

T Southern IDINGS

OCTOBER 2023

COMING TOGETHER: 700 Women Gather for Women's Convention



AN UNBROKEN
THREAD: 50
YEARS UNITED IN
MISSION

THE LIFE
JOURNEY OF
MELVIN AND
PHYLLIS BRASS

SUMMER CAMP
POINTS CAMPERS
TO JESUS

DEVASTATING
TORNADO RIPS
THROUGH SELMA,
ALABAMA

A Kingdom of Small Things



Steve Haley, D.Min.
*President of the
Kentucky-Tennessee
Conference*

Guest Editorial

It's the most popular exhibit in the world's most visited museum. Among the great treasures of antiquity housed at the British Museum, it could be argued that none is more valuable than the Rosetta Stone. Carved in the second century B.C., the three-language script on the stone celebrates the coronation of a new Egyptian monarch — and until the stone's discovery, an understanding of hieroglyphics was almost non-existent. The story of the Rosetta's discovery is an interesting lesson in how unnoticed things can have great value. It seems that at the time the stone was identified in 1799, it was being used as part of the pavement in a French fort, unnoticed for centuries until an observant soldier realized its potential value. Yes, sometimes little things can prove to be very important. I believe this axiom is true in serving the Lord.

In many of Jesus' parables, He speaks of the Kingdom of God in the context of small unnoticed objects. In Matthew 13, he offers a series of parables that liken the Kingdom to a pearl hidden in a field, to a little leaven that is necessary in baking bread, or, to a mustard seed that, over time, becomes a great tree. Jesus' point is simple: the Kingdom that God is building over time is composed of what may seem to be, at first, small unnoticed things. Yet, these small things can make a great difference. More than teaching these principles, Jesus lived them!

Christ's ministry reflected his interest and investment in the common, often unnoticed events that defined the lives of those he served: welcoming the playful attention of a circle of children ... a late-night conversation with Nicodemus ... writing with his finger in the dust of the ground as a terrified woman stands beside him ... an invitation to the diminutive tax collector Zacchaeus to come down from the sycamore tree and have lunch with him ... with gratitude receiving a little boy's lunch of loaves and fish ... washing 12 pairs of dirty feet in the upper room at Passover. While Jesus did perform many amazing public miracles, it seems that much of His ministry was contributed in simple settings, performing deeds that may not seem, initially, all that important. There is a lesson for us in Jesus' example.

After more than four decades of following Jesus, I am convinced I may never accomplish any headline grabbing successes. I don't anticipate a building being named after me. I don't think my portrait will ever hang in the gallery of a museum or the lobby of a cathedral. Yet, I'm also at peace with that reality that what Jesus intends for most of us, is to contribute small deeds of kindness, love, and selfless interest on behalf of others. A handwritten card of appreciation, a phone call of encouragement, showing up when someone needs you, prayers of support: Small deeds, done consistently and well, in love for others, is how God uses us, to build His Kingdom! ①

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

ADVENTHEALTH
Elizabeth Camps
ADVENTHEALTH UNIVERSITY
Jennifer Audette
CAROLINA
Rebecca Carpenter
FLORIDA
Gladys Neigel
GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND
Nathan Zinner
GULF STATES
Daniel Claudet
KENTUCKY-TENNESSEE
Paola Mora Zepeda
OAKWOOD UNIVERSITY
Norman Jones
SOUTH ATLANTIC
James Lamb, Ph.D.
SOUTH CENTRAL
Roger R. Wade
SOUTHEASTERN
Benia Jennings
SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY
Janell Hullquist

CONFERENCE/ INSTITUTION DIRECTORY

CAROLINA 704-596-3200
P.O. Box 44270, Charlotte, NC 28215
FLORIDA 407-644-5000
351 S. State Road 434, Altamonte Springs, FL 32714-3824
GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND 706-629-7951
P.O. Box 12000, Calhoun, GA 30703-7001
GULF STATES 334-272-7493
P.O. Box 240249, Montgomery, AL 36117
KENTUCKY-TENNESSEE 615-859-1391
P.O. Box 1088, Goodlettsville, TN 37070-1088
SOUTH ATLANTIC 404-792-0535
P.O. Box 1688, Decatur, GA 30031-1688
SOUTH CENTRAL 615-226-6500
P.O. Box 24936, Nashville, TN 37202
SOUTHEASTERN 352-735-3142
P.O. Box 1016, Mt. Dora, FL 32756-0056
ADVENTHEALTH 407-357-2083
900 Hope Way, Altamonte Springs, FL 32714
ADVENTHEALTH UNIVERSITY 800-500-7747
671 Winyah Drive, Orlando, FL 32803
OAKWOOD UNIVERSITY 256-726-7000
7000 Adventist Blvd., Huntsville, AL 35896
SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY
800-SOUTHERN
P.O. Box 370, Collegedale, TN 37315-0370

SOUTHERN TIDINGS | Volume 117
Number 10 | October 2023
Published monthly by the Southern Union.
Free to all members.
POSTMASTER: Send changes of address to
Southern Tidings
P.O. Box 923868
Peachtree Corners, Georgia 30010-3868
EMAIL: ycordova@southernunion.com

features

4
COMING TOGETHER: 700 WOMEN
GATHER FOR WOMEN'S CONVENTION

8
UNIONS' JOINT TENT EVANGELISM
ENDEAVOR LEADS TO 253 BAPTISMS

10
AN UNBROKEN THREAD: 50 YEARS
UNITED IN MISSION

12
SUMMER CAMP POINTS CAMPERS
TO JESUS

14
TEACHING STUDENTS TO THINK
OUTSIDE THE BOX

16
THE LIFE JOURNEY OF MELVIN AND
PHYLLIS BRASS

18
DEVASTATING TORNADO RIPS
THROUGH SELMA, ALABAMA

20
ROY PAULEY, GOSPEL MUSIC ARTIST,
PASSES AT 74

news

21 ADVENTHEALTH
22 CAROLINA
24 FLORIDA
26 GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND
28 KENTUCKY-TENNESSEE
31 SOUTH ATLANTIC
32 SOUTH CENTRAL
37 SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

38 OBITUARIES
42 CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING
44 SUNSET SCHEDULE
46 EVENTS CALENDAR

october 2023



COMING TOGETHER: 700 Women Gather for Women's Convention

BY CHRISTINA NORRIS

The women were crying, praising God, and embracing one another as the four-day Southern Union Women's Convention came to a close. They had written notes during sessions, recorded powerful musicians singing uplifting songs, and engaged in deep discussions. As they left the air-conditioned hotel conference room and stepped outside into the warm Orlando, Florida, air, there was one thing left to do: spread the news and sparkle for Jesus.

A few days earlier women from all over and beyond the Southern Union traveled to the hotel. Women flew, drove,

carpooled, and rode in buses to attend. Some traveled alone, some came with friends, others came as a church. These women all came together on August 24, 2023, for one purpose — to connect with others and be blessed.

The opening night women were invited to join a praise team led by accomplished musician Gale Jones Murphy in lifting their voices in song. The praise team introduced the theme song, a piece composed specifically for the event by Murphy. Tentative voices united to sing the opening lines: "We are joining together, working together, praising our Father above."

"I can't wait to go back to my church and spread what this event has done for me."

Kezzia Pioznacia





Following the theme song, Shirley Scott, Southern Union women's ministries director, and Yolanda Smith, Southern Union women's ministries advisor, warmly welcomed the women before introducing the eight conference's women's ministries leaders. The women were also welcomed by the Orange County mayor via a video message.

The women clapped as the first main session speaker took the stage. Heather Crews, part of the North American Division (NAD) ministerial association, spoke on ways to connect with Jesus, specifically focusing on the element of prayer. Her presentation was met with firm amens of

agreement, laughter as jokes were told, and clapping in support of her message. The women left feeling inspired.

"Lovie," a member of the Pillars of Faith Church in Ellenwood, Georgia, said she felt the love of God during the first main session and felt connected to the other attendees.

"When I got here, I saw all these women that glow, and they love God, they cherish God. And I want to feel that. So that was a good feeling for me to have during Heather's talk," said Lovie.

The next day was filled with seminars for women to choose from. Seminars were offered in English, Spanish, and

French, and covered a variety of relevant topics including finances, studying the Bible, and mental wellness. These seminars provided the women not only an opportunity to learn but connect with other women of similar interests.

Kathy Hernandez, Southern Union ministerial and evangelism coordinator, led women in discussions on how to overcome fears of making new friends, and how to be a good friend. Nicole Stokes, a teacher, led a seminar focused on single moms. Renee Bishop said she appreciated the seminar and the open and honest conversations that took place, especially as single moms are often stigmatized.



“I love the fact that I had a conversation with Nicole Stokes,” said Bishop. “I loved it. And she did a very great job of presenting her information. It resonated with me.”

In addition to these seminars, young women and teens were able to attend seminars specifically tailored for them. A group of about 30 teens registered for the teen track, which was led by Erica Jones, NAD women’s ministries assistant director. Jones and her team wanted to provide a safe space for the teens to discuss difficult topics. The team created opportunities for both fun, like going to the pool and enjoying snack time, and deep conversations.

“We want our teens to stay in the Church. So, we want to love on them. We want to give them the positive side of life and [provide] a place where they can talk,” said Scott.



The main session tackled difficult conversations during Friday afternoon’s plenary session. The seminar was led in a panel style with four women of varying backgrounds. The panel discussed four topics which they said are commonly considered taboo within the Church:



racism, mental health, LGBTQ+, and spiritual abuse. Following their insights on the issues and solutions, a microphone was opened to the audience for them to share their thoughts and solutions.

Leizl Saylon, a member of the Argyle Forest Company in Jacksonville, Florida, said she enjoyed the plenary session because she learned a lot. She also said a convention this large provided an opportunity for her and her church to meet and learn from women of other churches. She looked forward to learning about other church’s projects, and how the Argyle Forest Company could incorporate similar projects. “Whatever we’re learning here we can bring it to our different churches. And so, our women who were not able to attend, we can also bless them,” Saylon said.

Friday concluded with another main session. During the praise and worship time, “How Great Thou Art” brought women to their feet with raised hands and joint harmony. The powerful voices filled the room and evoked strong emotion. Later in the program, women were welcomed by the Inter-American and North American Divisions women’s ministries directors. This was a special occasion as it was the first time these two women had ever been together in-person. Following their welcome, Ron C. Smith, D.Min., Ph.D., president for the Southern Union Conference, also greeted the women and reminded them how valuable they are to the Union. The





evening's speaker was Gianna Snell, Breath of Life communication director. Snell spoke on her personal struggles with friendships and how she, with the help of God and therapy, has been able to rebuild healthy relationships.

The Sabbath morning meetings began with the youngest speaker — 16-year-old Eden Levey. Her confidently delivered message was backed with biblical texts. The audience received her message well, and many women gave Levey a standing ovation. As Sabbath meetings progressed, several women dressed in clothing representing various cultures greeted the attendees in different languages. Women in the audience who spoke the languages enthusiastically responded when they heard them. Sabbath morning also featured an almost 40-person choir. Again, the women heard a message from Heather Crews.

Following a lunch in the room next door, women rejoined in the main meeting room to hear a presentation on sexual abuse. The meeting equipped women with resources from the NAD, and featured a Bible study led by Amy Cirigliano, Georgia-Cumberland women's ministries director.

At the end of the presentation, women were encouraged to gather at a baptismal pool located outside for baptisms and Vespers. About 400 women sat in a tent covered area facing the pool, waiting for the baptisms. Following three testimonies of women expressing how good God is, one woman entered the pool to be baptized. The crowd waited in anticipation for another baptism. As the minutes passed, women began to leave. However, another woman decided to be baptized. Repeatedly the same scenario happened: anticipation of another baptism and a

tearful woman slowly walking toward the tank surrounded by supporters. In total eight women were baptized.

Kezzia Pioncacia was the youngest to be baptized. Pioncacia said she was profoundly impacted by what she experienced at the convention. She admitted she had recently been struggling with her character but had desired God. She said she felt empowered to make a stand for God after seeing other women's faith at the convention.

"The messages just hit. I don't have many words to describe it, it just influenced me in such a really good way toward God," said Pioncacia. "I can't wait to go back to my church and spread what this event has done for me."

On Sunday there were three sessions before the event concluded. The first session encouraged women to cling to God even when it feels easier to leave Him. The second session spoke on the importance of women being together and supporting each other's spiritual journeys. The final session took time to reflect on the event before asking the women to line up for a special anointing. Each woman individually received prayer and an anointing by convention speakers, women's ministries directors, a deaconess, or elder. As prayers concluded, women embraced one another and lifted their voices in song.



Christina Norris is the associate communication director for the Southern Union Conference.

UNIONS' JOINT TENT EVANGELISM ENDEAVOR LEADS TO 253 BAPTISMS

BY CHRISTINA NORRIS

Tent evangelism, often considered an outdated method of evangelism, recently demonstrated its continued effectiveness through a joint evangelism event. The Atlantic Union, with the support and assistance of the Southern Union, recently hosted a 20-day System for Survival evangelistic initiative. The endeavor reaped 253 baptisms.

The meetings took place in a 270-person tent set up in a vacant lot in Buffalo, New York. This location was selected because it is situated on the corner of two of the busiest streets in Buffalo. While the lot was owned by a local Seventh-day Adventist church, making it free to use, special permits had to be obtained to host the event at this location.

“It was on a very busy intersection, and we figured we’d get more marketability and more visibility by being on that corner — which actually worked,” said Ron C. Smith, D.Min., Ph.D., Southern Union president and key speaker for the initiative.

To lead the initiative, Smith used materials from his ministry, System for Survival, which is supported by the Southern Union. Nightly, a packed tent watched health and financial video talks by Jim



PHOTO BY: CEDRIC FRANCOIS



PHOTO BY: CEDRIC FRANCOIS



Ron C. Smith, D.Min., Ph.D., Southern Union president, was the key speaker for the evangelistic crusade.

the support of the Southern Union in helping make this tent evangelistic effort possible. “On behalf of the members of the Atlantic Union Conference, I want to express my most sincere gratitude to Dr. Ron Smith and his fellow administrators for their great support both financially and with their presence,” said Omeler.

The Southern Union, which leads the North American Division (NAD) with the most baptisms and professions of faith, according to the most recent NAD Secretary’s Statistical Report, desires to expand God’s Kingdom both within and beyond the Southern Union territory. These meetings resulted partially from a discussion among union presidents within the NAD to grow Division membership. According to Smith, the union presidents wanted to inspire one another by exchanging evangelistic opportunities.

“The purpose of partnership is to motivate one another, to get involved in soul-winning to a greater degree,” said Smith.

Currently, the Southern Union plans to partner with the Pacific Union to host evangelistic meetings in December. 📌

Christina Norris is the associate communication director for the Southern Union Conference.

Davidson, Southern Union executive secretary, and David Freedman, Southern Union treasurer. The attendees were given gifts like interactive children’s Bibles, Andrews Study Bibles, and T-shirts. Participants who had completed a Community Bible Survey, a form of Bible study, were given a framed photo with Smith, and could participate in a reception following the event. Smith said the reception allowed attendees an opportunity to fellowship.

Smith emphasized the meetings were designed to engage community members. Many individuals who were not yet baptized were asked to assist in the meetings in various ways. They would be asked to help run the registration table, hand out prizes, give people baptismal robes, among other things. Smith said he found that the sooner community people are engaged in responsibilities, they keep coming back because they feel needed and appreciated.

In addition to his nightly seminars, Smith also used System of Survival materials to conduct a field school. The field school happened daily from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., except on Sabbaths, and were offered to local Seventh-day Adventist pastors and Bible workers.

“We want to train our members to bring souls to Christ,” said Smith. “And

we want to inspire our colleagues to keep their eye on the most important dimension of our work — that is to be involved in the work of evangelism.”

The Atlantic Union Conference’s mission is “United We Go to Grow God’s Kingdom.” As a united effort between the Southern and Atlantic Unions, Pierre E. Omeler, D.D., Atlantic Union president, said he feels this event was an excellent representation of the Union’s mission. “This was a classic example of what we can do for the cause of God when we are united,” said Omeler.

Omeler said he is very thankful for



AN UNBROKEN THREAD: 50 YEARS UNITED IN MISSION

BY ELIZABETH CAMPS

My calling and the calling of AdventHealth is to sow seeds of hope, healing, and wholeness ... to embody the privilege of Extending the Healing Ministry of Christ. What about you? Will you join me?"

This was the question posed by Terry Shaw, AdventHealth president/CEO, on the opening night of AdventHealth's 33rd annual Conference on Mission. The conference was attended by AdventHealth Board members and executive leaders, key representatives from the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and local community leaders. It was an invitation to reflect on the efforts of the past and acknowledge the work that lies ahead.

With 2023 being an anniversary year for AdventHealth, the conference was a time of both celebration and reflection of the company's 50-year history since its founding in 1973 when representatives from standalone hospitals across the southern states made the decision to join together and form the health system.

"We want to get a handle on what mission means to each of us on a personal level, as well as professionally and certainly culturally," said Jillyan McKinney, president and CEO of the AdventHealth Medical Group in central Florida, and co-presenter during the conference's business session. "Are we being effective in how we deliver on our mission promise? Are we consistently

staying true to our roots? How has our history shaped our mission, and what does the future have in store?"

The event kicked off with an awards ceremony where more than 450 people in attendance recognized the work, service, and dedication of key individuals. There were six 2023 awardees:

- Lanell Jacobs and Linda Lynch: Christian Service Award for exemplary commitment to the mission of AdventHealth through outstanding job performance and loyalty to organizational values and service standards.
- Pat Northey and Reverend Ron Hawkins: Trustee of the Year Award for exemplary service as a board member



PHOTO BY: TIMOTHY BROWN

Terry Shaw, AdventHealth president/CEO, addresses the attendees at the 33rd annual Conference on Mission.



PHOTO BY: TIMOTHY BROWN

Jillyan McKinney (left), president/CEO of AdventHealth Medical Group in central Florida, and Tim Cook, chief mission integration officer at AdventHealth, guide conference attendees through a unique multi-media experience exploring five decades of AdventHealth history.

for one or more entities affiliated with AdventHealth.

- Abel Biri and David Banks: Crystal Angel Award, AdventHealth's highest recognition of outstanding Christian leadership in specific mission-related achievements, projects, and programs.

The next day, attendees explored five decades of AdventHealth history through a unique multi-media experience titled "50 Years: United in Mission." Through on-stage guides, video interviews, live testimonies and surprise guests, attendees discovered the unbroken thread of mission woven into the essence of Adventist health care, starting with the legacy of Christ's ministry on Earth and continuing with pioneers who founded the Church's earliest sanitariums.

"God's been so faithful and has bestowed abundant blessings on His healing ministry. The evidence of His presence and providence over these past 50 years, since 1973, is incredible," said Tim Cook, chief mission integration officer at AdventHealth.

The group explored the foundation of our health care ministry, the culture of AdventHealth that refuses to allow mission drift, and the role that innovation plays in sustaining that mission and carrying it into the future. In this exploration, the level of intentionality was evident in the training and mentoring of AdventHealth leaders as well as succession planning in order to keep the unbroken thread of mission integrity going.

Key leaders from AdventHealth's history shared their unique perspectives on how the mission advanced during their time and how each person's efforts brought momentum to the continuous weaving of the unbroken thread of mission.

"AdventHealth grows and develops leaders to continue to seek opportunities to innovate and advance our mission," said Craig Moore, chief operating officer at AdventHealth Kissimmee and on-stage guide during the conference's business session. Former AdventHealth leaders who experienced this growth firsthand were in attendance, including Tom Werner



PHOTO BY: TIMOTHY BROWN

A panel discussion convenes onstage following the business session where attendees explored 50 years of AdventHealth's history.

and Mardian Blair, former system CEOs, and Ed Reifsnyder, founding CFO.

"This is our mission: extending the healing ministry of Christ," said Cook. "There isn't a wasted word. It isn't a preamble. It isn't the beginning line of a complicated dissertation. It's simple. It's profound. It's intentional. It's active. And it's complete."

In response to this in-depth reflection, a panel convened on stage to discuss key themes that surface from the organization's history and how we might use what was learned to continue our mission into the future.

At the end of this exploration of AdventHealth's history, attendees were invited to share the ways and spaces in which they have seen God's leading and faithfulness in the past. They were also invited to look to the future and consider how the mission would grow even stronger in the next 50 years. "It's important we take time to reflect on our story of mission – on that thread that weaves through time and brings us here today," said Cook.

The themes of legacy, intentionality, and a focus on the future were echoed during the Sabbath morning address by Leslie Pollard, Ph.D., D.Min., president of Oakwood University, in which he spoke of the biblical account of the paralytic man who was carried by four men and placed before Jesus to be healed. "Those four friends remind us of our one

Great Friend who, 2,000 years ago, came on a mission to deliver critical care," Dr. Pollard said. "May we carry forward His healing ministry across the next 50 years with audacious, roof-rupturing faith."

A tradition from previous years, music was integral to the three-day event and featured the AdventHealth Orchestra and the AdventHealth Choir for the first time. Both groups, made up of AdventHealth team members, led more than 740 attendees in reverent worship on Sabbath morning — the highest attendance of Conference on Mission to date. The musical performances highlighted the desire of all individuals present to continue the legacy of Christ's healing ministry, extending it to all people.

"Tim Cook and I put significant thought and energy into how we could celebrate AdventHealth's 50th anniversary by utilizing our team members and performing some of the most inspiring music that has ever been written," said Richard Hickam, director of music and the arts at AdventHealth. "One of the things I love about musicians from all over coming together is that a number of them come in as strangers, but we served together, and we all left united in mission." 🎵

Elizabeth Camps is the senior communications specialist for AdventHealth.

SUMMER CAMP POINTS CAMPERS TO JESUS

BY ALEXIS DEWEY

Cohutta Springs Youth Camp (CSYC) is a place some people refer to as “Heaven on Earth.” It is a place where children are allowed to be the person God has created them to be, without any judgment or ridicule. Expressing that a place feels like “Heaven on Earth,” is describing that it feels pleasantly unreal. So, why do people say that CSYC feels “pleasantly unreal?”

CSYC opened in the summer of 1980, and the number of staff and campers has increased over time as the camp has grown. The camp has an array of things to offer its campers. It has activities like archery, basketball, horsemanship, wakeboarding, mountain biking, and more. However, there is something that Adventist camps have to offer that you cannot always find on your average summer vacation. Adventist camps offer an experience that allows you to see God in a different light. They allow campers to see what a relationship with Christ can truly look like.

Cohutta Springs Youth Camp has a Vespers every Friday night. During Vespers, the staff put on a play about the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The staff are given the opportunity all week to show the campers what it means to love and give grace as Jesus



PHOTO BY: LIZZIE PEGUERO PEÑA

Anaya Parker assists a junior camper during the closing nighttime program of Junior II Camp. Campers regularly say they love camp so much because of the staff who show them love and point them to Jesus.

did, and then, on Friday night, the campers get to see a reenactment of the greatest act of grace.

At the end of their week, the campers

fill out an evaluation to anonymously express how their week went. Every summer, in recent years, campers tend to write that the staff at Cohutta are

one of the biggest reasons that they felt a connection with Christ that week. Campers often say they enjoy camp so much, and a large part of that is the staff who show them love and point them to Jesus. Oh, and the water slide is fun, too.

This year was a big year for the CSYC staff to witness to their campers, with massive impact. There were 461 campers who made decisions to follow Christ, along with 312 decisions for baptism, 400 decisions to continue to walk with Jesus, four staff baptized, and 10 campers baptized. The unique highlight about this summer at CSYC is someone was baptized every week of camp! Adventist summer camps are winning hearts for the Kingdom every week of their summers.

One question on the survey that the staff added this year and were especially fond of, was asking if the camper wanted to continue to follow Christ. Normally, the questions are geared toward children who are not currently following Christ, but the staff wanted to add a question for those who already follow Jesus and want to continue that journey. "It is important to not only provide an opportunity for young people to make a decision for Christ, it is equally important to reaffirm those who have been baptized and reinforce their decision," said Jonathan Montes, summer camp director.

Camp is a unique experience for everyone who attends, both campers and staff. Camp can change an individual's life if they open their heart to it. The Holy Spirit is working through the camps to reach the new generation. Continue to pray that campers seek Christ after their summer experience. 🙏

Alexis Dewey is a junior mass communication major at Southern Adventist University, and served as the 2023 girls' camp director at Cohutta Springs Youth Camp.



PHOTO BY: LIZZIE PERGUERO PEÑA

Alicia Anderson (left) and Matt Dormus are only two of the 110 staff who showed Jesus to campers this year at Cohutta Springs youth camp. All week, camp staff get to show campers what it means to love and give grace like Jesus does.



PHOTO BY: RONNIE CAMPBELL-STEWART

Jonathan Montes, Cohutta Springs summer camp director and Georgia-Cumberland Conference youth director, baptizes Michael Geraghty during family camp. There were weekly baptisms at camp this year, resulting in 14 baptisms. Additionally during camp, there were 312 decisions for baptism and 400 decisions to continue walking with Jesus.

TEACHING STUDENTS TO THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

BY DENISE PARKER

Many years ago, I came across an article about Forest School. Forest School is an educational approach that takes place in natural outdoor settings, typically forests or woodlands. It focuses on hands-on learning experiences and allows children to engage with nature and the environment. Forest School emphasizes child-led activities, exploration, and play, fostering their curiosity, independence, and connection with nature. It also promotes skills such as problem-

solving, teamwork, resilience, and environmental awareness. I was intrigued by the idea. I also wondered how the students were able to learn the core subjects like reading and math while exploring outdoors.

Last school year, Mobile Junior Academy's pre-kindergarten through fourth grade started experiencing a taste of Forest School. Although the school does not have a huge forest, there is plenty of outdoor space for exploring and learning about this beautiful world God cre-





ated for us. The students still had traditional learning in the classroom but with extra time outdoors. Some days, lessons were even taught outside. People have often asked, “How do you teach outdoors?” My answer is simple. Instead of using manipulatives in the traditional classroom, use items from nature instead. For example, in a kindergarten math lesson, counting can be taught using natural objects such as sticks, rocks, flowers, and leaves. These items can also be used for sorting, matching, and many other math-related activities. These same items can be used in reading and writing lessons. My students created the letters of the alphabet using pine needles, sticks, and sand.

My favorite lesson was one of our Bible lessons. We were learning about how hard life must have been for the Israelite slaves. The students were able to experience firsthand how to make a brick. We used a small plastic pool and filled it with sandy dirt. Then, the students had to collect tall grass from all over the field. They were not allowed to use scissors or tools to make the job

easier either. Last, they had to carry buckets of water to mix it all together. Their favorite part was mixing it. They took off their shoes, rolled up their pant legs, and used their bare feet to mix it all together. One boy told me this was the first time he had ever played in mud. The joy on his face was contagious!

I have to admit I was a little skeptical about the whole idea at first. I felt like I wasn’t “teaching” my students enough. As I assessed my students’ progress periodically, I was amazed at how much they were retaining. The growth I witnessed in all of my students was amazing. We observed growth in cognitive, social, language, and emotional development. The biggest growth observed was a greater spiritual connection with God.

The last thing that I noticed throughout the school year was behavior. At the beginning of the year, I had one particularly challenging student. As the year progressed, they became more and more eager to please. By the end of the year, their challenging behaviors were almost completely gone. I

will take some credit for this, but time being able to explore outdoors was a tremendous help.

This year, students are more enthusiastic about generating new ideas for outdoor exploration. When I show students a new concept and ask what should we do to learn more, I can see the lightbulbs going off as they think of ways to approach new ideas. When a problem arises, they come to the teachers less and less to help resolve it. As the school year progresses, I am excited to witness the growth and learning of our students in this beautiful world God created. ●

Denise Parker is a teacher at Mobile Junior Academy.

THE LIFE JOURNEY OF MELVIN AND PHYLLIS BRASS

BY PAOLA MORA ZEPEDA

Melvin and Phyllis Brass, members from the Madison Campus, Tennessee, Church, have a simple yet beautiful life motto: “Think not of the reward, but of service.” Their journey together, which started as teenagers, is one that beautifully encapsulates the transformative power of love, selflessness, and a shared purpose.

The Meet Up

Melvin was attending Mount Ellis Academy in Montana when he first met his future wife, Phyllis, in 1949. As the junior class president, one of his responsibilities was to help plan the graduation program for the seniors. During this process, he started looking for somebody to play the organ, and that’s when he was introduced to Phyllis.

“When she arrived, I was surprised at how beautiful she was,” said Melvin. “I asked her out on an ice cream date, and we started dating my senior year of high school.”

Melvin attended Walla Walla University to pursue a degree in theology while Phyllis stayed in Idaho. After completing his freshman year of college, Melvin asked Phyllis to marry him. Seventy-two years later, the couple still cherishes their relationship.

“I would do it all over again,” said Phyllis. “I know we married quite young, but we’ve always been on the same page



PHOTO BY: PAOLA MORA ZEPEDA

Phyllis and Melvin Brass pose in their Springfield, Tennessee, home. The couple’s life motto is to think of the service, not the reward, and they have demonstrated this commitment throughout their lives.



Phyllis and Melvin Brass were married on August 19, 1951.

and have shared ideas and dreams.” One of those dreams was to serve others.

The Profession

Melvin spent his entire career within the realm of Adventist academies, a journey that commenced in 1955 at Gem State Academy in Idaho, where he taught Bible, science, history, and P.E. His journey as an educator also took him to the states of Colorado, Wisconsin, and California. Everywhere they went, Melvin left a mark as a teacher and friend. “I always believed that teaching was a vessel through which I could guide young minds toward embracing the love of Jesus,” said Melvin. “To me, more than the school subjects, I wanted [the students] to know Jesus and trust Him through life’s challenges.”

In addition to their four children, Melvin and Phyllis were also foster parents and were happy to welcome 13 foster children to their home.

In 1980, the couple relocated to Michigan to support Phyllis’ dream of studying at Andrews University and becoming a nurse. For Phyllis, nursing was more than just a profession; it was a purpose.

“Every patient I attended I saw as an opportunity to make a difference,” said Phyllis. “I truly loved my job — it was my calling from God.”

The Missions

Melvin and Phyllis’ love not only reached their local community, but also the world. Throughout his life, Melvin was involved in 13 short-term mission trips in countries like Mexico, Guatemala, Panama, Guyana, and Turkey. The focus of most of these trips had to do with construction, a passion Melvin developed as a child. During these trips, Melvin was able to help build churches, dorms, and even houses for women escaping domestic violence.

“I’ve always been very artistic, and I’ve always thought that sharing the things that God gave us is important — including our talents,” said Melvin. “So, for me, I just really enjoyed using my hands to help others.”

While Melvin was out on the mission trips, Phyllis’ role was no less crucial — showcasing their unity as a couple and their commitment for the mission. While

Phyllis joined only a few mission trips, her choice to remain was not one of limitation, but of empowerment.

“I stayed home to take care of the kids and help pay for the mission trips,” said Phyllis. “[Melvin] was really great at building things, while I enjoyed being a nurse. I felt like supporting him in his calling was my contribution [to the mission], and I was happy to do it.”

Looking Back

Melvin retired in 1998 and Phyllis retired eight years later. In 2006, the couple moved to Springfield, Tennessee, to be with their oldest daughter. Looking back, the couple praises God for guiding their lives through classrooms, hospital rooms, mission trips, and the embrace of those they uplifted.

“The secret to success is serving the Lord,” said Phyllis. “When we follow God’s plan and do what He asks us to do, the blessings follow.” ❶

Paola Mora Zepeda is the media ministries director for the Kentucky-Tennessee Conference.

DEVASTATING TORNADO RIPS THROUGH SELMA, ALABAMA

BY ROGER R. WADE

The Temple Gate Church in Selma, Alabama, became the center of disaster relief distribution on Sunday, February 4, 2023, after a devastating tornado struck the area on Thursday, January 12, 2023. The church, which had sustained minor damage, opened its doors to the community and provided much-needed aid to those affected by the disaster.

Through community partnership facilitated by Lillie Buckingham and Barbara Barnes, co-directors of the South Central Conference Adventist Community Services Disaster Response Ministry, blankets, buckets of cleaning supplies, hygiene kits, and backpack school kits were donated by Church World Services. Three truckloads, including a semi-truck load from partnering with Hands with Hearts, were brought into Selma. South Central Conference and Alabama Ad-

ventist Community Services Federation brought a truckload of supplies and cash donations along with 22 volunteers on February 4.

We cannot emphasize enough the dedication and leadership of Thiea Wilson, Temple Gate Church pastor, and the volunteers who are making a difference in this recovery effort to support the survivors affected by this catastrophic tornado event.

"Today was a miracle by God," said Wilson. "We served 1,855 cars, and approximately 3,000 people. So, we've almost served half of every person that was touched by the devastation of this storm. It was a blessing. It was a success, and nobody could have done it but God, and we give Him all the glory. People are thanking us, they're saying, 'We appreciate what you're doing out here today' — gracious smiles and words of thanksgiving."

Derrick Lea, director of Adventist Community Services for the North American Division, was in attendance to support the distribution. "The fact of the matter is, we have churches in communities all over the North American Division," said Lea. He continues, "The key is to actually be a part of the community. And that's what we're seeing here today. Members of Temple Gate were affected, just like the people right across the street. The fact that they can be there at a time of need, even as they are recovering themselves, really speaks to what Christ has asked of us to actually be in these communities, of having a tangible positive impact. That's what we're seeing here."

Individuals came to Selma to help from across the entire region. Nathaniel Dunlap Jr., D.Min., executive director of the Possessions, Resources, and Finances Insti-



PHOTO BY: ROGER R. WADE

ACS team and volunteers prepare to enter Selma, Alabama, before the distribution.



PHOTO BY: ROGER R. WADE

Distribution line in front of Temple Gate Church



PHOTO BY: ROGER R. WADE

Supplies were readied for distribution at Temple Gate Church.

tute, was inspired to show up because of the biblical story of Nehemiah which he preached from in Hurtsboro, Alabama, on the Sunday the week after the tornado hit Selma. February 4 was his second time to Selma, and he credited Thiea Wilson's expressed heart and concern for her community's long-term recovery. "Most people just want what they need right now. When you have community partners that are also mindful even three weeks after to provide for the community, I am moved to get involved," said Dunlap.

Beverley Wallace, D.Min., a Lutheran disaster response team member, was assigned to provide emotional spiritual care for the victims of the tornado. "We know that the trauma because of the disaster is going to have long-term effects," said Wallace. "We are here to help victims and to even acknowledge what's going on."

Robert, a resident of Selma who was affected by the tornado, got in line and waited to be served by the volunteers. Robert shared that the storm wiped out everything he owned, and that fortunately he was not in his home at the time. He also shared that being able to get the supplies confirmed God has his back.

Irene Griffin, a volunteer with Adventist Community Services from Hattiesburg, Mississippi, said, "I never thought I'd be doing this when I retired and moved back to Hattiesburg. I enjoy serving." Griffin shared she has been volunteering since March of 2018, when she



PHOTO BY: ROGER R. WADE

Derrick Lea, director of Adventist Community Services for the North American Division, and Beverley Wallace, D.Min., exchange notes.

arrived in Hattiesburg.

"We're here today to assist the residents of Selma, Alabama, in relationship with the tornado of January 12, 2023. They have a very long road ahead of them. We are here and will continue to be here to assist our pastor, Thiea Wilson, as long as we possibly can, to try to salvage some of the hurt, and let the community know that Adventist Community Services and Temple Gate Seventh-day Adventist Church are here," said Lillie Buckingham.

The relief efforts at Temple Gate Church were made possible by the support of volunteers and donations from individuals and organizations across the country. The church served as a beacon of hope in a time of great need, providing not only physical aid but also emotional support for those affected by the disaster.

"I want to highlight and congratulate the Temple Gate Church family and Pastor Thiea Wilson for their response to a community laid waste by a terrible January tornado that devastated Selma, Alabama," said Benjamin Jones Jr., South Central Conference president. "Pastor Wilson, with the help of South Central Conference and the North American Division Adventist Community Services, has turned the church into a distribution center for the many victims of the storm. Pastor Wilson and her church family have connected with other churches and com-



PHOTO BY: ROGER R. WADE

Lillie Buckingham (left), South Central Conference Adventist Community Services Disaster Response Ministries co-director; Beverley Wallace, D.Min., a Lutheran disaster response team member; and Barbara Barnes, South Central Conference Adventist Community Services Disaster Response Ministries co-director

munity agencies both private and civic to form a powerful united effort to help their fellow neighbors who have lost everything. This is a prime example of what we are looking for when we encourage our members and our churches to become engaged in the life of their communities. We must take our ministries outside of the four walls of our churches and roll up our sleeves and go to work to improve the life of the people around us. Remember, 'love' is an action word. I praise God for what He is doing through the ministry of Pastor Thiea Wilson and the Temple Gate Seventh-day Adventist Church in Selma, Alabama. May the rest of the South Central family go and do likewise."

In times of crisis, it is important to come together as a community and help those in need. The relief efforts at Temple Gate Church serve as a reminder of the power of compassion, and the impact that small acts of kindness can have on those who are suffering. 🕊

Roger R. Wade is the communication director for the South Central Conference.

ROY PAULEY, GOSPEL MUSIC ARTIST, PASSES AT 74

BY WALTER MAIER

Some might call him a legend; others would say Roy Pauley's career in Southern gospel music was legendary. His ministry of sharing the story of Jesus, along with his life's partner, Amy, was Pauley's driving force for more than 60 years. The Pauleys' devotion to the work of saving souls compelled their fervor for evangelism.

Roy Edward Pauley went to sleep in a well-earned rest early Sabbath morning, August 12, 2023. His passing came after a brief six-week battle with brain cancer. He passed away at AdventHealth (formerly Florida Hospital), Orlando. Roy and Amy were longtime members of the Lakeview Church in Haines City, Florida.

Pauley was born October 26, 1948, in Charleston, West Virginia, to Hubert and Orva Pauley. Roy is earliest known for his part of The Pauley Brothers music ministry with his brother, Ron, during the decades of the late '50s and '60s.

By the mid '60s, his music ministry had spread into the tri-state region of West Virginia, Ohio, and Kentucky. Roy's singing career was interrupted by a two-year stint in the Army from 1969 to 1971, including a year of duty in Vietnam as a field medic.

Upon his return from military service, he immediately resumed his music ministry, accepting the position as song evangelist with the television program, *Faith For Today*. While serving in 1974 as song evangelist in Ottawa, Ontario, he met Amy, the pianist for the church



Roy Pauley



Roy and Amy Pauley

having the meetings. They were married on November 21, 1974, during another crusade in Santa Monica, California. She not only became his wife, she also became his piano accompanist, and joined him on an occasional vocal duet.

After working with *Faith For Today* un-

til 1975, Roy and Amy moved to Kansas to serve as song evangelists, and then in 1977 to Florida Conference to continue their music ministry. Since 2004, they have continued sharing their music on a full-time, self-supported basis, traveling from their home in Florida. Pauley was called numerous times in his career to fill emergency voids with such legendary groups as Blackwood Brothers and Weatherfords. During the '90s, he sang regularly with the Statesmen.

Over the past years, Pauley, who is an ordained Adventist minister, has been a guest soloist with the Bill Gaither Homecoming concert team and featured on two of the Homecoming concert videos. Roy and Amy are also a part of several *Voice of Prophecy* Family Reunion music videos. Pauley was chosen to sing bass on gospel legend Hovie Lister's final recording in 2001 under the label: Grand Ole Gospel Quartet.

In addition to his popularity as a bass/baritone singer, Roy Pauley is known nationally for his column about gospel music legends, "The History of Gospel Music," in *Singing News* magazine. "I began my column in 1986, so this is the 37th year I've been writing for *Singing News*," said Pauley in a recent interview. The column also contains Pauley's artistic rendition of the musical artist being portrayed. ❶

Walter Maier is the retired pastor of Lakeview Church in Haines City, Florida.

Nurse Grows Career, Leadership Through AdventHealth's Nursing Professional Excellence Program

For Betsy Conley, a registered nurse in the inpatient rehabilitation unit at AdventHealth Winter Park, Fla., it's never too late to learn something new. With 25 years of nursing experience, Conley is a passionate learner who is continually seeking to improve patient care delivery and develop herself, and others, as leaders.

Her journey into nursing had its challenges. She pulled through family demands to complete her bachelor's degree in her late 20s, and when she set out to pursue her master's degree, her sister was diagnosed with cancer. While working as a nurse, Conley paused her education to care for her sister.

"My sister had this quiet, gentle presence that was like a cool hand on a warm forehead," she said. "Before she passed, she inspired me to keep growing and developing myself as a nurse."

With this goal in mind, Conley found an opportunity to advance her career when she joined AdventHealth 3 1/2 years ago. Her nurse manager, Kathy Doll, encouraged her to participate in the AdventHealth Nursing Professional Excellence Program (PEP), a system-wide clinical ladder that enables nurses to achieve their career goals, advance their education, and be rewarded for their expertise.

"Betsy immediately demonstrated a passion for nursing when she joined the team," said Doll. "She spoke to me about wanting to grow and take on new responsibilities, and I was happy to support her on this journey."

Conley said she went through the program much more quickly than she had imagined. She excelled in the PEP, com-



pleting the first two levels within four months, and she is currently working toward the third level.

Through the program, she developed her leadership potential as a preceptor in AdventHealth's dedicated education unit initiative, a program that partners AdventHealth's nursing units with local educational institutions to offer dedicated training opportunities to nursing students. She also chairs her unit's governance committee and serves on two subcommittees in her unit.

"This is a fantastic program that has improved my professional presence and confidence," said Conley. "I've enhanced my leadership skills through exposure to topics like relationship building, communication, mental health, and decision-making."

Conley said she has also grown personally through the program. "I learned the importance of listening and showing empathy, which has made me more en-

gaged with my patients and colleagues."

Conley said the PEP was the push she needed to continue her education. She's working toward her master's degree in nursing leadership with the help of AdventHealth's educational assistance.

"My goal is to be a nurse educator, which will enable me to continue demonstrating my passion for teaching and leading others," she said.

Service has always been an essential focus for Conley. Now working in a faith-based organization, Conley said she's encouraged by AdventHealth's mission and her own motivation to help others, especially people living in underprivileged communities.

"I've always had a heart for service because I've personally experienced what it's like to have less," she said. "We are here to serve. That's the essence of nursing." ❶

BY EMILY ESCOBAR, COMMUNICATIONS
INTERN AT ADVENTHEALTH

Monroe Spanish Church Faces Challenges after Drunk Driving Incident

The Monroe, N.C., Spanish Church was flooded with joy in April 2022, as they celebrated a monumental achievement: the church had successfully paid off its mortgage. This was a testament to the unwavering dedication and generosity of its members. However, a shadow was cast over this jubilation just months later in October. A drunk driver, losing control of their vehicle, violently collided with the church sanctuary. This unfortunate incident not only left a glaring hole in the structure, but also severely damaged the AV booth and equipment. To add to the dismay, a vital structural beam was dented, posing a potential risk.

Upon inspection, the fire department was quick to determine that the sanctuary was unsafe for use. Engineers, who were subsequently called in, corroborated this decision, highlighting serious concerns about the church's overall structural safety. This unforeseen disruption forced the congregation to adapt, moving their regu-



Hiram Ruiz (left), head elder; Efrain Torres, treasurer; Eduardo Flores, volunteer lay pastor/elder; Uriel Gutiérrez, elder; Jonas Flores, elder/building committee president; and Bryan Arvelo, pastor

lar worship services to the fellowship hall.

Yet, in these challenging times, the church leaders and its members saw a silver lining. While repairs to the damaged infrastructure were essential, they viewed this as an opportune moment to not merely restore but rejuvenate the space. This vision paved the way for an extensive remodel of the sanctuary.

Following a period marked by tenacity, collaboration, and immense support from the church members, Monroe Spanish Church reopened its doors in July 2023. The newly renovated sanctuary was not just a symbol of physical restoration, but also represented the community's resilient spirit and unwavering faith, shining even brighter through adversity.

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose," Romans 8:28 NIV. ①

BY BRYAN ARVELO

Spartanburg Youth Take the Lead for Vacation Bible School

As spring transitioned into summer, there was a conspicuous silence regarding who might lead the Vacation Bible School (VBS) for Spartanburg Church in 2023. June arrived, and Kaitlyn and Rachel Whalley, Emma Boughman, and Emma Frank — a mix of college and high school students home for

summer — noticed the absence of VBS on the church calendar. After a Sabbath service, they approached the pastoral staff, inquiring if anyone had taken the reins for VBS. If not, they would volunteer. The only uncertainty was scheduling, but their proposed week seamlessly fit the church's packed calendar.

The congregation energetically supported their vision for VBS. The gymnasium metamorphosed into a cosmic wonderland, thanks to countless hours of crafting and innovative set design. While veteran church members stepped in as department heads, the planning, sound, and programming sectors were spear-

headed by the young adults. The youthful leaders, some still in high school, not only rose to the challenge, but are eagerly anticipating next year's event — this time with a full year to prepare.

Current research underscores that young adults today prioritize acts of service over mere worship attendance. The pressing question is this: Do churches grant the youth not only the chance to serve but also to lead? When trusted young adults in the congregation show a willingness to guide, hand them the reins. Let them manifest their faith through dedicated service. ❶

BY BENJAMIN LAWSON



PHOTO BY: JESSICA KOVACH

The Vacation Bible School team included Rachel Whalley (left), Emma Frank, Kaitlyn Whalley, Emma Boughman, and Alex Boughman.

NYPD Expert Imparts Crucial Safety Lessons at Cornerstone Academy

Safety is a cornerstone of any learning environment, and Cornerstone Adventist Academy in Charlotte, N.C., is no exception. The school had the privilege of hosting Donzel Cleare, lieutenant, an experienced member of the New York Police Department (NYPD) with 20 years under his belt, for a comprehensive safety workshop.

Students at the school were provided with invaluable lessons on how to navigate various emergency scenarios. Cleare's enlightening session delved into the following key areas:

- Responding to storm alerts effectively.
- Identifying and using safe spots during potential intrusions.
- Mastering the use of specific code words to aid in swift communication and guidance.

Recognizing the profound importance of these safety protocols, the school board is keen on introducing further



PHOTO BY: RON QUICK

detailed training sessions. Their objective is clear: to ensure that each student is well-equipped and confident in their ability to handle any emergency situation they may encounter.

Outside of his safety expertise, Cleare has an impressive track record. He has served with distinction as the commanding officer for the Housing Bureau Community Affairs Unit of the NYPD. His



PHOTO BY: RON QUICK

dedication to the community doesn't stop there. He was also honored with the "Ambassador with Distinction" award for his remarkable efforts in the annual back-to-school giveaway, an initiative that has successfully provided essential school supplies to countless children in need. ❶

BY RON QUICK

Kress Memorial is Church That Cares

October is Disability Month. How can the church, as a whole, reimagine what it means to include all people in worshipping God and in serving others for the glory of the soon coming King? Kress Memorial Church in Orlando, Fla., is such a caring community.

Mario Romero loved God and made it his life's purpose to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. He was creative, kind, and compassionate. When Romero lost his hearing as a young adult, he wondered if there was room for him in God's Church. How would he hear? What will he do at church? Where would he even go to church? First, God granted Romero a wife and lifelong partner, Ybon, who is an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter. Then God led him to Kress Memorial Church where Eric Doran, Ed.D., pastor, and his wife, Sandra Doran, served at that time.

When Romero needed a place to be-



A group from Deaf Ministry gathers after worship services at Kress Memorial Church. Ybon Romero (front row, sixth from left) is a certified ASL interpreter. Mario Romero (back row, third from left) taught a Sabbath School class at Kress Memorial.

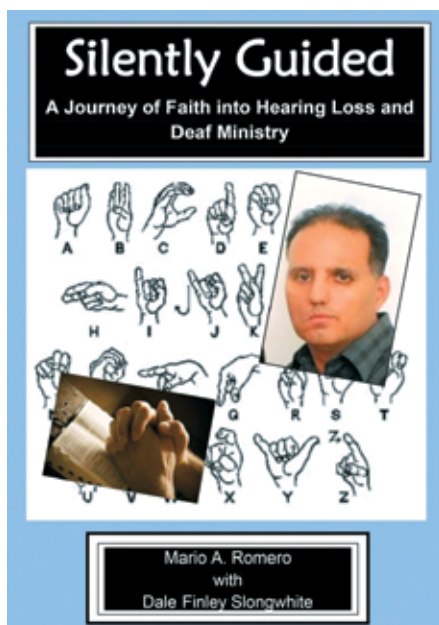
long, he found that Kress Church cared for the deaf and the discouraged. He found a church that allowed him to praise with his hands and hear with his eyes. The church placed people above process-

es and made room for him to believe ... to hope ... to grow ... to shine.

Eric Doran invited Romero to worship at the church and offered the pastoral office for him to teach Sabbath School in ASL to a group of individuals who were deaf. The church also embraced Romero and others during services by making space on the front pew, to allow for unobstructed visual access to the speaker and the interpreter.

Having been diagnosed with neurofibromatosis type 2 (NF2), a rare genetic disorder that created tumors on the nerves that control functions such as balance and sounds — the disease would progress to take Romero's hearing, as well as his livelihood, liberty, and, ultimately, his life.

Romero spent his life caring for others and sharing the Good News of salvation. He died September 22, 2022, with the full confidence of resurrection and restoration, thanks in a great part to Kress Church. Members received Romero with his unique abilities and differences, and allowed him to live out his purpose for God's Kingdom. ①



"Silently Guided: A Journey of Faith into Hearing Loss and Deaf Ministry" was written by Mario Romero and Dale Finley Slongwhite.



Orlando Hernandez, current pastor at Kress Memorial Church in Orlando, Fla., welcomes Mario Romero and the Deaf Ministry with love, acceptance, and kindness as he leads his congregation to serve and fulfill the church's mission to "Worship God. Love people. Build community."

BY ROSE J. THOMAS, PH.D.

Members Share Good News on US 19

A stretch of straight, flat, and wide highway US 19 in Pasco County, Fla., has become known as the deadliest highway in the country. This did not dampen the spirits of some New Port Richey Beth-El Shalom members and friends such as the Netan family, who went to a busy US 19 intersection to witness for God one summer weekend.

In just a few hours, hundreds of books, Bibles, tracts, and cards were given away. Prayer and Bible conversations were held with many people.

Two men stopped by to bring water and ask questions. Jeff Zaremsky, pastor, mentioned that the Bible says, in the Gospels, that no one who gives a cup of water to one of my disciples will lose out on his reward. They had never heard that before. In talking with them further, it was apparent they had never read the Bible. The team was able to answer their many questions, pray with them, and give them a Bible, a book, and Shalom Adventure cards.

Some people asked for prayer and



A sign welcomes drivers on busy US 19.

a book while stopped at the red light and stayed stopped even when the light turned green. Most often the cars behind them did not honk even though they

were going to miss the light because of the prayer taking place in front of them. The few times people honked, those receiving the prayer did not budge until the prayer was over.

A car stalled right in front of the team. Two members were able to push them off the road, give them water, help diagnose the problem, temporarily get the car running, and follow them to an auto shop while leaving them with a Bible, book, prayer, and a Shalom Adventure card. They were very thankful.

The world wants all to believe that most people are anti-God and anti-Bible, but the majority of the people on these busy streets honked, waved, gave thumbs up, and stopped to receive books, prayer, and conversations. People want to know more about God. They are just waiting for believers to interact with them. ●



Members from Beth-El Shalom of New Port Richey, Fla., distribute literature at a busy highway intersection.

BY JEFF ZAREMSKY

ACF Students See For Themselves

Approximately 65 students, advisors, and supporting pastors gathered August 25 and 26, 2023, for the Georgia-Cumberland Conference Adventist Christian Fellowship (ACF) 2023 ReStart Conference, held for Seventh-day Adventist students on public university campuses from around the conference

“It was a wonderful blessing to witness young people on fire for the Lord, engaged in the ACF mission to share the Gospel with students on their respective campuses,” said Rene Harper, M.D., faculty advisor for the Augusta University chapter. “We enjoyed beautiful music and uplifting sermons, great food, and heartwarming fellowship with the students and Marietta Church members.”

“It was great to see young people alive and excited to serve,” said Joseph Wamach, senior pastor of Marietta, Ga., Church, which hosted the weekend.

ACF is the official ministry for Adventist students attending public universi-



PHOTO BY: DON KEELE JR.

Jonathan Grand-Jean, Kennesaw State University; Darren Thompson, ACF alum; Providence Mpamo, Georgia State University; Jonathan Debreuil, ACF alum; Chelsea Walter, ACF alum; Dammary Ojwang, Augusta University; Liane Muir, Emory University; and Janeen Reynolds, ACF alum, lead worship in music at Marietta, Ga., Church. Not pictured behind the piano: on guitar, Josiah Saint Hillaire, Kennesaw State University, and Henrickson Edouard, Kennesaw State University, playing bass. Marietta Church hosted the ACF ReStart Conference, and benefitted from the students leading out throughout the church service.

ties, and this year’s conference featured Keith Bowman, associate pastor of the Hamilton Community Church, speaking on the theme, “See For Yourself.” Bowman began Friday night speaking on the topic of “The Jesus Who Was,” helping students re-examine the Gospel of Emmanuel — God with us.

Sabbath morning, Bowman continued the theme, addressing “The Jesus Who is to Come.” Diving into Revelation, Bowman’s Scripture-packed message highlighted how the judgement proclaimed in Revelation is Good News.

“Judgement is given in favor of the saints,” said Bowman. “Justice is finally coming to all of those who have been persecuted by the devil, and his little demons and dominions and authorities. But, hold on saints, because Jesus is coming That’s the Good News.”

Later in the day, students were introduced to “The Sabbath Gift,” a resource designed to get people to think differently about time, and more specif-

ically about getting the rest they need by focusing on the weekly cycle. The Sabbath Gift is a small boxed kit tak-



PHOTO BY: DON KEELE JR.

Keith Bowman, Hamilton Community Church associate pastor and weekend speaker for ACF ReStart, speaks on the theme “See For Yourself.” Approximately 65 Adventist students and sponsors from public universities across the Conference attended the weekend event.



PHOTO BY: DON KEELE JR.

Grace McConville, senior nursing major at Valdosta State University, is one of approximately 65 students and sponsors who attended this year’s ACF ReStart. The conference is designed specifically for Adventist students attending public universities in the Georgia-Cumberland Conference.

ing one (or a group) on a self-guided tour through a week, featuring a daily card with a QR code to take the person to a video feature, and a way to think differently about time for that day. The logical conclusion of thinking differently about time leads one naturally to the Sabbath.

The Sabbath concluded with Bowman talking about praying for divine appointments as he inspired the delegates through the topic, “Jesus and Me.” Bowman shared stories of his personal walk, and numerous divine appointments that God had set up for him.

“ACF ReStart was awesome,” said Daniel Andre, president of the Georgia-Tech chapter. “It encouraged me to pray to be bold for Christ!”

These sentiments were shared by many of the attendees, including Providence

Mpano, senior psychology major and ACF president for the Georgia State University chapter: “ACF ReStart was extremely uplifting, from seeing people from different campuses to delving into the Word together.”

On Saturday night the students were able to enjoy great fellowship with a game night featuring volleyball, basketball, table games, and even a very lively Mario Kart tournament.

“I had a great opportunity to get to meet and know former advisors, pastors, and some of the ACF Fellows on a more personal level, and it was invigorating,” said Kerwin Lawrence, faculty advisor for the Kennesaw State Chapter.

“[ReStart] is the most practical and helpful ongoing event I have been a part of through these years to promote ministry on the public university campus,”

said Gary Wagner, D.Min., retired chaplain, pastor, and missionary, who is now a volunteer chaplain with the University of Tennessee, Chattanooga chapter. “I have been a chaplain for ACF chapters for 25 years in three conferences, [and] I find the ReStart weekend to be an amazing opportunity to rub shoulders with the generations who attend.”

Summing up the weekend, Grace McConnville, Valdosta State University senior nursing major, exclaims, “It was an amazing weekend! I enjoyed every second of it!”

For more information on ACF in the Georgia-Cumberland Conference, go to acfgcc.org. 📍

BY DON KEELE JR.

Jasper Members Donate Quarters for Mission

Who would have thought that M&M Candy containers would be useful in raising mission funds? In April 2023, Donna Garrison, Sabbath School superintendent for the Jasper, Ga., Church, brought a collection of the candy containers to church, and challenged the members to take one or more and fill it with quarters for the 13th Sabbath Offering.

It may not be evident by looking at them, but each little, cylindrical container can fit exactly \$20 in quarters. Even though most people use cash less and less, it seems that people have more loose change than they know what to do with. Using loose change to help missions is a small thing that can grow the Kingdom of God.

And where would the money that Jasper was collecting be going to? The 13th Sabbath Offerings go to special projects



Members of the Jasper, Ga., Church gave \$198 in loose change (mostly quarters) toward the 13th Sabbath offering. M&M containers were used to collect the offerings benefitting the Inter-European Division.

around the world, where it is needed most. There is a special emphasis on the World Church supporting schools in areas that need help to create, maintain, and even expand them. The June 24, 2023, 13th Sabbath Offering was for the Inter-European Division, which includes Ro-

mania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Austria, Germany, Spain, Italy, Belgium, France, Switzerland, and Portugal. This division has a special pull to the Jasper Church as some of the attendees were born there, including the pastor and his wife who served in Romania under communism.

The Jasper Church is a small one, set back on a hill in the Georgia mountains. The congregation is not large, and it is the only Seventh-day Adventist church in the county. Still, the members took up the call gladly. When the containers were returned, the loose change offering totaled \$198 in funds for missions. Garrison reports that even though the Jasper Church is small, the 13th Sabbath Offering is proof of their big heart for the Kingdom of God. 📍

BY LISA STROM

Canvasser Sparks Unique Friendship, Ministry at Local Memphis Gym

It was a sunny July afternoon, and the sweltering summer heat of Memphis, Tenn., beat down on the streets. Jamal Grant, just 15, was canvassing at the local Kroger parking lot when the exhausting heat began to take its toll. Seeking new canvassing opportunities and refreshing air condition, Grant decided to move from the Kroger space into the surrounding stores.

As he walked down the strip plaza, Grant came across the Better Life Training and Nutrition (BLT) Gym. Even though it looked closed at first, he decided to knock on the business door for a little longer.

“I heard a little voice in my head that was like, ‘stay there,’ because I was about to leave,” said Grant. “Sometimes when you just stay and listen, the Lord shows you His handiwork.”

After a bit of knocking, the door opened, and Grant met Mary Champion, BLT owner. Without hesitation, he did his canvassing sales pitch. Champion was intrigued by the books, particularly the health-focused ones. She saw an opportunity to bridge her Christian upbringing and her passion for a healthy lifestyle.

“I had been looking for ways to combine my faith and my commitment to well-being,” said Champion. “These books seem like the missing piece.”

She eagerly engaged in conversation with Grant, seeking to understand more about the literature he held in his hands. As Champion’s enthusiasm grew, Grant put her in touch with Ivan Martinez, Kentucky-Tennessee Conference outreach coordinator.

At first, Grant purchased 20 health



PHOTO BY: XANDER ORDINOLA

Mary Champion and Jamal Grant pose in front of Champion’s gym, BLT. The two met while Grant was canvassing in Memphis, Tenn., and Champion bought 40 books from Grant.

books, including *Ministry of Healing* and *Fighting Disease with Foods*. Champion shared the books with her gym clientele, and she used some of the recipes to make meal plans for her customers. Later, she called Martinez again for another 20-book order. This time she also wanted spiritual books and specifically asked for *Steps to Christ* and *Your Questions, God’s Answers*.

Martinez was surprised to find that Champion was going to be using the books to conduct Bible studies in her gym.

“It’s just powerful when you think about it,” said Martinez. “The most

impactful thing about canvassing is just being able to witness how people in the community are hungering and thirsting after the material that we have as Seventh-day Adventists. I mean, [Champion] is like the woman at the well who heard the words of Jesus and ran to tell everybody.”

BY PAOLA MORA ZEPEDA

Kentucky Church Member Uses Bible-making Business to Inspire Readers

Daniel Arroyo, a member of the Danville, Ky., Church, was in search for his perfect and forever Bible — a high quality Bible that would not wear down after years, and that he could pass down to his children. After searching for months, however, Arroyo could not find a Bible that met all the qualities he was looking for. So, he decided to try a different approach: designing and crafting his own Bible. This journey eventually led him to launch his Bible publishing business, Humble Lambs.

“The mission and purpose of Humble Lambs is to produce the Bible in such a way that compels people to read it and thus connect with God more intimately,” said Arroyo. “I started the business in February of 2017, and the first Bible arrived and was sold on August of 2018.”

According to Arroyo, there are two main components that make Humble Lambs Bible stand out. First is the layout of the page. Departing from the conventional double-column format, Humble Lambs Bibles uses a single-column layout, following the golden ratio of Fibonacci’s rectangles. In addition, Jesus’ words are highlighted in blue instead of red — a choice made to accommodate for colorblind readers.

“Overall, layout was important to me because I wanted people to find themselves being drawn to the words,” said Arroyo. “If we could get people to spend five more minutes a day in the Word of God, then that is a big win for us. That’s really what we want.”

Beyond design, Arroyo says that quality was also very important to him. Humble Lamb Bibles are made with full grain goatskin leather and are assembled by

hand. The goal is that these Bibles will not wear down even after constant use.

Since Humble Lambs Bibles launched in 2017, Arroyo has sold more than 7,000 Bibles across the world — including in the United States, Singapore, Germany, Australia, South Africa, and Namibia. In addition, for every Bible that he sells, Arroyo donates one standard Bible to someone in need.

“It would be absolutely amazing to meet somebody in Heaven and learn that they were able to know Jesus better because of one of our Bibles,” said Arroyo. “My ultimate goal is for our little business to be able to have an eternal impact on somebody’s life.”

BY PAOLA MORA ZEPEDA



PHOTO BY: DANIEL ARROYO

Daniel Arroyo takes a selfie with copies of Humble Lamb Bibles, which he produces and sells. After searching but never finding his “perfect and forever” Bible, Arroyo was inspired to launch his Bible publishing business.



PHOTO BY: DANIEL ARROYO

Humble Lamb Bibles

Successful Evangelistic Series on “Prophecies of Hope” Concludes in Adamsville

A transformative three-week evangelistic series on the “Prophecies of Hope” concluded in Adamsville, Tenn., leaving a lasting impact on both the local church members and visitors. The series, which took place from June 23 to July 15, 2023, averaged more than 60 attendees each night, and welcomed Carlis Clinton, pastor and current evangelist, as a guest speaker.

Under the theme of “Prophecies of Hope,” attendees were invited to explore the depths of biblical prophecy and its relevance to modern times. The Adamsville, Tenn., Church, which had not hosted an evangelistic series in approximately 15 years, took the initiative to rent the city’s community center for the duration of the series.

“[This event] is important because we believe it’s the time of the Gospel coalition,” said Kathleen Alexander, Adamsville Church member and Bible work-



Carlis Clinton speaks at the Adamsville Church evangelistic series.

er. “The Holy Spirit is out touching the hearts of individuals; our job is to just partner in God’s mission.”

The first night of the series saw an impressive turnout, with approximately

40 church members and an equal number of visitors in attendance. According to Clinton, the atmosphere was charged with enthusiasm.

“It’s very exciting to see people who’ve never heard this message before get excited about hearing the Word of God,” said Clinton.

As the series reached its conclusion, a total of 15 individuals signed up for Bible study programs. This outcome was celebrated by the church members.

“Besides personal Bible studies, [public evangelism] is the most concise opportunity that the Church has to share the three angels’ message, which is the reason we exist as a Church,” said Clinton. “Our biggest prayer and hope are that everyone who attended [the event] will have gotten to know Jesus better.”



Approximately 40 visitors were welcomed on the first night of the church’s evangelistic series, “Prophecies of Hope,” in Adamsville, Tenn.

PHOTO BY: JANELLE LATTIMORE

PHOTO BY: JANELLE LATTIMORE

BY PAOLA MORA ZEPEDA

Mary Kate McNeil Celebrates 100th Birthday

Ralph Peay, D.Min., presented Mary Kate McNeil with a proclamation on Sabbath, April 22, 2023, from the South Atlantic Conference.

Peay, former president of South Atlantic, now serves as the senior ministries director for the Conference.

Mary Kate McNeil is a member of the Shiloh Church in Charleston, S.C., and the proclamation was given in honor of her 100th birthday.

McNeil was born April 20, 1923, and was raised in Marion, S.C. She grew up in a Christian home where she and her siblings were introduced to the Seventh-day Adventist message by her mother, Golder Brunson.

After marrying William McNeil, she moved to Charleston, S.C., where she resides in the home they built 80 years ago, and

where they still reside. Together, Mary Kate McNeil and her husband raised 18 children.

Although she had to work as a domestic worker to help shoulder the financial burden of Adventist education, her faith never wavered. At one point she had five children attending Oakwood College (now Oakwood University) at the same time, and three other children simultaneously attending Andrews University. Through her faithfulness, today 14 of her children have college degrees, vocational training, or military careers. In addition, she has 23 grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren who attended or graduated from Adventist Christian schools, colleges, and universities.

Throughout her 100 years, she has had family worship and attended Camp Meetings. She has served in her church in many capacities, including the health and temper-

ance leader, Sabbath School teacher, church clerk, hospitality committee, Dorcas Society (Adventist Community Services) leader, and missionary volunteer leader (AYS). She also worked as a Bible instructor and served her community as well — opening her doors to anyone who needed help with a meal, support, or encouragement.

She says the secret to her longevity is to follow a vegan diet and the Seven Laws of Health.

On the Sabbath she was awarded the proclamation, Ralph Peay was the worship speaker. His message was based on Psalm 92 and was titled “The Palm Tree Christian,” which was a reflection and testimony of the life of Mary Kate McNeil. 🕊

BY THE MCNEIL FAMILY



Ralph Peay, D.Min., presents Mary Kate McNeil with a proclamation in celebration of her 100th birthday.

Oakwood University Church Holds Community Child Dedication Service



PHOTO BY: JOSEPH W. BOOTH JR.

The child dedication service was led by Debleaire Snell (center), Oakwood University Church senior pastor and Breath of Life speaker/director.

This event showed me that we really do need God inside our lives,” said Candice Del Gardo when reflecting on the “Community Child Dedication” event hosted in May by Oakwood University Church (OUC).

Del Gardo, who heard about the dedication from a co-worker — an OUC member — brought her 8-year-old, 5-year-old, and 3-month-old sons to be blessed. She stood onstage alongside 46 other families with children, most of whom were not OUC members.

The Community Child Dedication, a vision of Debleaire Snell, OUC senior pastor, and Kimberly Mann, youth pastor, gave families an opportunity to have their children, ages birth to 12, prayed over. After service, the church welcomed the families to a baby shower where they received lunch and loads of gifts.

“As a mother of three small children, I knew we couldn’t stop at just praying over the babies,” said Mann. “We needed to give tangible resources to meet the needs of the people we were inviting to our church.”

Those resources included diapers, wipes, toiletries, socks, clothes, and toys piled high on tables lining both sides of a hallway. Families could load up as much

as they needed, thanks to the sponsorship of Mother-to-Mother, a nonprofit organization based in Nashville, Tenn., the nonprofit Mommy Love Foundation, and donations from OUC members.

Each child also received a Bible; a certificate of dedication; an invitation from Judy Childs-Dent, principal for Oakwood Adventist Academy, to enroll at the Academy; and a \$500 scholarship from Leslie N. Pollard, Ph.D., D.Min., Oakwood University president, to jumpstart their future college education.

A single mother, who flew from Florida with her three boys under age 4, marveled at the church opening its doors to her to pray over her children. Del Gardo and her 8-year-old son, Kingston, expressed a desire to return to OUC. These are the results a church hopes for from such an event.

“The Bible says children are a blessing,” says Mann, “and we need to give parents the spiritual and physical tools necessary to grow their children into kingdom kids.” That’s what practical evangelism looks like. 🕊

BY PATRICE THOMAS CONWELL, OUC PR/COMMUNICATION MINISTRY LEADER

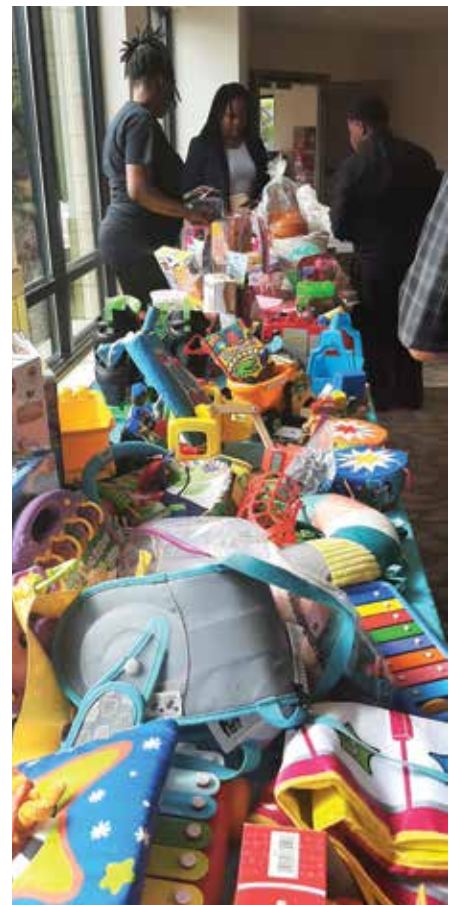


PHOTO BY: PATRICE THOMAS CONWELL

A baby shower was held where the attendees received lunch and loads of gifts.

Oakwood University Church Hosts Community Health Fair for Children

The cloudy rain-drizzled Sunday morning of April 16, 2023, marked the Oakwood University Church (OUC) Adventurers' Annual Children's Health Fair (CHF), but it did not dampen the excitement.

The CHF, led by Brenda Harrigan, Adventurers Club director, is an annual celebration of wellness and education. Though all are welcome to attend, it is designed specifically for children, preschool to fourth grade, which makes it extra special.

Bringing together OUC children, families, and the community, the fair started with a "Fun Walk" around the church premises, followed by a delicious breakfast to fuel participants for the day's activities.

The vibrant atmosphere was stoked by an interactive passport journey encouraging children to explore different stations, and gather knowledge about the importance of sunlight, fresh



PHOTO BY: JOSEPH W. BOOTH JR.

Nurse Veronica trains Skylar Matthews and Caleb Mullins on CPR compressions.

air, and drinking water along the way. Laughter filled the air as they eagerly solved puzzles, answered health trivia, and earned prizes.

A variety of health screenings ensured that the children and their fam-

ilies received valuable information about their well-being. The screenings covered hearing, height, weight, and dental health, promoting early detection and prevention of potential issues. In addition, CPR training sessions demonstrated the essential steps of life-saving compressions.

To further promote the joy of movement, an exercise station offered guided, age-appropriate stretching and calisthenics. The children delighted in the opportunity to race through the more than 75-foot inflatable obstacle course used to amplify the importance of an active lifestyle.

As the health fair ended, the children departed with smiles on their sun-soaked faces, and a newfound understanding of ways to take care of their bodies. For them, it was a day filled with laughter, learning, and the promise of a healthier future. 🌟



PHOTO BY: JOSEPH W. BOOTH JR.

Audiology screening by Alabama A&M student

BY MAQUISHA MULLINS, PH.D., OUC PR/COMMUNICATION MINISTRY TEAM MEMBER.

Campers Empowered, Faith Strengthened at Camp Thunderbird

In a picturesque corner of central Alabama, in the city of Millport, an extraordinary event unfolded this summer at Timber Lake Ministries Camp. South Central Conference held its 2023 session of Camp Thunderbird. With 115 enthusiastic campers aged 12 to 17 from various parts of the Conference territory, the camp was bustling with youthful energy and an eagerness to grow in faith and forge meaningful connections.

Anchored by vibrant worship sessions led by passionate leaders, the campers were completely immersed in a high-energy environment that left a profound impact on their lives. The worship time sparked a fire within their hearts, igniting a deepened devotion to their beliefs, and instilling a sense of purpose for their spiritual journey and to Jesus.

When asked, “What is your objective for this year?” Bryant Stewart, youth and young adult director for the South Cen-



PHOTO BY: J. CIERA LEWIS

Campers are baptized.

tral Conference shared, “My objective this year is clearly the same as it always has been: to continue the rebranding of Camp Thunderbird, allowing for the kids not just to have a chance to meet Christ, but to meet each other to get a chance to

detox from the over technological world that we have.” Stewart continued, “And, [to] get a chance to begin to build those small communications, relational fundamental things that we used to have in our community so strongly. And so, my hope



PHOTO BY: J. CIERA LEWIS

Camp Thunderbird team with Benjamin Jones Jr., South Central president



PHOTO BY: J. CIERA LEWIS

Morning line call

is that we can drop the technology, drop the phone, get out of TikTok, jump off of Snapchat, let Instagram go, and just have a moment to get to know each other and to get to know our God together.”

This summer witnessed an awe-inspiring display of commitment as 40 campers chose to publicly declare their faith through baptism. This powerful act of devotion revealed the depth of transformation and the profound influence that Camp Thunderbird had on their spiritual lives. It was a testament to the camp’s mission of nurturing a strong foundation of faith, and empowering youth to live out their beliefs boldly.

The excitement didn’t end there. Gregory and Kim Taylor, Southern Union youth directors, graced the camp with their presence, and offered words of encouragement and support to the dedicated staff. Their visit was rewarded with an extraordinary experience as they witnessed the Spirit of God moving among the campers. In profound moments of prayer, tears flowed as campers fervently interceded for one another, their heartfelt cries echoing a desire to deepen their relationship with God.

Benjamin Jones Jr., South Central

Conference president, also made a special appearance at Camp Thunderbird. In a heartfelt address, he passionately urged the campers to seize this invaluable opportunity to draw closer to Jesus. His admonishment resonated deeply within the hearts of those present, leaving a lasting imprint on their souls.

Camp Thunderbird continues to serve as a transformative space, enabling youth to not just make friends and enjoy outdoor activities, but more crucially, to

nourish their spirituality and establish unwavering connections with God. This summer’s camp was a resounding success, leaving a profound impact on the lives of the 115 campers who attended. As they return to their respective communities, they will carry the flame ignited at Camp Thunderbird, shining brightly as beacons of faith and hope. ❶

BY ROGER R. WADE



PHOTO BY: J. CIERA LEWIS

Campers and staff during morning worship

First Church Engages Reading Buddies Literacy Initiative

Reading and literacy statistics surrounding elementary-aged students are staggering. According to The Literacy Project (2022), reading more books correlates with higher reading scores. Students who get to choose what they'd like to read and have opportunities to read in informal environments are likely to be more motivated to read, demonstrate greater language and literacy development, and simply read more. Reading, as well being read to, influences readers further than simply hearing stories. These and other critical stats about the importance of supporting reading development in young readers — a foundational skill for learning — motivated the curation of a unique outreach initiative for First Church in Huntsville, Ala.

Reading Buddies was born and piloted as an initiative positioned to engage church members in community outreach with the potential to be both impactful and perpetual. Often community outreach begins and ends with a single event. However, an effort was sought that would provide ongoing, meaningful community engagement through volunteers' consistent connection to service opportunities. Adult volunteers were chosen to pair with elementary students to help young readers



Jennifer Patterson, D.D.S., First Church outreach coordinator, reads with a 3rd grader.

strengthen basic reading skills in authentic ways. A specific call was made for participants who enjoyed working with children and had time to volunteer during the school day; participants were assigned to schools; general orientation was arranged; and the participants were leased to work with young readers.

The Reading Buddies Literacy Initiative was implemented during the second semester of the current school year. It is designed to engage volunteers ages 18 and up by providing opportunities for

them to spend time reading and holding conversations one-on-one with elementary students and helping them sharpen basic reading skills on a weekly basis for 30 minutes per student during the school day. Volunteers served at two local Title 1 public elementary schools in the Huntsville City School system — James Dawson Elementary and Ridgecrest Elementary. The Reading Buddies meetups proved to be impactful for both students and volunteers as evidenced by smiles, enthusiastic interactions, much-anticipated classroom visits, special gifts, and more. Volunteers read great stories and practiced skills with students, chatted, laughed, loved on, and cherished time spent in informal ways, pouring into children in the local community who needed it the most. When it comes to practical ministry, a unique opportunity was seen to serve in a capacity that will have longstanding results. We are thankful for the privilege of being the hands and feet of Jesus through sharing time and great books with children, and are looking forward to the new school year when we can continue our Reading Buddy Literacy Initiative. ❶

BY JENNIFER PATTERSON, D.D.S.



William Lee, D.Min., First Church senior pastor, reads with a 3rd grader.



Audree Johnson, WJOU Radio Station general manager, reads with a 4th grader.

Employee LifeGroups Foster Closer Campus Connections at Southern

A new small-group initiative is strengthening relationships between employees at Southern Adventist University. Student LifeGroups have been a popular program on campus for many years, with at least one out of every three undergraduate students participating and of those, 100% reporting positive experiences from being in close-knit communities. Building on that transformational success, Joseph Khabbaz, vice president for spiritual life and University chaplain, developed a similar program for employees that launched last year.

This year, eight employee groups are meeting weekly for inspirational fellowship during the workday, including Bible study and prayer. Volunteer facilitators include two married couples who all work in different departments within the University.

“We were very intentional about finding a cluster of people who represent a broad sampling of campus, so our LifeGroup includes a librarian, an accountant, a fundraising professional, and a residence hall dean,” said Tammy Overstreet, dean of the School of Education, Psychology, and Counseling. She leads the “Getting to Know Jesus” study with her husband, Bob, director of the Center for Teaching Excellence and Biblical Foundations for Faith and Learning.

The Overstreets are pleased to witness God’s broader blessings on families and communities affiliated with Southern as the knowledge gained and personal changes happening on campus naturally overflow beyond its borders.

Greg King, dean for the School of Religion, and his wife, Mary, a nurse at the University Health Center, spearhead the “Following Jesus” LifeGroup. Like the Overstreets, the Kings were deliberate in



The faculty and staff of Southern Adventist University draw closer together to better serve the University’s students.

building a circle of people who weren’t already close coworkers or friends outside of the office.

In January of this year, the “Men@Work” LifeGroup was introduced by School of Computing professor Robert Ordóñez and Lucas Patterson, associate director of strategic partnerships on the advancement team. Members from six different departments continued meeting weekly through the summer months, and one participant even joins in during his days off.

The mission of all LifeGroups on campus is to provide opportunities to *belong* in spiritual small-group communities, to *behold* God personally and intimately, and to *become* empowered as disciple-makers of Jesus Christ. To date, the feedback from employee participants is overwhelmingly positive, with many citing the value of meeting and interacting with colleagues on a deeper level, as well as finding true encouragement and inspiration.

One survey respondent mentioned, “I love having more people who I know that are willing to pray for me”; others treasure “a break in the day to talk about Jesus,” and “time to recharge our faith during the week.” “Great discussions,” “powerful insights and perspectives,” “enjoying a connection with my coworkers that I wouldn’t have had otherwise,” and “moving from little known colleagues to friends and family,” also were noted by participants.

“While the spiritual wellness of individuals is being strengthened through this program, I’d suggest that employee connectivity is the broader University interest,” said Patterson. “Having faculty and staff from different departments engage in small groups together tears down silos and nurtures a family atmosphere as we share in Southern’s mission and vision for our students.”

BY TINA FRIST SMITH



BAKER, ELMER CARROLL, 92, born Aug. 20, 1930, to the late John Wesley Baker and Beuna Cogdill Baker, died July 26, 2022. He was the second of eight children, two of whom survived only as infants. Knoxville, TN, was his birthplace, but the family moved to the beautiful mountains of Black Water, VA, when he was still a baby. He learned many valuable skills from his dad as he worked with him on the farm while growing up. He joined the army when he was 20 and was trained as a gun repairman. Of his three years in service, 16 months were spent in Korea during the Korean War. He was placed over a shop repairing guns pulled off the front lines of battle. They were trained to do their repairs blindfolded in case lights were ever out.

His older brother, John, had learned of and accepted the Seventh-day Adventist message while working in Knoxville. He invited Elmer to study the Voice of Prophecy Bible lessons, which he did while the war was going on in Korea. He was amazed at how plain and beautiful the Bible became and was baptized soon after he was discharged from service.

The Lord then led him to enroll in college at Southern Missionary College (now Southern Adventist University) in Collegedale, TN, where he completed training to become a teacher. He met Katie Mae Phillips in college

there, and they were married in 1959. To this special union were born two sons and two daughters. His teaching career in elementary church schools included many happy rewards and covered several southern states from Virginia to Florida.

He is survived by his wife, Katie; three brothers: Henry, Jim, and Bill; two sons: Mark (Tansha), and Curt (Vesy); two daughters: Elisa (Rob) Elliott, and Maria (Shawn) Hensel; five grandchildren: Marita Hensel (Spencer) Puckett, David (Sara) Hensel, Austin (Cece) Elliott, Savannah Elliott (Jimmy) Fine, and Kevin Baker.

da COSTA, KARI A. SOAPPMAN, 42, born Oct. 21, 1980, at Hinsdale San and Hospital in Hinsdale, IL, died of stage IV Colon Cancer on Dec. 12, 2022, at the AdventHealth Hospital in Orlando, FL. Kari and her family attended the Markham Woods Church in Longwood, FL.

During her brief life she attended Andrews University in Berrien Springs, MI, in 1999. She transferred to Union College in Lincoln, NE, and graduated with a bachelor's degree in nursing in 2004. Later she graduated with a master's in business administration.

During her career, she worked in leadership roles at Adventist Health Howard Memorial Hospital in Willits, CA, and AdventHealth Gordon Hospital in Calhoun, GA. She gave up her prominent career to be a stay-at-home mom after her daughter Emily was born in Georgia, and later her son Lucas born in Florida (she homeschooled both). She is survived by her husband of 19 years, Moises; her two children; her parents: Peggy and Dennis Soapman; and her brother, Matthew Soapman.



GRAYMAN, PRUDENCE W., 88, born Feb. 15, 1934, Panama Canal Zone, died unexpectedly on Jan. 31, 2023. She was a member of the Port Charlotte, FL, Church.

She studied education in Costa Rica, and became a teacher and girls' dean in Medellin, Columbia. On Dec. 1, 1957, she married El Senor Arturo Grayman, and together they embarked on a journey of love, faith, and service in Columbia, South America, Maine, New York, Michigan, Curacao, Nebraska, and Florida. Her roles included secretary of the Panama Conference, secretary of personal ministries at the Medellin Union office, counselor, hospital secretary, editorial secretary, and initiated a newlywed ministry in the Netherlands Antilles.

In 2000, Prudence and Art settled in Port Charlotte. Art was associate pastor and pastored the Spanish congregation. Art continued to partner with his helpmate, Prudence, for multiple kinds of support in his ministry. She initiated a quilt ministry for those in need and encouragement, directed women's ministries, Vesper programs, and organized social events to foster fellowship.

She is survived by her husband of 65 years, Pastor Art Grayman; her son, Tim (Debra) Grayman; two daughters: Leonor (Otniel) Gonzales, and Sheila Grayman; six grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Her memorial service was conducted on Feb. 9, 2023. The loss of Prudence leaves a void in the hearts of those who loved her. Her memory will forever be cherished, and will continue to inspire those who were fortunate enough to know her. Prudence's legacy of faith, love, and service will endure as a testament to a life well-lived.

PING, DOROTHY MAE HEROLD SOMERS, 92, born Aug. 23, 1930, in Bedford, IN, to Frank and Agatha Herold, died Aug. 1, 2023. Dorothy married the late Dale Raymond Somers in 1953. When she was widowed in 1967, she was left to raise six children ranging from 3 to 12 years of age, and moved from Columbus, IN, to Berrien Springs, MI.

There she finished her bachelor of science in biology at Andrews University. She then relocated back to Columbus, where she worked at the Department of Human Services until 1972. In 1972, Dorothy again relocated the family to Collegedale, TN, where she worked at McKee Library, and then was offered her dream job as dean of women at Southern Missionary College (now Southern Adventist University).

She transitioned from having six children to having hundreds of children. She had a real burden on her heart to serve the Lord, and to lead others to love the Lord. She retired from Southern to care for her aging mother in Columbus. There she was reunited with her high school sweetheart, Lloyd Ping. They were married in 1993 and remained in Columbus until Lloyd's passing in 2009. She then returned to Collegedale where she enjoyed being with her family.

She is survived by her children: Dale "Rob" (Sue) Somers, Dianne Somers (Tom) Ward, Daryl (Jeanna) Somers, Dwight Somers, David (Cherice) Somers, Duane Somers; 13 grandchildren; and 20 great-grandchildren. She is interred in Columbus, with her first husband and the father of her six children.





SIQUEIRA, LYDIA NUNES, 103, born Dec. 27, 1920, in Itajaí, Santa Catarina, Brazil. She was a daughter of Pastor Germano João Frederico Conrad and Emília Beskow Conrad, died Aug. 1, 2023. She was a teacher, Bible instructor, speaker on the benefits of healthy living, writer, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. She married Pastor José Nunes Siqueira on January 22, 1941, a minister of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. From this marriage, four children were born: Osilda, Celina, Bety, and Marcus.

Lydia served the church alongside her husband, who ministered in Brazil and in the United States for over 40 years. She herself was a teacher in elementary church schools in south Brazil for more than 10 years. She later worked at the Adventist hospital in Glendale, CA, as an electrocardiogram technician for almost three years. It was during her two years as director of the Brazilian Voice of Prophecy Bible Correspondence School in Rio de Janeiro, that she wrote a new biblical course, "Encounter With Life," which replaced the old one, "Universal Course of the Sacred Scriptures." In New York City, she was the Bible instructor for the Greater New York Conference Van Ministry for four years. This ministry offered social services and religious help for the community. Lydia wrote a vegetarian cookbook, *Health Comes From the Kitchen* in 1979, published by the Adventist Publishing House in Brazil. It became very popular with the Brazilian general public and with Adventists. She also

was the co-author of "Solving Problems" with her husband in 1991. Lydia most recently was a member of the North Miami Beach Church in North Miami Beach, FL.

She is survived by three children: Celina Schwantes, Bety Siqueira, Marcus Siqueira Conrad, and his wife, Kelly Conrad; three grandchildren: Karin, Kalie, and David; and six great-grandchildren. Lydia was predeceased by her five siblings; her dear husband of 64 years, José Nunes Siqueira who passed away in 2005; and her oldest daughter, Osilda Pöhl, who passed away in 2013.

SKINNER, RONALD RICHARD, 77, born Aug. 20, 1946, in New York, to Robert and Virginia Skinner, died Aug. 26, 2023, in Woodstock, GA, leaving a legacy that touched the lives of many. A memorial service was held Sept. 16, 2023, at the Calhoun, GA, Church.

He attended Southside High School in Elmira, New York. He enlisted in the U.S. Army and was a combat veteran of the Vietnam War. He achieved the rank of Staff Sergeant, received a Purple Heart, and served in the First Air Cavalry and 173rd Airborne Brigade. Among other distinctions he also had the honor of being assigned with special forces units from the Republic of Korea. He was proud to serve his country and work with a diversity of people from around the world.

Prior to deploying to Vietnam, he married his first wife, Jeannie Arapage Skinner. They remained married for 45 years, until her death. Upon his return and discharge from the military, Ron dedicated his life to helping others as well as Christianity where he became a Seventh-day Adventist. He attended Atlantic Union College to become a Christian school teacher and principal. He was a talented professional and well versed in religious history, theology, math, science, and technology, where he was one of the first people to introduce personal computers into the classroom. He was a lifelong learner with many interests. He was also an ordained elder, and he spent the majority of his career dedicated to Christian education including at schools in New York, Massachusetts, New Mexico, Texas, Florida, Kansas, and Georgia.

Ron interacted with people from all walks of life and backgrounds. He promoted Christian education and spoke in countless churches around the U.S., and he had a tireless passion for helping to improve the development of Seventh-day Adventism at the regional, national, and international levels. Even into retirement, Ron served on church and education committees, and he collaborated with others in many outreach programs. He was committed to helping others and he chose a life where he lived that commitment daily. He touched many and he will be remembered by many.

Ron married his second wife Emma Hagan Skinner in 2017, who he is survived by; his sister and brother-in-law, Debbie and Carl Anderson; two sons and daughters-in-law: Frank and Cynthia Skinner, and Mike and Julie Skinner; four grandchildren; four nieces; nephews; a stepson and stepdaughter: Abel and Paula Hagan; and a large extended circle of family and friends.

For those who knew Ron well or even just a little, he cherished the opportunity to interact with people everywhere. He thoroughly enjoyed seeing students grow up to be successful in both their personal and spiritual lives. And up until his last day, he had love in his heart for everyone. He will be missed.



ULMER, RONALD M., 89, born Nov. 1, 1933, to Victor and Fannie Ulmer in New Orleans, LA, died July 16, 2023, in Tavares, FL, after a valiant fight of 19 years with Parkinsons.

At the time of his death, Ron was a member of the Forest Lake Church in Apopka, FL, for more than 20 years. Previously, he was a member of Kress Memorial Church in Orlando, FL, for more than 30 years. He was active in the Adventist Church for his adult life including being a head elder, deacon, and many other responsibilities. Ron served in the Air Force as an air traffic controller and served for four years in Goose Bay, Labrador. His hobby was being a woodworker like his dad who taught the craft to his three sons.

He was employed in patient's business in accounts receivable at Florida Hospital in Orlando, from 1974 until he retired in 1997.

Ron is survived by the love of his life for 52 years, E. Charlene Ulmer; one sister-in-law, Gertrude Ulmer of Altamonte Springs, FL; nieces; nephews; and many friends.

Interment is in the National Veterans Cemetery in Bushnell, FL, beside his beloved brothers: Vic and Roy. He was also predeceased by his parents.

DAVIS JR., DR. COSBY M. (BILL), 92, of Winston-Salem, NC, born in May of 1931 in Williamson, WV, to Cosby M. and Lola Hill Davis, Sr., went to sleep in Jesus at his home on Aug. 21, 2023. The family moved to Winston Salem in his early youth where he later graduated from Mineral Springs High School. He attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill for one year before enlisting in the Navy during the Korean War. During his service, he was stationed in California where he met and married his wife Dorothy and started a family. After his service, he graduated from Southern Missionary College in Collegedale, TN, and later Southern College of Optometry in Memphis, TN. He opened his optometric practices in Winston-Salem and Mayodan, NC, in 1961. He did not retire from his life's work until the age of 84 because of his love for people and improving vision-health for all ages. For over 60 years, he was an active member of the Winston-Salem First Church as an elder, school board member and chair, building committee chair, and Sabbath School teacher. His greatest passions were knowing Jesus, Christian education, and ensuring anyone who wanted to attend had that opportunity. He is survived by his five children: Cosby M. (Robin) Davis III of Winston-Salem, Dr. Terry L. (Melanee) Davis of Winston-Salem, Karen D. (Rick) Lewis of Matthews, NC, Victor K. (Kelly) Davis of Winston-Salem, and Olivia D. (Brad) Butner of Winston-Salem; five grandchildren: Heather D. (Andrew) Johnson, Nicholas A. Lewis, Ashley L. (Matt) Hunzelman, Zachery B. (Laura) Davis, and Eric C. (Ashley) Davis; and eight great-grandchildren: Samuel, Olivia, Jacob, James, Allie, Hayden, Theo, and Harper, of whom he was very proud; and two sisters, Betty Davis Slater and Nancy Davis Colcer. He was preceded in death by his wife of 59 years, Dorothy Crosslin Davis.

DRISKELL, GLORIA JEAN, 78, of Louisville, KY, born in Murray, Kentucky, on Feb. 5, 1945, and adopted by the late James and May Barnett on May 9, 1946, died on March 3, 2023, surrounded by love. Gloria was blessed to be a stay-at-home mom to all her children. She was an avid member of the Louisville Church where she served as a head deaconess, a Sabbath School teacher, and helping anywhere else she was needed at church or school. Her favorite was telling the children's story. Gloria is survived by her husband of 42 years, Jim; their children: Tina, Jimbo (Bonnie), Scott (Jody), Johnny (Amy), Angel, and Stephanie (David); their 15 grandchildren; and so many immensely loved great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death not only by her parents but also her son, Ted Clifford.

GANG, ELSIE MAY, 82, born Sept. 12, 1941, in Takoma Park, MD, to Carl and Ruth Anderson, died Feb. 2, 2023, after complications from a fall. Her father was in west Pennsylvania at the time of her birth, working as the tent master for evangelistic meetings, and only got to see his baby daughter six months after her birth. For most of her early years, she lived in South Lancaster, MA, attended Browning Memorial Elementary School, and graduated from South Lancaster Academy. She enrolled in the nursing program in Glendale, CA. At the same time, Eddie Gang was studying dentistry at Loma Linda, CA. After meeting, Eddie visited her in Glendale every weekend. They married August 16, 1964, in the Portland, ME, Adventist Church. That same year, Elsie May graduated from the Glendale Nursing School, and worked for two years with the heart team at Loma Linda University. When Eddie graduated in 1966 from dentistry, they moved to Alameda, CA, where he was stationed at the USS Coast Guard base, serving in the U.S. Public Health Service. They joined the East Oakland Seventh-day Adventist Church, which gave them a baby shower for their soon to be born son, Jeffrey Allen, who currently serves as associate professor of religion at Loma Linda University. The greater part of their life together was lived at Cedar Ledge Farm in New Jersey, where Eddie practiced dentistry, and where their daughter Carla Lynn was born. Elsie May was actively involved in running cooking schools, sharing hospitality, leading Pathfinders, and serving as head deaconess for 30 years at the church they joined. Eddie and Elsie May became grandparents to Madison, currently finishing her program in speech pathology; Braden, a second-year student at Southern Adventist University preparing for nursing; and McKenna, a senior at Redlands Academy in CA. In 2004, Carla, their daughter, had a fatal cerebral hemorrhage. In 2010 Ed retired from his dental practice, and in 2016 they moved to Hendersonville, NC, and became members of the Fletcher, NC, Church. Elsie May is survived by her husband of 58 years, Eddie; their son, Jeff (Gina); and three grandchildren: Madison, Braden, and McKenna.

GOYNE, DR. ROBERT EVAN, 100, of Ooltewah, TN, born Feb. 7, 1923, in Tillamook, OR, the son of the late Hillary M. Goynes and Beulah Richards Goynes, died July 18, 2023. He served in the United States Merchant Marine during World War II. Dr. Goynes earned his M.D. from the Loma Linda University School of Medicine in 1956. Over the next 32 years, he practiced family medicine in Upper Sandusky, OH, and specialized in internal medicine

and practiced internal medicine in Lincoln, NE. On retiring in 1988, Dr. Goynes lived in Wilmington, DE, Chestertown, MD, and finally Ooltewah, TN. In retirement, he invested in and managed four apartment projects in Texas. A lifelong Seventh-day Adventist, Dr. Goynes was intent on providing for his family and helping those in need. He loved dogs, travel, playing tennis, and was an avid reader, focusing on the Civil War and WWII. Survivors include his wife of 71 years, Barbara Smith Goynes; two sons: Thomas (Cheryl) Goynes, and Arthur (Janet) Goynes; two daughters: Kathleen Goynes and Christine Schafer; 10 grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. In addition to his parents, Dr. Goynes was preceded in death by two brothers, Richard and Arthur Goynes, and a sister, Jane Goynes Bainum.

GRASSO, JOSEPH, 79, born July 4, 1943, in Brooklyn, NY, son of Italian immigrants, Angelo and Maria, he was raised with a strong work ethic, family values, and six siblings, died May 26, 2023, in Edgewater, FL. He was a member of the Forest Lake Church in Apopka, FL. He developed a love of learning, excelled in education, and was fluent in Italian and Spanish. He served in the Navy transcribing Morse code messages during the Vietnam War. He earned a master's degree and a 30-year career as a guidance counselor with New York City Board of Education. After retirement, he was an adjunct professor at Seminole State University. Upon introduction to the Adventist faith, he found a community of friends and held many leadership positions: church planter, religious liberty director, teacher, deacon, and elder. He freely shared his faith. He is survived by his wife, Vilma; son, Angelo (Kathy); three daughters: Ana Maria (Greg), Jennifer (Glen), and Fiorella (Karl); and eight grandchildren. A Celebration of Life service was conducted by Matthew Smith, pastor of Forest Lake Church in Apopka, where he was a member.

HALL, LOUISE, 92, of Louisville, died June 29, 2023. She was a member of Louisville First Church. She and her husband, Robert, also enjoyed their hobby of making chocolate candies. She is survived by her husband of 72 years, Robert H. Hall; and her nieces; and nephews. Louise was preceded in death by her daughter, Karen Parrish; two brothers: James Smith and Kenneth Smith; and her sister, Janette Booth.

BE INSPIRED.



Download the brand-new AWR360° app!

Inspiration and a full media library at your fingertips!



visit: awr.org/apps



AWR360°
CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

Adventist World Radio 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904

Let's Connect!

[f awr360](https://www.facebook.com/awr360)

[t awr360](https://www.instagram.com/awr360)

[i awr.360](https://www.youtube.com/awr360)

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

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

HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR ADVERTISING

(1) Have your pastor or local church elder write "Approved" and his signature on the sheet of paper containing the advertisement, (2) write your name and address on the same sheet, (3) specify how many times the ad is to run, (4) send the approved ad to your conference office 6 weeks in advance of the publication date and (5) don't forget to enclose payment in full for each month the ad is to run. Make checks payable to SOUTHERN UNION.

RATES: Southern Union: \$40 for 20 words or less, including address. \$45 for anything longer than 20 words up to 45 words. \$1.30 per word beyond 45. Accepted as space is available. Ads may run in successive months as space permits.

Southern Tidings makes every reasonable effort to screen all advertising, but in no case can the periodical assume responsibility for advertisements appearing in its columns, or for typographical errors.

PROPERTY AVAILABLE

FLORIDA SDA REALTOR Would you like to BUY or SELL in Orlando, Florida or surrounding cities? I look forward to helping you! Sandra Da Silva, Realtor: 407-840-8500 (call/text). Service provided in English, Spanish & Portuguese. [C]

YOUR REALTOR IN FLORIDA & EAST-ERN TENNESSEE Are you ready to BUY or SELL your home? Maybe you want to trade hectic urban life for peaceful country living? Want to build a homestead? I can help you make it all happen. Contact Osvaldo "Ozzy" Ferrer 423-457-9057 or 407-285-2510. Call, text, WhatsApp, or email ozzyferrer@outlook.com. [C]

REFINANCE YOUR MORTGAGE TODAY! Looking to lower your interest rate, consolidate debt, get cash out for home improvements, or get pre-approved to purchase your home? We have the nation's top lenders. FHA/VA/USDA/Conventional/First Time Home Buyers welcome. Licensed in AL, NC, TN, FL, and other states. Call 411-MORTGAGES...Ozzy 407-285-2510 / 423-457-9057. [C]

CONFERENCE OWNED INDEPENDENT LIVING Community near Orlando, Florida. SDA Church on the property. AdventHealth medical care, shopping, beaches very close. The sunshine is free and plentiful. Start your new life with us!! 407-452-4243 Nancy (Admin), Katty (PR). [C]

SUMMIT RIDGE RETIREMENT VILLAGE An Adventist community in a rural setting outside Oklahoma City that offers affordable homes or apartments and caring neighbors, with a fellowship you'll enjoy. On-site church, planned activities, and transportation, as needed. Also, Wolfe Living Center offering independent living and nursing home. Website: <http://summitridgevillage.org> or Bill Norman 405-208-1289 [C]

DON'T JUST RETIRE.... Live with purpose at Fletcher Park Inn. An Independent Living Retirement Community, located on the campus of Fletcher Academy near Hendersonville, North Carolina. Join our family, take part in the many opportunities for staying active, volunteering, mak-

ing new friends and living with a purpose. Call to find out more about our apartment and villa homes 828-209-6930 ask for our marketing department or visit www.fletcherparkinn.com. [C]

KY LAND FOR SALE: Surveyed into 5 different lots. Each lot is 3± acres. Griffin community. Low gentle slope. Mtn. views. Close to Little South Fork River and Daniel Boone National Forest. City water, electric & garbage pick up available. If you like peace and quiet and having a garden, this land is perfect for you. 865.982.2555. [10]

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

FLETCHER ACADEMY IS HIRING! Serve with Purpose in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains. Join "a growing community of believers operating Adventist schools, ministries, and businesses in harmony to educate youth to have a transforming influence on the world as disciples of Christ." View current openings at www.fletcheracademy.org/career. [C]

UNION COLLEGE, Lincoln NE is searching for a Program Director for the Public Health Graduate Program. A doctoral degree in public health is required. This individual will be responsible for the implementation of and teaching within the graduate program. Please view the job description and instructions for application at college.edu/employment or contact Debbie Eno at Debbie.eno@ucollege.edu for more information. [10-11]

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks a full-time faculty in the area of Counseling for School of Education/Psychology. A doctoral degree in counselor education from a CACREP-accredited program is required. Doctoral degrees in clinical or counseling psychology from APA-accredited program could be considered if applicant has been employed as full-time faculty member in a counselor education program for a minimum of one full academic year before July 1, 2013. For a full job description and desired qualifications please visit www.southern.edu/jobs [10]

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks a full-time teaching faculty member with pediatric expertise to join a cohesive, mission-focused team for the School of

Nursing. Teaching responsibilities include undergraduate pre-licensure child health and simulation. Requisite qualities include pediatric RN experience, flexibility, and commitment to Adventist nursing education. Teaching experience and an earned doctorate are preferred. For a full job description and desired qualifications please visit www.southern.edu/jobs [10]

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks a full-time program director to launch a new Doctor of Physical Therapy degree program. The ideal candidate will be proficient in managing the CAPTE accreditation process, new program development, and teaching graduate physical therapy courses as well as clinical practice. In addition, the successful candidate will be committed to mentoring advisees, nurturing student learning both in and out of the classroom, and disciplining students in Jesus Christ. For a full job description and desired qualifications please visit www.southern.edu/jobs [10]

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks a full-time Engineer teaching faculty member for School of Engineering and Physics in the areas of mechanical, electrical, and computer engineering. The ideal candidate will be proficient in developing and teaching undergraduate engineering courses, including both lecture and laboratory components. Master's degree in mechanical, electrical, or computer engineering or related area required. Doctorate preferred. Prior higher education teaching experience and/or relevant industry experience preferred. For a full job description and desired qualifications please visit www.southern.edu/jobs [10]

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks qualified candidates for the following staff Salaried positions— Marketing & University Relations Editorial Manager, Online Campus Teaching Technology Specialist, Academic Administration DHSI (Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions) Project Manager, Academic Administration DHSI Community Outreach Coordinator, Academic Administration DHSI Retention and Resilience Coordinator. For more information go to Southern.edu/jobs [10]

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks qualified candidates for the following staff Hourly positions— S.A.L.T. Outreach Coordinator for School of Religion, Evangelistic Resource Center Office Manager for School of Religion, Alarm Technician, Deli Part-time Salad Supervisor, Landscape Supervisor. For more information go to Southern.edu/jobs [10]

WANTED — missionary minded teacher to help start a church school in southern Alabama-Troy SDA Church. Please call Lewis Norwood at 334-735-0277 or cell at 423-957-1777. [10]

UNION COLLEGE, Lincoln NE, is searching for a Payroll Accountant. This position

oversees and supervises the payroll functions of the organization, ensuring pay is processed on time, accurately, and in compliance with government regulations. This is a full-time, non-exempt position. Please see the full job description and instructions for application at ucollege.edu/employment. [10]

MISCELLANEOUS

RELOCATING? Apex Moving + Storage has a national account with the General Conference for your moving needs. Take advantage of a volume rated discount. Be assured you are moving with the best! Call Marcy Dante' at 800-766-1902; or visits us at: www.apexmoving.com/adventist. [C]

TEACH SERVICES HELPING AUTHORS: Publish your book, including editing, design, marketing, and worldwide distribution. Visit www.TEACHServices.com to submit your manuscript for a free evaluation or call 800-367-1844. Shop for NEW/USED ADVENTIST BOOKS at www.TEACHServices.com or at your local ABC. [C]

NC & SC Allstate Insurance Agency. SDA owned and operated. Call today for a free quote for auto, home, renters, boat, motorcycle or life insurance. Agent is UCSDA church Treasurer & Elder. Exclusive Agent, Brian King 704-844-2572 or jbrianking@allstate.com or visit us at www.allstate.com/jbrianking. [C]



SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY offers master's degrees in business, computer science, counseling, education, nursing religion and social work. Flexibility is provided through some online and many on campus programs. Financial aid is available. For more information, call 423-236-2585 or visit www.southern.edu/graduate-studies. [C]

WILDWOOD LIFESTYLE CENTER Residential Program. Suffering with a physical or mental health issue? Come away and receive healing from the Great Physician, regaining your health through natural rem-

edies. Join our residential programs, and learn principles of healthful living by calling 706-820-1493 or visit wildwoodhealth.com [10-12]

ADVENTIST TOURS 2024. Israel March 10-19 with Dr. Andy Nash (optional Jordan & Egypt); British Reformation June 9-18 with Dr. Greg King; Germany-Austria: Martin Luther to WWII June 18-28; Thailand June 17-26. From \$1950/person plus airfare. (Customized group tours also available.) Contact tabghatours@gmail.com or tabghatours.com for full info. [10-11]

KIDS NEED NEVER BE BORED! Just point them to LifeTalkKids.net and let them listen to great adventures, faith-building Bible stories, captivating science and awesome nature programs and more 24/7. Kids grow better with radio. Download our FREE APP at: LifeTalk.net [10]

SDA MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELOR- Cara Soto, M.A. Need a confidential place to share your struggles? I provide Christ-centered therapy. In-network provider for Aetna and BC/BS. Serving all of Florida through telehealth. To make an appointment with me, call 331-246-0930 or email

me at Cara@finishwellgroup.com [10]

SEEKING A PLACE to share your hands and heart in service to the Lord? Join Volunteer team at Camp Kulaqua, High Springs, FL. Bring an RV and spend a season with us. For more information, call 386-454-1351 or email: volunteer@campkulaqua.com. [10]

UNION/CONFERENCE JOB OPPORTUNITES



Moving?

Don't leave us behind.



To change your address for Southern Tidings scan the QR code, or email yourstove@southernunion.com

This form can also be filled in and mailed to:
Southern Tidings P.O. Box 993605, Peachtree Corners, GA 30010-3605

name _____

old address _____

new address _____

phone number _____



ARE YOUR INVESTMENTS SECURE?

Your parents raised you to be the person that you are today as they watched out for your well-being and cheered you on as you grew up. Now they have reached their golden years and they need help to make good decisions for their well-being and care. When Sue's parents needed care, she was glad that they had been pro-active in getting their Power of Attorney and Health Care Surrogate Forms signed appointing her as the person to attend to their needs. It was an easy transition for her to take care of them. Please take advantage of the services your local conference offers to have these documents prepared ahead of time.

If you are interested in a Deferred Gift Annuity to support God's work, please contact your planned giving office.

Carolina
Rick Hutchinson
(704) 696-3200

Georgia - Cumberland
 Roy Harwell
 (706) 629-7051

Kentucky-Tennessee
Siren Production
(615) 859-1391

South Atlantic
Marketing Monthly
(404) 762-0535

Southeastern
John Gernoster
(360) 735-2142

Florida
Mill Board
 (407) 644-5000

Gulf States
David Sigamani
(334) 272-7493

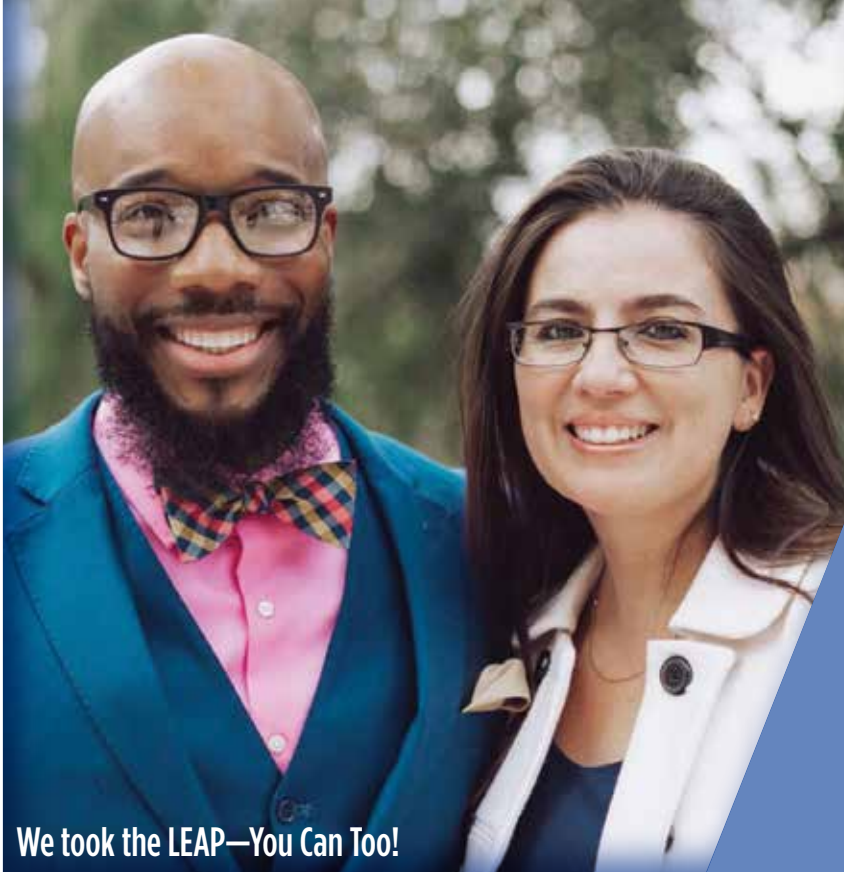
Oakwood University
Melissa W. Rutledge
(256) 726-7508

South Central
Sandra Clayton
(815) 226-6500

Southern Adventist University
Kimberly Robertson
(423)-236-2831

SUNSET

| | OCT 6 | OCT 13 | OCT 20 | OCT 27 | NOV 3 | NOV 10 |
|------------------|-------|--------|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| ATLANTA, GA | 7:17 | 7:08 | 6:59 | 6:51 | 6:45 | 5:39 |
| CHARLESTON, SC | 6:59 | 6:50 | 6:42 | 6:35 | 6:28 | 5:23 |
| CHARLOTTE, NC | 7:01 | 6:51 | 6:43 | 6:35 | 6:27 | 5:22 |
| COLLEGE DALE, TN | 7:19 | 7:09 | 7:00 | 6:52 | 6:45 | 5:39 |
| HUNTSVILLE, AL | 6:25 | 6:16 | 6:07 | 5:59 | 5:52 | 4:46 |
| JACKSON, MS | 6:40 | 6:32 | 6:24 | 6:16 | 6:10 | 5:05 |
| LOUISVILLE, KY | 7:20 | 7:09 | 7:00 | 6:51 | 6:43 | 5:36 |
| MEMPHIS, TN | 6:38 | 6:29 | 6:20 | 6:12 | 6:05 | 4:59 |
| MIAMI, FL | 7:03 | 6:56 | 6:50 | 6:44 | 6:39 | 5:35 |
| MONTGOMERY, AL | 6:25 | 6:16 | 6:08 | 6:01 | 5:54 | 4:49 |
| NASHVILLE, TN | 6:25 | 6:15 | 6:06 | 5:58 | 5:50 | 4:44 |
| ORLANDO, FL | 7:07 | 6:59 | 6:52 | 6:46 | 6:40 | 5:35 |
| TAMPA, FL | 7:11 | 7:04 | 6:57 | 6:51 | 6:45 | 5:41 |
| WILMINGTON, NC | 6:51 | 6:41 | 6:33 | 6:25 | 6:18 | 5:12 |



We took the LEAP—You Can Too!

David Johnson • Class of Fall 2019

Karina Johnson • Class of Spring 2018

Take the LEAP! Get Your Degree Done.

Check Out All Our Best
Options for Your Success



- Age 22+
- Low Tuition
- Online Only
- Debt Amnesty
- Global Reach
- Best Foot Forward*
- Prior Learning Credit
- Summer Mini-mester Sessions
- VA Educational Benefits

*Best Foot Forward option allows the student to delete 2 low-achieving semesters from their transcripts.

256.726.7098

leap.oakwood.edu

OAKWOOD UNIVERSITY • Office of Adult & Continuing Education

OAKWOOD
UNIVERSITY
LEAP
Leading Education for Adult Professionals

CAROLINA

Retiree Retreat – Sept. 18-21. Nosoca.
Carolina Men's Retreat – Sept. 29-Oct. 1. Nosoca. English/Hispanic Registration.
Harvest Impact
 Oct. 6-7 – Summerville, SC.
 Oct. 13-14 – Raleigh, NC.
Hispanic Women's Retreat – Oct. 6-8. Nosoca. Register.
Women's Retreat – Oct. 13-15. Nosoca.
Let's Talk Young Adults
 Oct. 21 – Greenville North.
 Nov. 18 – Hendersonville Spanish.
 Dec. 9 – Greenville, NC, Spanish.
Growing Together – Nosoca
 Jan. 12-14 – Hispanic.
 Jan. 26-28 – English.

FLORIDA

A Better Choice / Florida Adventist Book Center – Altamonte Springs: 407-644-4255. High Springs: 386-454-7956. Shop online: myfloridaabc.com or order by e-mail: FloridaABC@floridaconference.com
Florida Adventist Book Center Express Delivery Schedule – Avoid shipping costs by placing an ABC order to be delivered to a scheduled location. Orders must be made by phone or email before noon on the Thursday prior to a scheduled Sunday delivery.
 Oct. 8. St. Augustine, Jacksonville LifePoint Christian Fellowship, Jacksonville Southpoint. (Southeastern Conference: New Life International, Jacksonville Ephesus.)
 Oct. 15. West Palm Beach First, Pompano Beach, Margate, Ambassador in Lauderdale Lakes, Lauderdale. (Southeastern Conference: Port St. Lucie.)
 Oct. 22. Naples, Lehigh Acres, Fort Myers, Cape Coral, Avon Park.
 Oct. 29. Inverness, Brooksville, New Port Richey, Clearwater, St. Petersburg, Winter Haven. (Southeastern Conference: Mount Calvary.)
 Nov. 5. Kendall, Miami Temple, Miami Springs, Maranatha in Miami Gardens, Sunrise, Midport.
 Nov. 12. East Pasco in Zephyrhills, Brandon, Palmetto, Sarasota, Port Charlotte, Avon Park.
 Nov. 19. North Lake in Leesburg, Marion Oaks in Ocala, Ocala, Madison, Tallahassee.
 Dec. 3. Daytona Beach, New Smyrna Beach, Titusville, Melbourne, Fort Pierce. (Southeastern Conference: Palm Bay.)
 Dec. 10. West Palm Beach First, Pompano Beach, Margate, Ambassador in Lauderdale Lakes, Plantation. (Southeastern Conference: Port St. Lucie.)
 Dec. 17. Naples, Lehigh Acres, Fort Myers, Cape Coral, Avon Park.
Young at Heart 50+ Retreat – Nov. 6-9. Camp Kulaqua, High Springs.
Free Savvy Retirement Series Via Zoom – Oct. 24. Sponsored by Florida Conference Planned Giving and Trust Services: Managing and Lowering your Tax Bills at Retirement.

Registration: planned.giving@florida-conference.com or 407-644-5000, x2246 or x2241.

Camp Kulaqua's 70th Anniversary – Oct. 13-15. TELL YOUR CAMP STORY: Invited are all previous camp staff, volunteers, and those connected to camp to come and join the celebration! Visit website: www.campkulaqua.com.

One Day Marriage Retreat for English Speakers – Nov. 4. Featuring Dr. Dion and Dr. Dilyn Henry at Florida Conference Office, Altamonte Springs.

One Day Marriage Retreat for Spanish Speakers – Nov. 11. Featuring Dr. Consuelo Romera at Florida Conference Office, Altamonte Springs.

Florida Keys Camp Meeting – Feb. 2-4. First Camp Meeting of the 2024 season to be held at Camp Sawyer, mile marker 34, on the Oceanside. Speaker: Mark Finley. Jennifer LaMountain and the Family and Friends Septet will provide special music. For reservations, housing, or more information, please contact Lynn at 734-796-3733.

GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND

Fall Men's Retreat – Oct. 6-8. Cohutta Springs Conference Center.

Adventurer Regional Day – Oct. 8. Regions 3 and 4.

Master Guides Camporee – Oct. 20-22. Cohutta Springs Youth Camp.

Pathfinder Regional Events – Oct. 20-22.

Lights, Camera, Evangelism: Elevate Your Livestream Ministry – Oct. 26. 7 p.m. Webinar.

Adventurer Regional Weekend – Oct. 27-29. Region 5.

Emotional & Spiritual Care Certification, Provider 2 Part 1 – Oct. 27-29. Cohutta Springs Conference Center.

ACF Leadership Reboot – Nov. 3, 4.

Teen Challenge – Nov. 3-5. Cohutta Springs Youth Camp.

South Georgia Camp Meeting – Nov. 10, 11. Warner Robins Church.

Please check our website for the latest information, www.gccsda.com.

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

Ask an Attorney Series – Oct. 16-24. Chattanooga area attorneys and financial experts are offering free, one-hour consultation sessions to learn about starting or updating your estate plan, planning for retirement, consolidating debt, setting up a budget, caring for the elderly, and investing, among other topics. Call 423-236-2832 or email plannedgiving@southern.edu to make an in-person or online appointment.

Archaeology Lecture – Oct. 23. The Institute of Archaeology welcomes research scholar Klaus Wagensohn, Ph.D., from Yale University to present "Between Doom and Glory: The Treatment of Babylon by the Last

Assyrian Kings" in Lynn Wood Hall Chapel at 7 p.m. The free lecture will be broadcast live at southern.edu/streaming. For more information, call 423-236-2030.

Homecoming – Oct. 26-29. Mark your calendar and join fellow alumni and attendees for the ultimate Southern family celebration. Honor Classes include: 1943, '53, '63, '73, '83, '93, '98, '03, '13. Check out all the weekend activities at southern.edu/homecoming or call 423-236-2827 for additional details.

PreviewSouthern – Nov. 2, 3. Interested students are invited to take a campus tour, discuss majors with professors, sit in on financial aid workshops, and enjoy a fun activity in Chattanooga. For more information, call 1-800-SOUTHERN, email visit@southern.edu, or visit southern.edu/preview.

Schutte Family Lecture and Invoke Concert – Nov. 2. Author and avid world traveler Jonathan Reisman, M.D., will share his experiences practicing medicine in some of the most remote places in the world, including Antarctica and India's urban slums of Kolkata, at 11 a.m. in Collegedale Church of Seventh-day Adventists on campus. Later, a genre-dodging ensemble described as "not so classical, beautiful, adventurous, American, and immediately engaging" will perform a repertoire encompassing bluegrass, Appalachian fiddle tunes, jazz, and minimalism in Iles P.E. Center at 7:30 p.m. Call 423-236-2814 for additional information about both events.

Symphony Orchestra Concert – Nov. 5. The university's orchestra, under the direction of Laurie Redmer Cadwallader, will perform at 7:30 p.m. in the Collegedale Church of Seventh-day Adventists. This and many other musical events are also broadcast at southern.edu/streaming.

Archaeology Lecture – Nov. 6. Michael G. Hasel, Ph.D., professor of Near Eastern Studies and Archaeology at Southern, will present "Destruction in the Gate: New Excavations at Tel Hazor, Israel" in Lynn Wood Hall Chapel at 7 p.m. The free lecture will be broadcast live at southern.edu/streaming. For more information, call 423-236-2030.

Lynn Sauls Lecture – Nov. 9. The School of Journalism and Communication welcomes Michel Martin of NPR's Morning Edition and former weekend host of All Things Considered as guest speaker for the R. Lynn Sauls Lecture Series at 7 p.m. in Iles P.E. Center. Visit southern.edu/truth for more details.

European D-Day Commemoration Tour – May 6-17. All are invited to join the Southern Adventist University Alumni Association in honoring the 80th anniversary of D-Day through a tour of Holland, Belgium, France, and Germany. This adventure is highlighted by the Dutch tulip fields and Keukenhof Gardens, the beaches of the Normandy invasion 80 years later, Paris, and a cruise on the Rhine River. The tour director, Bill Wohlers, Ph.D., has led 25 previous tours. The current price of \$4,995 includes airfare, two meals each day, lodging, ground transportation, and sites. Visit southern.edu/alumni-tour for details.

Enroll in one of Oakwood's graduate degree programs:

- Master of Public Health
- Master of Arts in Urban Ministries
- Master of Business Administration
- Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies
- Master of Social Work

LAUNCHING LEADERS

APPLY NOW

 gradadmissions@oakwood.edu
 graduate.oakwood.edu
 256.726.8091



OAKWOOD
UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF
GRADUATE STUDIES

MASTER'S DEGREE IN BUSINESS

Business With a Biblical Perspective



You'll acquire the skills you need to be successful in today's workforce—based on the biblical principles of honesty, integrity, and high ethical standards.

It's convenient.

Eight-week online sessions accommodate busy schedules and allow students to accelerate their degree completion.

Courses provide value-added content.

Foundations of Business Writing and Research ensures a smooth transition to graduate school. Integrated Business Simulation gives students real-world experience in a controlled setting. The MBA Portfolio class allows students to share relevant projects with prospective employers.

Prep for CPA Review.

Students with an MBA Accounting emphasis may take the Wiley CPAexcel review courses for six of their 12 elective hours.

Call or visit online to find out how you can get started.

- Master of Business Administration
- Dual Degree—MSN and MBA
- Dual Degree—MSW and MBA