–21: *Brown County Blowout, Timber Ridge Camp*

Sept. 26–28: *Pathfinder Backpack Trip, Shades State Park*

LAKE REGION

Sept. 6: *Men's Day, Conference-wide*

Sept. 7–13: *Semana de Oración por la Unidad Familiar*

Sept. 7: *Comida Internacional*

Sept. 12–13: *80th Anniversary Celebration, Camp Wagner*

Sept. 13: *Día Oración por la Unidad Familia*

MICHIGAN

Sept. 5–7: *Adventurer Family Camp, Camp Au Sable Northwoods*

Sept. 5–7: *Upper Peninsula Camp Meeting, Camp Sagola*

Sept. 12–14: *Pathfinder Camporee, Camp Au Sable Northwoods*

Sept. 12–14: *Public Campus Ministries Fall Retreat, Camp Au Sable*

Sept. 19–21: *Men of Faith Campout, Camp Au Sable Northwoods*

Sept. 19–21: *Mother/Daughter Retreat, Camp Au Sable*

Sept. 26–28: *Family First, Camp Au Sable*

Sept. 26–28: *TLT Squared, Camp Au Sable Northwoods*

Sept. 26–28: *Upper Peninsula Women's Retreat, Camp Sagola*

WISCONSIN

Sept. 5–7: *Adventurers Family Camporee, Camp Wakonda*

Sept. 5–7: *JAHWI Youth Retreat, Camp Wakonda*

Sept. 12–14: *Pathfinder Camporee, Camp Wakonda*

Sept. 13: *Centinela Day, local churches*

Sept. 19–21: *Hispanic Marriage Retreat, Great Lake Conference Center*

Sept. 26–28: *Public Campus Ministries Retreat, Camp Wakonda*

Events listed were scheduled to proceed at press time.

Please call ahead or check event websites before making plans to attend.

LAKE REGION CONFERENCE

80th ANNIVERSARY

A Camp Meeting-like Experience
SEPTEMBER 12-13, 2025
CELEBRATION SCHEDULE

PASTOR CLAUDIA ALLEN
SPEAKER

DR. HENRY WRIGHT
SPEAKER

DR. WILLIAM COX
GUEST PRESENTER

PASTOR DANA EDMOND
GUEST PRESENTER

Keep Praying. We're Almost Home.

“Let my prayer come before thee: incline thine ear unto my cry.”
Psalm 88:2 (KJV)

One day, while meditating on God’s goodness and how nothing is too hard for Him, I began to think about this prayer that I believe the Holy Spirit sent me:

Dearest Lord,

My heart is heavy as I see and hear the turmoil around our world. I lift up to thee:

- Your sons and daughters here in the United States that may be facing deportation. People whose lives may be uprooted or displaced, and who may be in danger if returning home;
- I pray for those many, many individuals who have been fired, or been told to resign — all losing their jobs/careers because their government agency has been ripped apart in the name of budget cuts;
- The increase in cost of goods and services due to the initiation of tariffs upon nations that are allies;
- The increase in crimes against your innocent children at their schools, and/or individuals just out in malls, restaurants, sporting events and a variety of other public places. People who have been hurt or lives cut short due to violence;
- An increase in the lack of caring and compassion in the hearts and minds of many of your children toward each other. And on and on it goes.

So many other hateful, unjust and hurtful situations may now exist that affect the lives of all of us either directly or indirectly. Lord, when will it end? When will a greater spirit of love and unity manifest itself among your people? I pray that our churches, while we still can, become hospitals for the soul. A place where *all* are welcomed and nourished by

your word in worship and reverence to you, our God and Saviour. These things I pray. Amen.

Amidst all of this, we have this hope: “No power can hide from us the light of the glory which shines from the threshold of heaven along the whole length of the ladder we are to climb; for the Lord has given us strength in his strength, courage in His courage, light in His light. When the powers of darkness are overcome, when the light of the glory of God floods the world, we shall see and understand more clearly than we do today. If we only realized that the glory of God is round about us, that heaven is nearer earth than we suppose, we should have a heaven in our homes while preparing for the heaven above.”—4SDA Commentary 7:961

May we always remember that the joy of the Lord is our strength. The goal is still the same, heaven. My brothers and sisters, please keep praying for each other and our world, because we truly are almost home. ■

Paulette Taylor is prayer coordinator for the Indiana Conference.



▲ PAULETTE TAYLOR



The Law and Church School Teachers



▲ JENNIFER GRAY WOODS

Is it legal for a church school to require its teachers to be church members?

Yes. Generally, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits an employer from discriminating against an employee based on religion in hiring, firing, or other employment actions.

However, there is a special exemption to this law for religious organizations. Under sections 702 and 703 of Title VII, “a religious corporation, association, educational institution, or society,” is permitted to hire individuals of that particular religion in order to carry out the work of the religious organization. This exemption allows religious organizations to hire employees who share the same religious beliefs without facing challenges under Title VII of religious discrimination.

In the beginning, the religious organization exception started off narrowly defining which positions the exception applied to; however, over the years it has been broadened to cover every job position available at a religious organization.

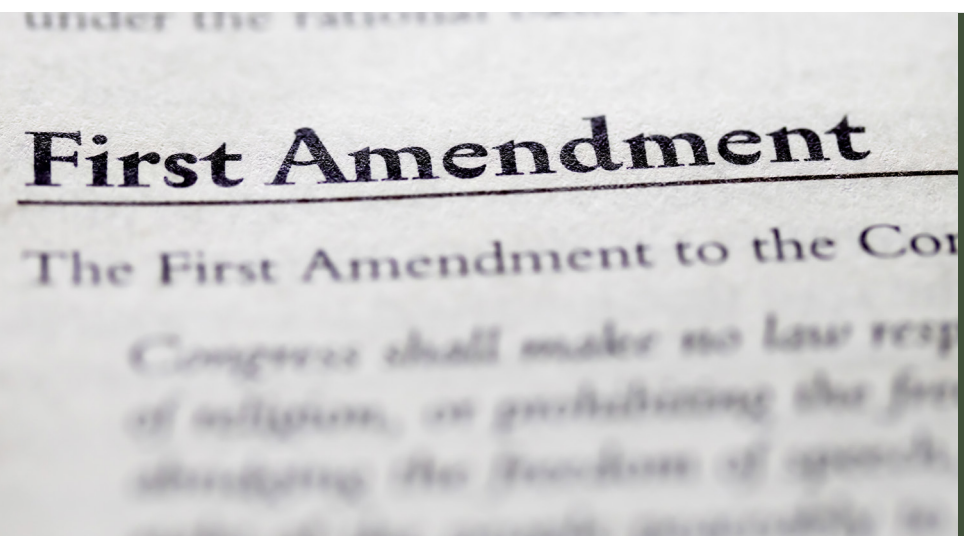
This exemption is based on the first amendment of the United States Constitution which states that

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” Based on the free exercise clause, churches and other religious organizations should be able to operate without the government interfering in how they operate. And the hiring of employees is a key part of how religious organizations operate and fulfill their religious mission. This concept of religious organizations operating free of government interference is often referred to as the ecclesiastical abstention doctrine or church autonomy doctrine.

It’s clear to see that religious organizations may have a reason for requiring employees to adhere to certain religious practices and values. This is particularly true in our schools, where religion and biblical values are infused into the teaching curriculum. Without the protections found in Title VII’s exception, a church school could be required to hire someone who didn’t share the doctrinal beliefs of the church. As a somewhat extreme example, a school might be required to hire someone who identifies as an atheist to teach as an instructor of religion. If a school or other religious organization was forced to hire employees who don’t share or adhere to the religious doctrinal views of the organization, this could have a detrimental effect on furthering the religious mission.

In recent years various courts have reexamined and sometimes limited the application of the church autonomy doctrine and coreligionist hiring, most recently in a court case out of Maryland. It is foreseeable that this issue will continue making its way through the courts as religious organizations continue to enforce their first amendment rights. ■

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



Consider This Before Your First Paycheck

Have you heard about the poor rich doctor? This doctor graduated from medical school, completed residency, and now has a high-paying job practicing medicine. You would think they'd be set, right? But here's the twist: they're living paycheck to paycheck.



▲ RICHARD MOORE

Wait — what? A doctor making hundreds of thousands of dollars a year can't save money? Yes, really. And they're not alone. Plenty of people with high incomes — degrees or not — are struggling to get ahead. So, what is going on?

People go through academic training, learning a skill they hopefully will enjoy for the rest of their lives. They learn the smallest details and how to address the issues they are confronted with regarding their expertise. They may spend hundreds of thousands of dollars receiving this education, but along the way they are not taught how to manage their funds once they graduate and start working. They buy the biggest of houses, the most expensive cars, nicest clothes, finest furniture, eat at the ritziest restaurants, send children to the best childcare providers and schools, attend the greatest entertainment events, and go on extravagant vacations, and then realize the monthly payments for all these things are more than they can handle, not to mention giving a faithful tithe and offering. Hence, living paycheck to paycheck.

It is my privilege to teach a class at Andrews University called Personal and Family Finance. It is a required course for those taking the MDiv concentration in Marriage & Family Life Ministry. Things taught in this class include how to prepare a personal budget, family budgeting, setting goals, understanding mutual funds (this is where most people's retirement funding will come from), and understanding family dynamics regarding money management. I wish this class or something similar

was a required class for high school and college students everywhere.

If people were taught how to manage their money while learning about their careers, there would be a lot less financial stress in families. Tithes and offerings more than likely would be substantially increased. In a similar note, people spend tens of thousands of dollars on weddings that only last one to a few hours long and spend little or nothing on how to be married, which may lead to miserable marriages and even divorce.

Are you in a similar situation to the poor rich doctor? Let's learn how to manage our funds and marriages. Reach out to a financial counselor and take a class on money management. Reach out to a marriage counselor and learn how to be a husband, wife, and parent. With God's help we can have happy financial situations and happy marriages. ■

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



My Scooter and I

Being at Andrews University has taught me many things. Of course, I learned how bad I am at math, how to know which professors are the most helpful, and how many minutes to leave before the rush at the end of an event. But living with a disability has taught me much more: how to be resilient, how to be a voice for myself and others, and how to make sure I am heard.

My disability, muscular dystrophy, affects my mobility though I can walk some distances. I always knew I would be able to go to college but would need a mobility aid wherever I attended. I was a little nervous and embarrassed when I first got my mobility scooter. Sure, I had been a disabled individual all my life, but having a mobility scooter in college felt like I had a big sign saying, "I'm disabled." I was worried people wouldn't be willing to get to know me because of this giant elephant (or scooter) in the room. It would be another barrier that I would need to face. Little did I know that my mobility scooter would become my superpower.

Due to my scooter's sleek look, many folks on campus began to know me as "the girl on the scooter." It became my identifier: the redhead with the red scooter. And the funny thing is, I am proud of that. I go much faster than anyone else walking

on the sidewalk. I can zip and zoom in and out of buildings. I get to my classes in record time and can race anyone to a bustling event or food pop-up. I had always been comfortable with having a disability, but having this scooter has given me a new sense of acceptance and advocacy. It gave me the confidence I needed to succeed. My challenges do not have to limit what I can accomplish. In fact, they've helped me solve problems.

I've been able to educate people on other types of disabilities, as well as my own. My existence on this campus provided the opportunity for dialogue on how to better include people with mobility challenges. When you aren't personally encountering a barrier, you don't think about it. But I've challenged myself and others to think about things that don't personally affect us. Others may not think about how I access a building that wasn't designed for people with disabilities, but I have to think about it every day. My projects have included advocating for accessibility maps to be available online and creating an accessibility guide for the Andreason Center for Wellness.

Throughout my time here, I have trusted that God will help me find a way to be accommodated. I have also trusted that He will help others in our faith community see the importance of accommodations for all people. If we are taught to love and help others, that also means individuals with disabilities. When faced with challenges, whether accessibility or other barriers, it is an opportunity for us to work together to ensure the difficulty is overcome.

My little scooter has made its mark on campus and has allowed me to do the same. One of the most important things I've learned is that it is okay to ask for help. Whether opening doors or helping with advocacy and education, God has shown me the power that can come in asking for assistance. I do not have to roll through this life alone. ■

Alexandria "Lexie" Dunham graduated from Andrews University this spring with a psychology degree. She hopes to pursue graduate studies in clinical mental health counseling.



Tools to Transform, Tools to Empower

Natasha Richards didn't set out to become a coach for young adult women. In fact, when she first felt the call to attend the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University, the former nurse was juggling a full-time job at Walmart with her work as a conference campus ministry liaison. The idea of uprooting her life felt outrageous. But the call persisted — and she answered. “It was not by choice ... but there was a point where I just surrendered.”

That step of faith was just the beginning.

While pursuing her Master of Divinity, Natasha began connecting with young women seeking guidance. It wasn't intentional — it just kept happening. Reflecting on her own struggles as a young adult, she understood why. “Everybody saw my potential,” she says, “but I couldn't see me at all.” Depression, poor decisions and a lack of practical tools left her searching. Church, counseling and coaching helped, but something was missing: a bridge between spiritual truth and emotional healing.

That knowledge inspired MpoweredMe, a coaching platform born from her earlier event planning business. Through one-on-one sessions, an app, self-guided video courses and affirmation cards, Natasha equips women with emotional intelligence tools grounded in biblical principles. For example, “We often hear, ‘You need to forgive,’ but no one talks about how to get there,” she explains. “I want to give people practical tools on how to apply the Bible to life every day.”

The work is personal. As a mother of two, Natasha sees each client as someone's daughter — someone who deserves to be seen and heard. “If they ask for help, will somebody be there for them?” She sees MpoweredMe as a resource for these young women as well as for parents wanting to learn how to connect with their children.

Even with a vision, entrepreneurship isn't easy. From designing business cards to hosting her annual Esther retreat, Natasha has learned that success is a process that demands patience, persistence and faith. “Overnight success doesn't happen overnight,” she says. But as you take small steps forward, “your gifts will make room for you.”

Natasha feels called to pour into women who feel stuck, lost or unsure of who they are. Through MpoweredMe, she helps clients “heal from [traumatic] experiences and become conquerors,” moving from pain to purpose. “The highlights for me are the intimate moments ... where somebody's life is improved, empowered, because God allowed me to have a conversation with them.” Her journey is a testament to what happens when you step out in faith — not just to find yourself, but to serve others along the way. ■

Kaara Harris is an assistant professor of journalism and communication at Andrews University.





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