The Spiritual Side of Student Life

Sección En Español
The Day that Rocked our World

Surreal, catastrophic, unbelievable, nightmarish, and nerve-shattering are just some of the words to describe the terrifying event of September 11, 2001, the day that rocked our world. This horrifying experience unfolded right before our eyes on national television, and at closer proximity to thousands of New Yorkers, Pennsylvanians, and Washington, D.C., residents. And, though what we viewed on our live news networks was actually taking place, many described a corresponding feeling of disbelief that our worst fear was becoming reality.

Many of us believed that these unthinkable acts of terror could not happen to us. However, they did, and thousands of screaming people in lower Manhattan and the northern Virginia area were sent fleeing in search of safety. One upper Manhattan resident fled more than 80 long city blocks and lost her shoe in the process. She recalls exiting the subway station just below the World Trade Center complex in time to see the second plane hit the South tower. The grinding, crushing, explosive sounds of scraping metal and shattering glass created a dingy atmospheric haze across lower Manhattan. As the towers were being evacuated, despondent employees jumped to their deaths. The terrorist attack on America which unfolded in New York, northern Virginia, and Pennsylvania, gripped hearts around the globe. Our world was shaken up. This was a day that rocked our very foundations.

The human heart searches for meaning and encouragement in times of confusion and fear. It has been demonstrated by numerous studies that our response to misfortune is more impacting on our well-being than the misfortune itself. What can we learn from these catastrophic events?

The Bible offers meaning and interpretation that supplies a context for the events of September 11. In Luke 21, we were admonished to take careful inventory of events in our world during these times. Jesus alludes to signs of His return to this Earth, and among the many signs He catalogs is the distress of nations and people’s hearts failing them because of fear. One of the paradoxes of our place in history is that international leaders with an emphasis on foreign relations and policies speak of peace while simultaneously developing arms for war. This causes people to be afraid. Jesus urges us in this kind of climate to look for Him to come back to this world. His purpose for returning includes the introduction of a new world government of which He is leader. The foundations of this new government are peace, honesty, and love.

Matthew 24 speaks of another day sure to rock our world. When Jesus returns to the Earth, there will be a more global riveting effect. The brilliance, volume, and surprise of this event will be even more impacting than the events of September 11, 2001.
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Many Adventist University students find that ministering to patients in clinicals encourages them to nurture their own spiritual life.
Adventist colleges in the Southern Union offer far more than just a safe environment for students to get a Christian education. These three institutions provide unique opportunities outside the classroom for young people to discover God’s leading in their lives.

Wake up. Eat. Go to class. Go to class, again. Eat. See friends. Return to class. Study. Work. Eat. Go to sleep. Repeat this over and over again for nine months out of the year and you begin to have an idea what it’s like to be a college student today (although the sleep part can be a bit of a luxury sometimes).

But all is not lost in the frantic pace of such a busy schedule. Adventist University of Health Sciences (Orlando, Florida), Oakwood University (Huntsville, Alabama), and Southern Adventist University (Collegedale, Tennessee) provide activities and environments ensuring that amid the chaos of a college student’s life lie many chances for Christ to enter in and remind them that He is in control. In these moments, God teaches students that things of eternal value are rarely double spaced, peer reviewed, or graded. It is here they learn that education is very important, but it isn’t everything.

**Adventist University of Health Sciences**

The patient walked slowly across the hospital room, anxious about the upcoming procedure and surrounded by nurses and doctors speaking an unfamiliar language. Kayla Pyecha, senior nursing student, sensed the tension, and when the patient burst into tears she realized she needed help from someone bigger than herself.

“Would you like me to pray with you?” Kayla asked.

While the patient did not understand much English, the prayer that followed superseded language.

“Right after we prayed she stopped crying,” Kayla said. “You could tell she felt better after she received the spiritual support she needed.”

At Adventist University of Health Sciences, Kayla and her classmates learn the importance of holistic care. A caretaker’s primary goal is to meet a patient’s safety and physical needs, but sometimes the deeper needs are of an emotional or spiritual nature.

“Spirituality is encouraged in our program from day one,” said Lynne Tier, professor in the Department of Nursing. “We care for patients not just by what we learn in the books, but by meeting the needs of the patient and family.”

Alain Jean, senior nursing major, had a similar situation with an elderly patient who was not coping well with the reality that his leg would soon be amputated. Alain decided to get to know the patient on a personal level. This approach led to an opportunity to encourage the patient and have a conversation about God.

At the end of the day the patient thanked Alain, telling him he helped more than he knew. These situations not only benefit the patient, but also inspire the students.

“Clinicals are a maturing experience, when you go to the hospital you’re surrounded by real life,” Alain said. “I realize I can be a missionary while being a nurse. I really like that.”

For Kayla, nursing is a career that challenges her to grow spiritually. “Interacting with patients encourages me to stay strong in my faith and relationship with God so I can continue sharing that love and hope with others.”
Oakwood University

The Office of Spiritual Life (OSL) at Oakwood University strongly believes that mission starts at home. Christians are called to love our neighbors as ourselves, and that means ministering right next door. One way they share this passion for action with students is through OU4HHIM (Oakwood University 4 His Hands in Missions), a group that works on both national and international missions.

Last year, OU4HHIM took on two major projects that led students outside the classroom, outside the worship services, and outside of Huntsville for opportunities to work for God and grow closer to Him through service for Him.

During Thanksgiving Break, OU4HHIM traveled to Memphis, Tennessee, for four days of volunteering. They worked with at-risk youth through sports and crafts at a local nonprofit, visited Alcy Seventh-day Adventist Junior Academy where they used drama to reach the students, and spent time with sick and shut-in members of the surrounding churches.

For Spring Break, OU4HHIM volunteered in Orlando, Florida. They served at a downtown rescue mission, connecting deeply with children and families.

“What made this trip special was the fact that the students who came could have done so many other things,” said Sarina Goulding, senior theology major at Oakwood. “Spring Break is a big deal!”

But, Sarina and her classmates took away far more from this experience than they would a trip to the beach or any other vacation destination.

“We learned not only how to serve others, but also how to serve each other; through devotions and prayer partners, we built a family of students grounded in service. There is nothing better than coming together with one goal and one purpose: to serve Him.”

Sarina Goulding is a senior theology major at Oakwood University. In her words: “We are called to ‘love our neighbors as ourselves,’ and that means ministering right next door. It is such an amazing experience being a helping hand ‘for Him’ right where we are. Thanksgiving Break in Memphis, Tennessee, we spent at Youth Villages, a nonprofit organization where we volunteered with the youth through sports and crafts; and Alcy Adventist Junior Academy, where we performed a ‘Service’ skit; as well as our work with the sick and shut-in of the surrounding churches. Spring Break 2013 in Orlando, Florida, we decided to serve at downtown Orlando’s Union Rescue Mission. It was a great experience to work in its Bargain Store with ‘Jeans for Teens,’ as we went through hundreds and hundreds of jeans for homeless youth. We also worked with their children and with the families. We not only learned how to serve others, but how to serve each other; through devotions and prayer partners, we built a family grounded in service.”
Southern Adventist University

Service-learning activities and student-led mission trips are extremely helpful in creating an atmosphere where young people attending our Adventist universities can grow spiritually. But for some, nothing connects them more to the Divine than spending time in nature.

Southern Adventist University is fortunate to have more than 800 forested acres as part of its campus. Included in that space are trails for hiking and biking, caves for exploring, and natural rock walls for climbing. Combine that with Collegedale’s proximity to Chattanooga, recently voted the number one city in American by Outside magazine, and students seeking to explore God’s Second Book find Southern a good fit.

Austin Long, junior nursing major, was enrolled for a year at the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga — a time that he says “neither God nor I was proud of” — before transferring to Southern. A lifelong athlete, part of his routine included jogs each morning on nearby sidewalks and roads. One day after moving to campus he decided to try out the Biology Trail, a collection of more than 10 miles of paths winding around White Oak Mountain on the western edge of campus, during the run.

“I could not believe that such a beautiful place existed right outside my dorm. Everything around me was screaming of God’s glorious and beautiful power,” Austin said. “I began to pray and talk to God throughout the run, and as I topped a particularly difficult hill, I fell to my knees grasping for air. I pleaded for God to change me and make me new!”

Deeply moved by the experience, Austin now runs on the Biology Trail each morning and prays on top of the ridge. Since he began this habit, his grades, happiness, and relationship with God have all improved “by leaps and bounds.”

Blessed with a vast toolkit of natural resources — mountains, rivers, caves, and more — Southern’s spiritual, social, and academic leaders make every attempt to utilize these geographical features to help nurture those under their care. Be it a vespers program in canoes on a lake, or lawn concerts in the amphitheater, opportunities abound for students to grow amid the wonders of His creation.

For more information, please visit adu.edu, oakwood.edu, or southern.edu.

Sarah Crowder is the communication specialist at Adventist University of Health Sciences, Orlando, Florida. Tim Allston is the director of public relations at Oakwood University, Huntsville, Alabama. Lucas Patterson is the editorial manager at Southern Adventist University, Collegedale, Tennessee.

Southern students take advantage of the Biology Trails on campus. The trails were recently voted as a top 10 site for mountain biking in Tennessee.
In May 1997, Melissa and I accepted a call from the Georgia-Cumberland Conference to plant a deaf church in Atlanta, Georgia. Being deaf myself, I felt called to be a pastor for this demographic, and had just graduated from the seminary at Andrews University. We began with no members and grew slowly to a church family of 12. Then, in April 2005, Southern Deaf Fellowship was organized as an official church with 34 charter members. Three years later, we were called to the Collegedale, Tennessee, area, and have been serving there since.

Deaf people are geographically spread out the world over, and the ministry is hardly limited to the local area. Every Sabbath, Southern Deaf Fellowship live-streams the worship service via the Internet. As most of the world’s deaf population doesn’t have an interpreter available to them, technology has been an incredibly effective tool in reaching out to the deaf brothers and sisters, wherever they may be. Through the years, the membership has grown to 60, and they live all over the country. Individuals in a total of 225 cities in 31 states, plus Washington, D.C., have logged on to the website to watch the Sabbath morning service. We’ve also had viewers from 12 countries: Canada, Mexico, El Salvador, St. Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, Germany, Poland, Romania, Sweden, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

A unique challenge for members who live in such widespread locations is the desire and need for face-to-face fellowship. Southern Deaf Fellowship’s Camp Meeting, held each year at Cohutta Springs Conference Center in Crandall, Georgia, is designed to meet this very need. The deaf travel from far and wide to attend the event, and highly value the opportunity to spend time together.

Serving in deaf ministries has been a team effort for my wife and me. Each week, she interprets in spoken English the sermons I preach in American Sign Language (ASL). And, we’ve strived to make it a community effort, as well. Many students enrolled in ASL classes at Southern Adventist University attend Southern Deaf Fel-
fellowship to experience deaf culture, and augment their language learning. Interacting and sharing with these young adults has been a great avenue for educating them about the needs of the deaf within the Church.

The deaf community is an often over-looked people group who need to hear the Gospel. More than two million deaf people live in America, but the work around the world is even greater. Sign language is not a universal language, and every country has its own sign language, not unlike spoken language. What’s more, every country has an entire deaf sub-culture that is completely unreached, which presents an incredible challenge.

In his article “Do We Hear Them?” (Adventist World, February 2012), Larry Evans, General Conference liaison for International Deaf Ministries, highlights the incredible need for ministry among the deaf, and calls for this need to be at the focal forefront for Adventist members and church leaders. To illustrate how far behind the deaf work is — I am currently the only full-time, paid Adventist pastor in the North American Division. There is a desperate need for workers and a training center to educate them.

But again, the need is global. Gospel Outreach is one entity that has taken on the mission of reaching the world’s deaf. John Blake, a hearing retired minister from Canada who has a grown deaf daughter and son, works diligently with this ministry, and has witnessed the life-changing effect it had on foreign deaf culture. India, for example, has more than 19 million deaf people, and Gospel Outreach has sponsored more than 40 deaf workers, resulting in seven churches for the deaf and more than 500 members. India was also the first country to have an Adventist school for the deaf, and we are excited about another Adventist deaf school that is almost complete near Mountain View College, Philippines. Excluding the United States, there is an Adventist deaf ministries presence in Ukraine, Poland, France, Kenya, India, Philippines, Brazil, Barbados, Trinidad, Ghana, Russia, Latvia, Korea, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Canada. It’s good news, but it still leaves a lot of countries untouched. Melissa tells people that it is the work among the deaf that will usher in Christ’s coming because they are the last to “hear.”

It is with this knowledge that I pray you will open your mind and heart to the need and overwhelming task left to fulfill the Great Commission among this people group. To learn more about how you can be involved with deaf ministries, please contact me or visit the website at deafchurchonline.org.

Jeffrey Jordan is pastor of the Southern Deaf Fellowship Church in McDonald, Tennessee.
Every Flight is a MISSION

With blue skies stretching to infinity, 15-year-old Ken Guill chugged along on a tractor as he cultivated rows and rows of Iowa corn. His attention was suddenly diverted to the sky as he watched an airplane lift off from a nearby airstrip.
His desire for flying, born at age five, took over his senses, and his eyes never left the plane as it soared into the sky. His dad would later find him trying to replant the corn he had overturned.

Flying became not only a dream but a reality when, five years after the cornfield experience, Guill became a student pilot and was on his way to becoming certified. Over the years, he found ways to use his love of flying for recreation and in helping others.

As he volunteered transporting patients for the Angel Flight organization, he saw a need to serve stretcher patients since commercial airline flights were not equipped for this. However, it wasn’t until a rainy day in November 2004 when the thought came to him to start such an emergency relief flight organization.

As the president and founder, he chose Missions Possible for the organization’s name. His friend and vice president, Joe Kemmerer, suggested adding the word “made” to the title, and Orlando-based Missions Made Possible was born.

As the president and founder, he chose Missions Possible for the organization’s name. His friend and vice president, Joe Kemmerer, suggested adding the word “made” to the title, and Orlando-based Missions Made Possible was born.

After putting in personal money toward the initial outlay, Guill has relied on donations to fund this 501(c)(3) organization. Through generosity of individuals and sponsorship of corporations, Missions Made Possible has flown 95 flights for patients as young as babies in need of specialized medical care to 94-year-old seniors relocating to a medical facility near loved ones.

“Thank you so much for volunteering your services to fly Nicholas and me to Florida for his hyperbaric treatment,” wrote Jayna Stogner, pictured with her son and Richard Newbauer, M.D.

Later, when the engine needed to be replaced, the Lord impressed him to look for one on eBay. Finally, when donations slowed down, he prayed for guidance on what to do next. The Lord sent a young man who was willing to buy the plane and give Missions Made Possible complete use of it for all of their flights.

Captain Guill’s dedication to service has not gone unnoticed. He was recently featured in an “Everyday Heroes” segment on Central Florida News 13. During this year’s spring training, the New York Yankees acknowledged Guill and Missions Made Possible during their Helping Others to Persevere and Excel (HOPE) Week and presented him with a $5,000 check. While recognitions are greatly appreciated, the accolades he enjoys most are the many thank-you notes received through the years from the people he has helped.

Learn more about Captain Guill’s life-saving missions at missionsmadepossible.com, or e-mail him at missionsmp@aol.com.
THE DUNFORD FAMILY OF FORT MYERS
Serving God, Community, and Country

By Larry and Sherryl Ford

Through service, the Dunford family of the Fort Myers, Florida, Church is living out what God has asked of them: “See that justice is done, let mercy be your first concern, and humbly obey your God,” Micah 6:8, CEV.

Larry Dunford, D.D.S., a prosthodontist, and his wife, Terrilynn, a registered nurse, have found numerous ways of using their gifts, training, and education to serve their church and community. Since 1986, Larry’s skill, concern for his patients, and desire for excellence have contributed to his continued recognition among top prosthodontists.

Involved in their community, the Dunfords give their time and talents to numerous local charities including Project Dentist’s Care which assists those who can’t afford dental work, and Special Equestrians which provides therapeutic horseback riding and equine assisted activities to children and adults with disabilities.

When Larry was president of the National Association of Seventh-day Adventist Dentists, Loma Linda University School of Dentistry asked him to head up a mission trip to Fiji for dental students and hygienists. Sons Miles and Lance accompanied their parents to help provide free dental care to underprivileged Islanders.

The Dunford boys have become respected professionals in their own right. They are compassionate, caring individuals who are concerned not only about the welfare of their church family, but their entire community.

Lance, the oldest, is an assistant public defender for the 20th Judicial Circuit serving southwest Florida. His clients have described him as “trustworthy, consistent, and one who shows concern.” One defendant expressed his appreciation simply for “being treated like a person.”

While studying psychology in college, the youngest son Miles found his childhood fascination with airplanes reawakening. Recently, he received his Navy wings and began training on F-18 Super Hornet aircraft.

No doubt both sons learned the joy of service from parents who are active in their local church. One of their most noteworthy contributions was the “transformation they brought to the worship service through their music,” says Marvin Williams, a former pastor. “Our congregation loved the praise time as their hearts were prepared for the spoken message.”

“Miles has always been a dreamer and a doer,” says cousin Aaron Harder. “I couldn’t be more proud of his accomplishments and the man he has become.”

Truly, the Dunford family is answering Scripture’s call to be just and merciful while humbly obeying God. As a result, their service honors the Lord and reflects their gratitude for the freedoms of our country.
The 67th South Central Camp Meeting this year began as usual: constituents piling in on Friday, the busy registration process, checking into the rooms, unloading the vehicles ... pretty much the same old stuff as years gone by. There were expectations of a communion with God, anticipation of various seminars, and the list goes on and on. The same question was on everybody's mind: “Would Camp Meeting be any different this year than last?” To the glory of God, the answer was resoundingly, “yes.”

Prayer was the main emphasis for Camp Meeting, with the theme, “When My People Pray.” It was a blessing to see groups of worshippers around the campus huddled together and praying, praying for the Holy Spirit to fall — and fall the Holy Spirit did!

Out of all the events surrounding Camp Meeting, there were three that stood out above the rest: the preaching moment, ordination, and the Spirit of Prophecy seminar. The preaching moment began with Leslie Pollard, Ph.D., D.Min., president of Oakwood University, as the keynote speaker. He set the pace for the preaching moment with his message, “What's Up!” That pace was then met and exceeded as each service passed, until the last Sabbath when Kenneth Manders, executive secretary for the Bermuda Conference, brought the house down with the message, “Power Failures.” The Holy Spirit filled the sanctuary, and hundreds were convicted to either unite with Christ for the first time, or to renew their relationship. The preaching moment ended with a question, “Can it get better than this?” And, even with the anticipation that next year will be better than this year, that will be a tall order to meet.

However, the preaching moment was not the only highlight of Camp Meeting. All witnessed a rare event in the Conference, and that was the ordination of nine pastors. It has been well over 20 years since a large number of pastors were ordained at one time. William Winston, president of South Atlantic Conference, gave the ordination message, and Vincent White, retiring pastor, gave the charge. There was another event that we pray remains a one-time event: Ed Hardin, pastor, became ill at Camp Meeting, and had to undergo emergency surgery. Hardin was one of the nine. After a brief discussion it was determined that Hardin would be able to attend his ordination via the Internet from his hospital room. So Ben Jones, Conference ministerial director, and Marvin L. Allison Sr., Conference communications director, made their way to the hospital, and as the service was happening in the Oakwood university Church, the constituents were able to witness Hardin ordained via the monitors in the sanctuary. The Lord took what would have been a low for Hardin and used the airways to defeat the devil.

There were many seminars offered for spiritual and personal growth; however, one of the seminars became the third highlight of Camp Meeting. Craig Newborn, Ph.D., Conference Sabbath School and Spirit of Prophecy director, ran a three-day seminar on the Spirit of Prophecy. Newborn showed the history of how the Church reached a point where many today either don’t care to read, or have rejected her relevance. He then challenged the attendees to stop using the writings of Ellen White as a means to end all arguments, and to restore confidence in her writings to a young adult population, which increasingly see her as being irrelevant for today, or as just another author.

Camp Meeting is a time of spiritual refreshing, spiritual growth, and spiritual renewal. We were not disappointed or let down. Prepare to join us for next year's Camp Meeting.
A disciple in the New Testament is “learner” in Greek. At Indian Creek Camp on April 12-14, 2013, more than 80 individuals committed a whole weekend to “learn” what it means to be a true follower of Jesus. What was formerly the Kentucky-Tennessee Prayer Conference has been renamed Family Discipleship Conference to better reflect a more wholistic approach to spiritual transformation. One of the major intentions is to provide the opportunity for more young adults and families to attend a conference like this.

Incorporated in the weekend is a special track for children, ages three and up. The meetings include music, age-appropriate messages, and crafts that emphasize the theme for the weekend. This year while the adults were in the chapel “learning,” 24 children under the creative leadership of Keith DiDomenico and his team explored the great love of Jesus and the call of a disciple!

The featured speaker for the adults was Ken Wetmore, Conference youth director. Through pointed, dynamic, thought-provoking, and challenging stories he led everyone to see Jesus as they had never seen before! Rather than boxcar-style seating, everyone found a place at round tables encouraging open discussion and closer fellowship. During one presentation, Play-Doh even found its way to the tables.

The highlight of the weekend was a very special Sabbath afternoon program for all ages. Adults and children were each directed to take a rock on which they were to write whatever sins or difficulties might be keeping them from a full relationship with Jesus. They were then instructed to carry the rock throughout their journey to the lake. As each group visited five stations, they were reminded they could not put the rock down. At one station, everyone dipped water to fill a pitcher that was to be poured out into a larger cooler simulating the “Wedding at Cana.” Another station featured bread broken and fishy crackers dispersed among the group, signifying the feeding of the 5,000. And, of course, you can’t follow Jesus without fishing, so children and adults alike dropped lines in a small tub filled with water hoping to catch a (metal) fish. A balancing board simulating the disciples when they were caught in the storm invariably required help from an outside hand. It, by far, was the most popular! The greatest challenge might have been washing each other’s feet with a rock still clutched tightly in hand. One guest commented he had not taken part in footwashing for more than 30 years.

As the walk was concluded, there was a message based on Micah 7:19: “He will again have compassion on us; He will tread our iniquities under foot. Yes, You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.” This was a calling for all to throw their rocks into the depths of Center Hill Lake. One young boy had written, “My mother’s cancer,” and he threw his rock in the lake. Another little one wrote that she was “upset.” Later, one little girl told her mother she missed her rock because she had carried it with her everywhere. This made the point of how easy it is to carry our burdens, and the struggle it can be to let them go and give them to Jesus.

Byron Corbett, pastor, concluded with the Sunday morning meeting, giving a comprehensive look at what a true disciple is. The children ended the weekend by sharing songs they had sung in honor of Jesus. All learned following Jesus may not be easy, but everyone can be assured of this as His followers: We never walk alone; He is always right there beside us!
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Introducing the New GraceLink

The kindergarten room at University City Church in Charlotte, N.C., looks like a birthday party in progress. Colorful balloons are being punched or patted into the air. By softly patting the balloons, the children see that when they are gentle and loving to others who are not kind, they will be more likely to receive a gentle response in return. This is just one of the interactive lessons from the GraceLink curriculum that allows the children to actively participate in learning about God, and prepares them to receive the theme of the Bible lesson. Teacher Debora Herring says, “I personally love GraceLink. The more interactive it is, the more the kids love it.”

Teacher Connie Peters, from Fletcher N.C., Church types and copies the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy background references from the teacher’s guide for parents, by their request. She’s noticed this encourages interaction between the children and their parents as they study the lessons together at home. These are some of the many ways GraceLink is being used to meet the needs of today’s children.

Few innovations through the years have had the impact on children’s ministries in the Southern Union as GraceLink. Introduced in the late 1990s, this comprehensive curriculum was designed to provide a more contemporary approach to children’s Sabbath School, but with the least possible disruption to a beloved product that was meeting the needs of the churches.

Then, there was a determination to strengthen the networking aspects of GraceLink, with a renewed emphasis on parents and teachers. It is important to create new ways for the entire community to interact and benefit one another.

Finally, an intentional effort was made to maintain a sharp focus on the largest mission goals of the Church. GraceLink isn’t just about children’s Sabbath School; ultimately, it is about leading the children to the foot of the Cross and helping them become lifelong members of the Church.

Out of this careful response in return.

First, there was a commitment to make the product visibly stronger, while losing none of the familiar texture and character. The intent was to make the program more flexible and current, the needs of the children:

• A new graphic approach for PowerPoints

One change is a return to a more traditional graphics style in the illustrations for PowerPoints — the Junior-level part of the curriculum — with a stronger representational approach and a creative cross-generational appeal.

• A distinctive parents’ page

The intent is to provide content stated in adult terms, reminding teachers and parents that their gifts of time and effort are recognized as they work with children.

• A more obvious biblical chronology

Graphic symbols enable the participants to identify where the story fits into the biblical chronology.

• A more intentional focus on biblical prophecy

The distinctive Adventist emphasis on prophecy and the end times has been amplified and enhanced.

• Identification of fundamental Adventist beliefs

A new feature identifies which of the 28 Fundamental Beliefs of the Church each particular lesson supports.

The new GraceLink adds a group of product augmentations that take into account a changing world and new forms of social interaction. It builds on what has gone before without losing any of the richness that characterized the initial phase of the program.

—BY KATHY RUSSELL
Allan Williamson Retires After 26 Years of Ministry in the Southern Union

Allan Williamson came to the Southern Union Conference in 1986 as director of youth ministries, and served in that position until he retired on December 31, 2012. During those 26 years of service, which were fully dedicated to youth, young adult, Pathfinder, Adventurer, and camp ministries, he was also asked to serve additional ministries and departments.

In 2001 he became church ministries director, Adventist community and disaster response director, ASI executive secretary, and medical/dental director. During his years of service he also served as family ministries and health ministries director.

He was instrumental in starting the first Southern Union Academy Prayer Conference, which is held each year. Pathfinders enjoyed and were blessed at the six Southern Union Pathfinder Camporees that were held under his leadership.

Youth and young adults received a rich spiritual blessing and enjoyed Christian fellowship at the Southern Union Youth Congress that was held in Chattanooga, Tenn.

A new call center for disaster response was set up in Collegedale, Tenn., which is activated at the time of a major disaster. It was very helpful during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Under his leadership in medical/dental ministry, many physicians, dentists, and optometrists were encouraged to take up practice within the Southern Union Conference territory. Medical/dental conventions, along with continuing education credits, were held every two years in Gatlinburg, Tenn.

A health professionals’ conference was held during the odd years for allied health professionals and the health directors of the local churches. Continuing education credits were provided for physical therapists, respiratory therapists, CRNA’s, nurses, and health directors.

A team of camp professional directors continue to give strong leadership to summer camp and retreat center ministries.

Ken Rogers is a native of the Pacific Northwest. He graduated from Auburn Adventist Academy and Southern Adventist University, and earned a master’s in religion from La Sierra University.

The Carolina Conference invited him to serve as youth pastor and chaplain at Fletcher Church and Fletcher Academy, and then religion and chorale director at Mt. Pisgah Academy.

The Napa Church in northern California provided him with youth ministry experience for four years, when an invitation to join the pastoral staff at Collegedale, Tenn., Church was extended.

Ken Rogers is frequently invited to speak to adults and numerous youth events around the world, as well as Weeks of Prayer, graduations, and Pathfinder camporees. He has performed more than 100 weddings, a host of baptisms, and child dedications. During the years many have been blessed by the music ministry and participatory praise singing Rogers has directed.

Prior to coming to the Southern Union, he was the vice president for student services at Walla Walla University, Walla Walla, Wash.

He is married to Cheryl McGhee, and they love the blessing of four adult children and three precious grandchildren.

“Allan Williamson has been a true friend, mentor, and role model for me over the years, and to follow in the ministry arena that Allan has fostered is an honored privilege,” said Rogers. “I am excited to work with the conference youth and Pathfinder directors as we continue to grow the Kingdom of God — anticipating the soon return of Jesus.”

Ken Rogers joins the Southern Union as Director for Children, Youth, and Young Adult Ministries

worked with Sherrie Norton in increasing the volunteers participating in the student missions program. Many local ministry programs and campus ministry projects involving students and leadership opportunities were established.

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Prior to coming to the Southern Union, he was the vice president for student services at Walla Walla University, Walla Walla, Wash.

He is married to Cheryl McGhee, and they love the blessing of four adult children and three precious grandchildren.

“Allan Williamson has been a true friend, mentor, and role model for me over the years, and to follow in the ministry arena that Allan has fostered is an honored privilege,” said Rogers. “I am excited to work with the conference youth and Pathfinder directors as we continue to grow the Kingdom of God — anticipating the soon return of Jesus.”
How Healthy Relationships Impact Your Health

Loneliness & Isolation
Did you know feelings of loneliness and isolation increase risk of premature death by up to 500 percent? Loneliness is one of life’s deepest hurts. Lonely people tend to abuse drugs, tobacco and alcohol, overeat, struggle with depression, and overwork.

Amazing Discovery
The Alameda County study is considered to be the definitive study on social support and the risk of death, giving some of the very best evidence for the protective effect of social support. Researchers tracked 7,000 people for 40 years and found this:
- People classified as lonely and isolated had three times higher mortality.
- People with many social contacts had the lowest mortality.
- The amount of social support was the best predictor of good health.

Bottom line? Social connection helps prevent premature death. And get this: It is a more powerful predictor of health and longevity than age; gender; race; social economic status; self-reported physical health status; and health practices such as smoking, alcoholic beverage consumption, overeating, physical activity, and the utilization of preventive health services. Wow.

Created For Love
God designed us to be healthiest and happiest and when we are interpersonally connected to others; we were created for love.

James Lynch, M.D., writes, “The mandate to ‘Love your neighbor as you love yourself’ is not just a moral mandate. It is a physiological mandate. Caring is biological. One thing you get from caring for others is you are not lonely; and the more connected you are to life, the healthier you are.”

That’s CREATION Health!
—BY LYNELL LAMOUNTAIN

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Registration Open for Golf Tournament that Helps Fund Scholarships

Golf enthusiasts of all ages and skill levels are invited to participate in the Dave Cress Memorial Tournament on September 22, 2013, at the Nob North Golf Course in Cohutta, Ga. Proceeds from registration go directly to a scholarship fund for student tuition assistance at Southern Adventist University.

The tournament format is a two-person select shot at 8 a.m. and then a four-person select shot at 2 p.m., with awards for the top three teams in each match. Registration begins an hour before tee time, and fees are set at $65 each for those who sign up before July 15 ($75 after that date). Southern students can register for $30. Each year, an average of 150 players participate; however, the goal for 2013 is to grow that number closer to 200.

David Cress, the past Georgia-Cumberland Conference president who died in a 2004 plane crash, had a passion for both young people and golf. He participated in the tournament every year when it was originally named the Alumni Classic Tournament. Shortly after his tragic death, it was renamed in his honor.

Proceeds from the tournament go to the Dave Cress Memorial Endowed Scholarship fund. More than $50,000 has been raised over the life of the tournament to help Southern students with financial need. Last year, sponsorships and registration fees contributed more than $10,000 to the endowment.

The rain date for this year’s event is September 29. For more information visit southern.edu/golf or call 423-236-2829.

—By ShanA MichAlek

School of Social Work Faculty, Students Receive Statewide Awards

Faculty and students from Southern’s School of Social Work were recently honored by the Tennessee chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) for excellence in their field.

Every year members of NASW submit names of individuals within the field of social work who they feel exemplify the best of the profession’s values. For the past five years, a student in Southern’s program has won the bachelor’s of Social Work Student of the Year Award; Rebecca Peck, master’s of social work, has been awarded the master’s of social work Student of the Year; and Evie Nogales Baker, associate professor of social work, has been named Social Worker of the Year.

Having three members of our School receive these awards is important for the program because it is an affirmation that the students are being well prepared to perform as professional social workers in the community,” said Lorri Merchant, associate professor of social work.

The two students who won awards this year credit a large amount of their success to Southern’s social work program. Alyssa said that attending Southern has not only helped her grow academically, but spiritually as well.

“I made the right choice for great undergraduate and graduate social work programs when I chose Southern,” Alyssa said. “I feel confident and empowered, not only as a student and professional, but also as a daughter of God.”

In addition to its two students, the faculty and staff in the School of Social Work are thrilled to have one of their own be honored with the Social Worker of the Year award.

“Our department could not be more proud of Professor Baker,” Merchant said. “Those she has worked with in the community praise her knowledge, her loving demeanor, and her professionalism.”

To learn more about the School of Social Work, visit southern.edu/socialwork.

—By Luke evAnS
Adventist Health System

AHS Employees are Among the Most Engaged Workforces

Adventist Health System, which comprises 44 hospital campuses and approximately 79,000 employees, has received the Gallup Great Workplace Award for the third year in a row, recognizing it as having one of the best-performing and most productive and engaged workforces in the world. Adventist Health System was presented the award during a summit at Gallup’s main campus in Omaha, Neb., May 7-9, 2013.

“Adventist Health System’s employees are dedicated to providing health and healing with skill and compassion every day. This award shows they have a deep connection to the mission of our organization, as well as a strong commitment to their colleagues,” said Don Jernigan, president/CEO of Adventist Health System.

The Gallup Great Workplace Award is based on the most rigorous workplace research ever conducted. A panel of workplace experts evaluated the award-winning organizations.

During the summit, Great Workplace Award winners presented the best practices they applied to their workplace and the improved business results they achieved through building an engaged workforce.

“These award-winning organizations set a new standard for workplace excellence,” said James Harter, chief scientist. “They have proven track records for improving lives along with performance. The management tenets they practice have proven value in both thriving and struggling economies overall.”

—BY MELANIE LAWHORN

Florida Hospital Tampa is partnering with Hillsborough County Public Schools (HCPS) to design and implement programs that provide education and support for whole-child development. Each will have a special emphasis on health-related initiatives that include the study of science, technology, engineering, and math. The partnership started in January 2012, although the formal agreement was not signed until March 19, 2013, and will last until March 2015.

The cooperative educational program entitled, “Alliance to Benefit the Whole Child,” will support six schools operated by HCPS. Throughout the year, Florida Hospital Tampa will participate in a number of activities, including building an obstacle course at Boys Preparatory Academy at Franklin Middle School, located in Tampa. The obstacle course will allow students to learn the benefits of working as a team, competing and exercising at the same time. In the fall, Charles Lambert, M.D., medical director of Florida Hospital Pepin Heart Institute, will invite students to observe a live surgery in a teaching setting.

“The School District’s partnership with Florida Hospital Tampa has provided life-changing experiences for many of our students,” said Gwen Luney, HCPS assistant superintendent for student services and federal programs. “Young men and women in the school district are now considering careers in the field of medicine. The reason for this change is the exposure Florida Hospital Tampa has provided in our elementary, middle, and senior high schools. The school district is very fortunate to have staff members at Florida Hospital Tampa who recognize the value of supporting public education. We hope the relationship will last for many years to come.”

During the year, students will have the chance to shadow Florida Hospital Tampa staff members during clinical rotations through nursing, radiology and surgery. Florida Hospital Tampa will also host a number of health and wellness programs, and has delivered cases of water to students during FCAT testing, and participated in spring painting and gardening projects.

“Our goal is to work with Hillsborough County Public Schools to create special events around studying science, technology, engineering, and math, so we can ultimately inspire the next generation of health care providers,” said Lauren Key, vice president of marketing at Florida Hospital Tampa.

—BY JENNIFER MCVAN
Students Research Local Water Quality in New Lab

In January 2013, the Department of Health and Biomedical Sciences opened a multi-scale health science research lab. The lab is equipped with technology to utilize geographic information systems (GIS) to study health-related phenomena.

Students have already started researching the first phenomena: a local town with high levels of iron and lead in the drinking water. By entering data from the county’s water quality test, the students used GIS to map iron and lead levels. A future step is to collect anonymous patient records from the community where the water was tested. By cross-referencing the records with the data, students can determine if there is a correlation between recurring health issues and water quality.

“For each research process you can go deeper and deeper. For each process there’s an ability to integrate with other fields,” said Russ Butler, professor in the Department of Health and Biomedical Sciences. “This has great value for our students.”

Due to the connection to Florida Hospital, Adventist University of Health Sciences students have a unique chance to get involved in valuable, resume-building research, while potentially making a difference in the health quality of a community.

“We sit in the center of a tremendous opportunity for research,” said Don Williams, academic dean. “We applaud the work that’s been done, but this is only a down payment on the good things to come.”

—BY SARAH CROWDER

Electronic Tablets Improve Clinical Experience for Anesthesia Students

JLR Medical Group, an Orlando anesthesia practice, donated funds to purchase 52 electronic tablet devices for the Department of Nurse Anesthesia.

The tablets, intended primarily for students to obtain clinical evaluations from their preceptors, have also been an excellent resource for the nurse anesthesia students. Since the first class of anesthesia students received the tablets in January 2013, clinical evaluations have increased by an average of 22.5 percent.

“The immediate impact has been a dramatic increase in clinical evaluations, but as students have more time they’re finding more and more ways to use them,” said Alescia DeVasher, chair of the department.

Kate Olsen, senior nurse anesthesia student, recalled carrying heavy, cumbersome reference books to clinicals.

Now, when she takes a tablet instead, she has all the same information right at her fingertips. “Clinicals can be a stressful environment to go into,” Olsen said. “The tablet aids in organization and gives a sense of calm.”

Two groups of anesthesia students also utilized the tablets in their capstone projects by creating electronic resources for future students: a clinical orientation guide and specialty rotation case cards. The combination of digital books, reference materials, and study cards allows confidence and professionalism while gaining experience in clinicals.

“It alleviates a lot of anxiety,” said Rachel Mackey, senior nurse anesthesia major. “I’ve used it when I had a difficult case or a patient with a disease process I wasn’t familiar with.”

—BY SARAH CROWDER
The Pisgah Manor Health Care Center has opened its doors once again! After having been in the same building since 1975, it was time for something new.

May 14, 2013, marked the grand opening of the new Pisgah Manor, a state-of-the-art facility that is twice as large as its former building. More than 450 people attended to watch the ribbon-cutting of the new facility, and to help celebrate the big day. Guests enjoyed live music and hors d’oeuvres while they listened to addresses by David Kidder, president and CEO of the Carolina Adventist Retirement Systems; Amy Jackson, representative of the Asheville Chamber of Commerce; and Leslie Louis, president of the Carolina Conference.

The new Manor, constructed using a modified neighborhood design, features numerous stone fireplaces, cozy living rooms, patios, and gardens. With 72 private bedrooms and 23 companion rooms, it has the ability to provide specialized care for 118 people.

“We wanted our residents to feel like they were at home,” said Carolyn Stevenson, director of marketing at Pisgah Valley.

Residents and staff are delighted with the new building.

—BY KARA HOLLAND

Two North Carolina Churches Celebrate Their Heritage

The Morganton and Hickory churches celebrated a special day on May 18, 2013, as they worshiped in the church building of their founding fathers, the Hildebran Church. The former Hildebran Church, located between the current Hickory and Morganton churches, was the site of an extensive evangelistic effort in the early 20th century. Ellen White wrote much about the Hildebran Church in her writings, often applauding them for their dedication and encouraging them in their efforts.

The small white church building was built in 1897, along with an industrial school and a boarding house.

D.T. Shireman, founder of the Hildebran church, had a vision to start a self-supporting school which would provide young people with a solid education, while at the same time reaching out to the growing community with evangelistic meetings. In the winter of 1901, Ellen White’s grandson Edson White bought the school from Shireman, adding it to his new program called the Southern Missionary Society (SMS).

“We shall remember Brother J. E. White’s coming to our relief when we were passing through deep trials. The time has now come for us to lay down the burden we have so long carried in the school work, allowing it to rest upon younger shoulders,” wrote Shiremen in the Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald, December 31, 1901, edition.

During the 1960s, the Hildebran Church was abandoned and the congregation moved to join either the Hickory or Morganton churches. Today, the old advent church building is owned by a Baptist church, who meets there weekly for their Sunday services. However, the Hildebran Church continues to serve as a memorial to the pioneering work and dedication of the early advent believers.

—BY KARA HOLLAND
North Augusta Church members wanted a church building for a long time. They had been renting for 27 years. From worshiping in a school lunchroom, to worshiping in a gymnasium, their “home” church was anything but home. During one period of time, the congregation had even met in a basement under a gymnasium, where they could hear the thud of the basketballs overhead while they were holding church service.

Despite their humble beginnings, they were certain that God had a plan for their church. With the strong leadership of its founder, Bill Harward, pastor, the members were instilled with a vision that held strong through the years.

The small 30-member church often struggled, often feeling that Satan was doing his very best to snuff out the light of their presence in the community.

“Our church grew and contracted many times,” said June Merritt, church treasurer. “But it never faltered.”

In the summer of 2011, things began to happen. “I was sitting in my living room one Friday night, reading the Adventist Review, when I distinctly heard a voice in my head that told me to buy the church that we were currently renting, even though it was not for sale,” said Al Matchim, former pastor.

The next morning at church, Matchim told the members about his experience, yet insisted that they wait on God’s timing. “If it’s God’s will that we buy the church, [they] will call us,” he said.

A few months later, the pastor was called and notified that the church was on sale, and that its former owners would like to give the North Augusta Church members the first offer.

However, with a small congregation of around 25 members, they could not afford much. In his head, the head elder capped the maximum church budget off at $80,000. Since most properties they had been looking at cost far more than that, it seemed very unlikely that any church would be offered at such a low price. Nevertheless, when the offer came six months later, it was for the exact amount of $80,000. During the waiting period, some elderly atheist neighbors of one of the church members had sold their house and gone to live in a nursing home. The church members had befriended this couple through the years, taking them food, driving them to appointments, and mowing their lawn. As a result of their kindness, the couple donated $47,000 to the church!

“Over half of the needed money came by simply making a friend,” said Matchim.

After receiving this huge gift, the church was in high spirits. They were determined to not go in debt, and confident that God would provide.

In the following months donations came pouring in to the church, and it was paid in full on January 10, 2012.

At last, the North Augusta members had a church building!

According to Matchim, “We learned to always trust God. He is never too early, and never too late. He’s always right on time.”

—BY KARA HOLLAND
Florida News

Educators Endeavor to Follow Bible Principles

Educators at William A. Kirlew Junior Academy (WAKJA) endeavor to follow biblical principles by providing a Christ-centered education that encourages preparation for this life and for the kingdom of God.

Each school day begins with staff worship, followed by a student-led devotion. Week of Prayer events are conducted twice in each year’s curriculum. This past year’s guest speakers were pastors Ian Binns and Guibert Etienne. Thirteen students accepted Jesus as their personal Savior.

Ever since third grade, Tahlia Hutchinson routinely asked her mother, Dahlia, if she could be baptized. Her mother always responded that she was too young. However, as an eighth grader, Tahlia’s wish came true, and both she and her mother were baptized on March 9, 2013.

In June 2011, Southern Tidings featured the story, “God Uses Child to Lead Dad to Baptism,” chronicling how Maran Walters Jr. led his father to Jesus. This year, Maran was among the group of students baptized, so father and son are now rejoicing in the saving knowledge of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

God truly continues to bless WAKJA because educators ensure that students are introduced to Jesus in order to fulfill the purpose of Christian education, which is redemption.

According to Ellen G. White, on page 30 in the book Education, “the work of education and the work of redemption are one, for in education, as in redemption, ‘other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ,’ 1 Corinthians 3:11.”

—BY VALREY FRANCIS

Pathfinders Excel at National Bible Competition

Florida Pathfinders from Altamonte Springs, Miami Spanish, and Westchester Spanish churches traveled to Lincoln, Nebr., in April to compete in the North American Division Pathfinder Bible Experience Finals. They were among 38 clubs representing the United States, Canada, and Great Britain.

The journey started with students studying the books of Acts and I and II Thessalonians. They memorized complete chapters of the Bible and accompanying Bible commentary. More importantly, they learned dependence on God and that, through Him, all things are possible.

Previously, Florida’s top three teams advanced through competition levels in their state areas, followed by Florida regional finals, and then Southern Union finals. At the national level, Florida’s teams were among those which achieved correct answers for at least 90 percent of the highest score.

“Their level of knowledge was phenomenal,” said one event judge. “They definitely know their Bible.”

—BY JACQUELINE AMICH

In 2011, Maran Walters Jr. led his father to Jesus. This year, Maran was baptized.

Guibert Etienne (left), Maranatha Church associate pastor, and Margate Church member Ian Binns conducted weeks of prayer at William A. Kirlew Junior Academy.

Westchester Spanish Pathfinders: Jonam Mejias (front row, left), Racquel Amich, Rebeca Amich (team coach), Darlinee Soto (back row, left), Victoria Soto, and Denysse Alvarado. Not pictured: Sabrina Ramos.

Miami Spanish Pathfinders: Elba Garcia (front row, left), Melody Cruz, Denise Blandon, Manuel Baldizon (back row, left), Nitzi Hernandez, and Catherine Martinez.

Altamonte Springs Pathfinders: Isaiah Martin (front row, left), Najah Shepherd, Jayla Smith, Shantiq Palmer (back row, left), Courtney Richard, and Catelyn Richard.

Tahlia Hutchinson was baptized on March 9, 2013.
Camp Kulaqua Breaks Ground for New Lodges

Camp Kulaqua in High Springs, Fla., broke ground April 14, 2013, for three hotel-style lodges, with completion anticipated by January 2014. The lodges are designed to accommodate an ever-growing Florida Conference membership, and its retreat and conference needs.

Camp Kulaqua started in 1953 as a small youth camp for approximately 6,000 Florida Conference members. Through the years, Florida Conference has grown to more than 61,000 members, and so have the needs for camp and retreat facilities.

These housing units, Woodland Lodges, are designed to meet the needs of those who prefer accommodations that are more comfortable than the existing chalets, mini-lodges, and cabins. Each hotel-style room will include a private bathroom, queen beds, a sitting area, and a writing desk. They will accommodate up to six people — perfect for families or men's and women's retreats. They will also have a refrigerator and microwave. Each will accommodate up to 120 people. For those who wish to hold meetings without leaving the facility, the lodges also feature a conference room for more than 100 people, a kitchen for catering or local food service, and the latest audio/visual and wireless Internet capabilities. The lodges are the first step in a master plan that will expand Camp Kulaqua to accommodate up to 1,000 guests.

The design and location of the lodges will give the guests an opportunity to enjoy the woodlands of north Florida with all its wildlife and outdoor ambiance. Each room includes a balcony or patio and access to natural walkways, gazebos, and an outdoor amphitheater that will accommodate the guests in all three Woodland Lodges.

As church groups, youth groups, Conference event planners, or individual families desire to escape the confines of a hectic life, Camp Kulaqua provides a natural habitat where visitors can listen to God's voice as they marvel at His creation and focus on accomplishing the mission of discipling others for Christ.

—BY PHIL YOUNTS

Umatilla Member Celebrates 100th Birthday

Elberta Giebell's family celebrated her 100th birthday on April 14, 2013, at Umatilla, Fla., Church where she has been a member for 13 years. An Adventist for 78 years, Giebell has worked in the children's department, and spent 20 years in community service. As the Lord uses her at 100 years to work for Him, she actively reaches out to others such as the Walmart greeter to whom she gave books. The greeter and her husband attended the birthday party and were invited to return and attend church services.

Giebell was born April 16, 1913, in Pittsburgh, Pa. For many years, she was employed as a certified nurse assistant (CNA) and a licensed practical nurse (LPN). She was married to Floyd Giebell for 66 years before he passed away in 2001.

Her family includes Thomas (Kathy) Giebell, Peggy (Richard) Aitken, Richard (Darla) Giebell, Anita Carlson, and Carolyn (Doug) Towles; nine grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandchild.

—BY GERI BOWER
Every year the Cohutta Springs Foundation holds their annual retreat at Cohutta Springs Conference Center at the end of April to thank members.

According to Darrel Starkey, who served as Foundation president for the past five years, "The Foundation continues to work hand in hand with the Georgia-Cumberland Conference, helping to defray the cost of many new and improved facilities like the recent dining hall addition and patios."

The weekend was packed with fun. Clifford Goldstein, editor of the adult Sabbath School quarterly and author, was the keynote speaker.

Another weekend highlight was listening to reports from Rob Lang, Cohutta Springs Youth Camp director, and Olivier Lemaitre, Cohutta Springs Conference Center executive director.

"The Cohutta Springs Foundation retreat is truly an annual celebration of God's ministry at Cohutta," said Lemaitre. "This is the one weekend of the year when we turn back and see how God has blessed with new projects, construction, and ministry opportunities, as well as rejoicing over guests and staff."

The goal of Cohutta is to create an environment in which guests will find and/or reconnect with their Lord and Savior, and the CS Foundation is making this possible by financially supporting the projects. The construction of a new baptismal area on camp side is an illustration of this.

Lang said, "After 21 years of leading camp ministry, I still can't describe all the good things that take place at camp! There are too many things on so many levels for so many lives. Camp is a place where faith comes into focus. With more than 30 outdoor activities, and the opportunity to develop essential life skills at the same time, it is unparalleled as a life-changing experience, and it is fun! I will be baptizing two boys at camp because that is where they made their decisions for Jesus. This evening I will be officiating a wedding for two young adults who met at camp while working on staff. A new Adventist home will be formed! This is what is happening today because of camp ministry."

The weekend also included recognition for Rick and Shelly Stern, from Collegedale, Tenn. The Sterns were the recipients of the Winton Preston Award which acknowledges members who show extraordinary support in growing Foundation membership and provide outstanding support.

Foundation members provide counsel, direction, ideas, and funds for programs and projects at Cohutta. The Foundation (formerly known as the Development Associates) brings the "impetus and 100 percent of the funds for the original conference center," says Starkey.

Membership is open to anyone.

—BY TAMARA WOLCOTT FISHER
Good News Shared at Camp Meeting

Church members traveled to Southern Adventist University in Collegedale, Tenn., from May 22 to 25 to join in fellowship for Camp Meeting 2013. “Good! News in a Crumpled World,” was the theme. The featured speakers were Brad Thorp, president of Hope Channel Network, and Dana Edmond, president of the South Central Conference.

Attendees passed on this Good News in a loving way to victims of the recent Oklahoma tornado disaster on May 20. Attendees were challenged to match a gift during the Sabbath School offering: $5,000 from the Samaritan Center, a nonprofit social services agency. The total amount given to aid Oklahoma was $12,037.12, and including the Samaritan Center funds it is now $17,037.12.

Kurt Allen, Georgia-Cumberland vice president for finance, said, “We will be sending the funds on to the North American Division (NAD) through the offering remittance system, with the NAD forwarding the money on to Oklahoma.”

Another way participants experienced Good News was a variety of seminars, including speakers Fitzroy Graham, Jared Thurmon, Karen Lewis, and Don Jacobsen. One of the most popular presentations was Ron Malloch’s astronomy seminar: “The Heavens Are Telling.” Malloch shared a pictorial view of prophetic history that is written in the stars. He showed how the story of The Great Controversy is told in the constellations. The amphitheater and two overflow rooms were packed full for his presentation.

Other popular seminars included Ed Reid’s trust services seminars: “Preparing for the Devil’s Last Great Temptation” and “Life After Debt: How to Get There.” Reid first presented Revelation’s foretelling of a financial embargo, and God’s principles of financial faithfulness to help prepare. Reid also shared principles for dealing with debt and living without it.

Spiritual emphasis was also taking place in the children’s divisions. Rob Snider, pastor of Cedartown, Ga., Church, brought something new to the juniors program this year by having the children bring their Bibles, and incorporate their use throughout the presentations and activities. The theme was the “Three Angels and the Four Pillars,” and although it seemed a heavy topic, many of the children enjoyed it, said Fernando Verduzco, children’s ministries director.

“Parents were thanking me because their kids were so excited to come time after time,” said Verduzco. “But, I told them Rob was the one to thank!” Snider wrote the theme song for the juniors program as well as Tabor Nudd, pastor of Gainesville, Ga., Church, who wrote the theme song for the primary division. Both Nudd and Snider have written the junior and primary program theme songs for the past several years.

Ed Wright, Georgia-Cumberland president and the Sabbath evening speaker, encouraged the members to attend Camp Meeting or to try it for the first time.

“Camp Meeting is really the only time when we worship with members of other churches, appreciating the rich diversity of our Conference, and allowing God’s Spirit to move among us collectively,” Wright said. “It helps us to feel connected, not only to the entire Conference, but to the World Church.”

—BY SHAHA MICHALEK

Timothy Gillespie, Faith Community and Health Liaison for Loma Linda University Health, was the speaker for young adults during Camp Meeting. They met at Collegedale Adventist Middle School.

Ben Roy shared science fun with the children in the Primary class.

Ron Malloch spoke on “The Heavens Are Telling.” The story is still written in the heavens for all to see.

The Adventist Book Center sale is always popular.
Bass Students Participate in Job Shadowing

Bass Memorial Academy, Lumberton, Miss., has brought many new, useful changes to the school such as iPads, gardens, and morning workouts. Now they have revamped the way their students get ready for future careers by hiring Elida Pacheco-Meneses as a guidance counselor.

Meneses started a job shadowing program. The senior class shadowed professionals in different occupations, and wrote a reflection paper on their experience. To prepare for this project, the students took career personality tests so that they would have an idea of what jobs they might prefer. The job shadowing hosts included a wide range of professions. The minimum amount of time was three hours, but some students shadowed for multiple days, and even shadowed multiple people. Students were asked to evaluate their experience in an anonymous survey. One student said, “I was able to decide whether or not this job was for me. It helped me look into other options — options I didn’t think I would actually end up pursuing.” Another student explained, “I learned there are lots of routes/paths you can go down. You aren’t limited.” The students liked having hands-on experience.

The program was successful, but it took perseverance to accomplish. The step-by-step process can be daunting, but the end result shows that projects like these are worth it. These youth were able to see what plans God might have for them in the future, and they were able to witness to their hosts through Adventist education.

— BY GABRIELA CINTRON

University Parkway Church Member
“Pays it Forward”

Debi Jernigan, a member of University Parkway Church in Pensacola, Fla., was featured recently on Pensacola’s WEAR-TV 3 as the recipient of a “Pay it Forward” gift of $500. Sponsored by a local car dealer, Hill-Kelley Dodge Chrysler Jeep, the idea of the televised gift program is to present someone chosen at random with $500, who will then turn around and give it to someone who really could use the money. Jernigan gave the money to Ann Wilson, also a member of University Church.

Wilson was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis 16 years ago, and is now in a wheelchair. Steve Wilson, her husband of 40 years, takes care of her after serving in the Navy and retiring from Civil Service at NAS Pensacola. The television cameras followed Jernigan as she went to the Wilsons’ home to make the presentation to Ann. Jernigan is accustomed to paying it forward. She volunteers at hospice and assisted care facilities. She’s a hairdresser, so she uses her skills to treat people to a new hair-do, or a manicure, or even a new outfit. She does anything she can to make someone’s day brighter. But, she had never made someone’s day by surprising them with $500 until the television crew approached her. The video was shown during University’s Church service on May 4, 2013, and aired on May 9.

— BY GLENDA HASS
New Convert Determined to Follow the Truth

Beverly Green was baptized by Robert Meneses, pastor of the Vicksburg, Miss., Church, on April 13, 2013. Green’s journey toward finding Bible truth began when she started watching the Amazing Facts television program every Sunday. She completed three Bible studies with them. The more she watched and studied, the stronger her conviction became. “These people have it all,” Green shared. She stopped going to the Sunday church where she had belonged for years. When asked why, she said, “I did not want to be part of Babylon.”

After completing the correspondence Bible studies, she waited for a call from an Adventist pastor. She decided she would not go to an Adventist church until someone invited her. That invitation would be the sign God was leading. The call came one year later. As Meneses was getting settle in his new district, the first elder brought him accumulated mail. Meneses remembers opening three envelopes from Amazing Facts that had been sent a year earlier. One was a Bible study interest from Green. Immediately, Meneses called and invited her to visit the church. Though facing opposition from her brother, Green began coming to every church service.

Then, she became ill and was treated for pneumonia, but did not get better. After further medical examinations, she was diagnosed with cancer in both lungs. The church was stunned. During prayer time every Sabbath morning the members would surround Green and pray for her. Through everything, even when the treatments got tough, the members always saw a smile on her face. Her faith was secure.

Four months later, she was declared cancer free! “Beverly has been a testimony of faith and determination. She was determined to stand for God even during those difficult times when illness wanted to rob the joy she had found in the Adventist truth,” says Meneses.

—BY ELIDA MENeses

Conference Staff Learns How to Respond in Active Shooter Situation

Corporal J.F. Peterson from the Montgomery, Ala., Police Department joined Dave Livermore, Conference secretary, on May 13, 2013, to present an Active Shooter Training Seminar for the Conference office staff. After presenting Active Shooter information provided by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Livermore and Peterson conducted drills so that the office staff could learn how to react in case of an intru-

The call came one year later. As Meneses was getting settle in his new district, the first elder brought him accumulated mail. Meneses remembers opening three envelopes from Amazing Facts that had been sent a year earlier. One was a Bible study interest from Green. Immediately, Meneses called and invited her to visit the church. Though facing opposition from her brother, Green began coming to every church service.

Th. Then, she became ill and was treated for pneumonia, but did not get better. After further medical examinations, she was diagnosed with cancer in both lungs. The church was stunned. During prayer time every Sabbath morning the members would surround Green and pray for her. Through everything, even when the treatments got tough, the members always saw a smile on her face. Her faith was secure.

Four months later, she was declared cancer free! “Beverly has been a testimony of faith and determination. She was determined to stand for God even during those difficult times when illness wanted to rob the joy she had found in the Adventist truth,” says Meneses.

—BY REBECCA GRIce
Kentucky-Tennessee News

Raleigh Church Holds First Health, Wellness Fair

Cinco de Mayo is observed in the United States, various other locations, and in Mexico each year on May 5. It commemorates Mexico’s unlikely victory over the French at the Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862.

On May 5, 2013 Community Services and Women’s Ministries, under the leadership of Meri James, and members of the Raleigh Church in Memphis, Tenn., gave added significance to Cinco de Mayo. They hosted a health fair on the church grounds. In the face of threatening weather, when it seemed all would fail, and spirits were dampened, postponing the fair was discussed. However, a faithful few went into prayer mode and the Lord intervened. He had the final say.

All were blessed by the many resourceful church members and volunteers from the community who served. There were doctors, nurses, healthcare practitioners, audiologists, optometrists, dental hygienists, teachers, nutritionists, food demonstrators, massage therapists, administrative staff, and Pathfinders.

While the adults were getting their testing done, the children were entertained by Akasha Samuel and her activities team. The children enjoyed face painting, Bible memorization games, bubble contests, and many more activities.

There were cooking demonstrations every 30 minutes on items such as bread making, how to make a colorful fruit and vegetable salad, smoothies, juicing, and a vegan casse-role. The samplings were healthy and delicious.

The community services disaster response team hosted a five-hour CPR/First-Aid/AED certification class. Members received intensive training and were awarded a two-year certification. Hopefully, they will use their skills in saving lives for the kingdom.

The Raleigh Church members took great pride in hosting this event, and are looking forward to planning an outreach in the community dealing with health. It was providential — Cinco de Mayo will be remembered and will be placed in the church calendar.

Community services thanks everyone who worked tirelessly; devoted their time, talents, and prayers; and took their responsibilities seriously. Meri James commented, “It literally brought tears to my eyes when I saw the interest and dedication of our church family.” Let’s continue in such spirits.

—BY HILARY JAMES

Carter’s Celebrate 65th Wedding Anniversary

Bert and Betty Carter of Greenbrier, Tenn., celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on May 14, 2013. They were married in Warford, England, 15 miles north of London, in 1948. In 1976, they moved to Ridgetop, Tenn. They have two children, both born in England. Their daughter, Julie Estella, now lives in Greenbrier; and their son, Nigel, resides in England. They have three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

The couple spent many years in the Seventh-day Adventist publishing work in England, Tennessee, and Canada. They also went to Russia for seven months in 1992 to help establish a publishing house there. They are active members of the Ridgetop Church, and have held many church offices through the years.

—BY HELEN KELLY
Kentucky Member Organizes Adventist Motorcycle Ministry

Andy Burgin, a member of the Louisville, Ky., First Church, organized the Kentucky Chapter of Adventist Motorcycle Ministries (AMM). This organization is a Christian ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It uses motorcycles as a tool to reach others who have a love for the outdoors and a desire to reach others for Christ. Burgin says, “Being a servant is our main focus.” This chapter is looking for opportunities for service and connecting with others with similar interests.

The international organization has a web page, http://www.adventistmotorcycleministry.org, with information about the organization. If you are interested in membership, rides, or other activities that take place in Kentucky or Tennessee, please contact Andy Burgin at torch1100shadow@yahoo.com.

—BY CLIFTON KELLER

Louisville Citizens Commissioned
“Give-a-Day Week of Service”

“Give-a-Day Week of Service” is a city-wide movement for the people of Louisville to volunteer for one day during the week of service. When representatives from the Louisville churches heard about the program at one of the mayor’s Faith Forum’s, they immediately recognized it as a way Seventh-day Adventists could contribute to the community, demonstrating their interest in helping to make Louisville a great place to live.

Announcements were placed in the church bulletins, and emails were sent out alerting members to the opportunity. Several projects were selected for people to choose from so that members could work together as a group.

Five members of the Middletown Church chose to help beautify the Louisville Nature Center. While the women weeded around the nature center itself, the men spread mulch on nature paths or weeded the area around signs. As they were working, two different television stations arrived with cameras and reporters to gather film and interviews to be featured on the evening news. As the Middletown pastor and another member were interviewed, they had the opportunity to share that they were part of a group from the Middletown Seventh-day Adventist Church just desiring to make a difference.

God blessed a simple desire to give back to the community by putting His people at the right place and right time to be even greater witnesses for Him than they could have imagined.

—BY BARBARA HAGELE

Pictured are Richard Wilson (left), Arden Hagele, Linda Wilson, Barbara Hagele, and Marius Serban, pastor.

Pictured are Karen Cooksey (left), Irvin Cooksey, Ruby Latta, Gary Latta, Andy Burgin, David Cushman, and Judy Dickbaut, pastor.
Reviving Souls with a “Breath of Life”

They paraded down the center aisle dressed in white robes, walking toward the front of the church, as would “brides adorned for their grooms.” The on looking crowd erupted in applause, standing ovations, and cheers as they watched a living metaphor unfold — Christ’s bride, the church, going to meet her groom — as the baptismal candidates prepared for their spiritual marriage. It was a fitting finale and representation of Revelation Now!, the second Breath of Life (BOL) Spring Revival at Oakwood University Church (OUC), April 6-20, 2013.

The Holy Spirit convicted 111 men, women, and children to join their lives to Christ through the preaching of Carlton P. Byrd, D.Min., BOL speaker/director and senior pastor of OUC. Focusing on the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, Byrd dissected the historical and future significance of all the beasts in these apocalyptic books as they relate to world events. Add the 111 baptisms to the 128 baptisms from the 2012 Spring Revival (171 total baptisms for the 2012 calendar year at OUC, the single highest number for any local church in the North American Division) — and one sees evidence that Breath of Life still ministers to those who need to hear the eternal Gospel.

“Our priority is evangelism,” says Byrd, “seeing men, women, boys, and girls accept Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and becoming baptized Christians of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.” Thus, BOL will continue its mission to present the everlasting Gospel of Jesus Christ to all people groups from a contemporary, urban perspective.

—BY PATRICE THOMAS CONWELL

Memphis Youth Stand Up for Christ

Spring Break 2013 will be a week to remember. The members of Memphis Longview Heights Church’s praise groups, Joyful Expression and Seventh Day, were given the opportunity to audition for Juanita Bynum’s Threshing Floor Conference in Memphis, Tenn. Not only did they audition, but both groups were chosen to minister.

After the audition, a list was distributed outlining the items each praise group would have to wear to be a part of the event. One item was jewelry. The youth are so convicted of their beliefs that they said “no.” They would not be part of the event if they had to wear jewelry. After discussing Adventist beliefs with Bynum and her staff, the groups were allowed to minister without the jewelry.

Initially, the male group was asked to minister two nights during the event — once on Thursday night and again on Friday night. Bynum shared that she wanted them to minister as the Ark of the Covenant was being brought into the Sanctuary. Her staff informed us on Thursday night that the ark was not going to be brought in on Thursday night but on Friday night, so the boys had to wait. They were disappointed, but they stayed, cheered on the girls group, and listened to the sermon.

God had something special planned. During the sermon that Thursday night, several things were brought out. Bynum spoke on the Sabbath. She talked about the seventh day being a day of rest, and that she does not work on the Sabbath. It was good to hear her share that in her sermon because Adventists worship on the seventh day Sabbath. She was so interested and asked a couple more questions. She even stated that she wanted to learn more. When Friday evening came, the boys ministered right before the Ark of the Covenant was revealed on the Sabbath.

The youth took a stand for Jesus, and, as a result, someone received knowledge about God’s seventh day Sabbath.

—BY AUDRA OWENS
There was great rejoicing in Heaven as the heavenly host looked down on Emmanuel Church in Mobile, Ala., saw 84 new believers follow the example of Jesus into the watery grave of baptism, and rise as new soldiers in the army of faith on Sabbath, May 18, 2013. The older saints were mesmerized, as some had never before seen anything like this in the church’s recent history. This was the result of a two-week series by evangelist Alfred Miller Jr., of Birmingham, Ala.

The excitement of the newly baptized members had started on the Wednesday night before when Miller made his first call to follow Christ, and 50 individuals responded. One more individual was added through baptism on May 25, and four more on June 1. Together with those who joined by profession of faith, a total of 93 new members joined the Church for Christ.

Emmanuel has been under the leadership of Harold Goodloe, pastor, since August 11, 2012. Including this recent evangelistic outreach, to date there is a grand total of 98 new members added to Emmanuel during his pastorate.

The electrifying atmosphere of this evangelistic series has not ended with baptism. The whole church has been included in a plan of comradery, teaching, and reaching, whereby the new members will be engulfed in a sea of Christian love, helping them to adjust to this new way of walking with Christ.

—BY JOYCE SAMPSON-ROBINSON
Couples Renew Their Marriage Vows

During the weekend of February 13-17, 2013, Shiloh Church in Ocala, Fla., conducted a special marriage renewal event for their members.

Jay Winston, pastor, and his wife, Crystal, along with the married couples of Shiloh Church in Ocala, Fla., celebrated “A Time To Remember.”

The event featured a marriage counseling session on Wednesday, February 13, conducted by Joseph Lewis, retired pastor, and his wife, Julia, and the members of Shiloh. He admonished 23 couples to continue doing the things they did to win the hearts of their spouses, to keep their eyes focused on each other, and to ask God to guide and direct them in all their future endeavors.

Antwoyn Mells, pastor of Progress Village Church, and Westside Community Church in Tampa, Fla., and former beloved pastor of Shiloh, and his wife, Carliita, were the special guests for the Sabbath activities. The Sabbath events included a Renewal of Vows Ceremony for the couples who participated.

The couples had a combined total of 638 years of wedded bliss, rekindled their love for each other, and thanked God for allowing their marriages to be successful and happy through Him.

The highlight of the weekend was the “Honeymoon Night Out” which was held at a local hotel. The couples enjoyed a second honeymoon, a Sunday morning breakfast, and a private “Sweetheart Banquet” in the Grand Ballroom on Sunday afternoon.

—BY ROBERT HENLEY

Second Adventist-Owned Funeral Home Opens in Florida

God led Kristy Waldon to become the proud owner of WALDON Professional Funeral & Cremation Services in April 2013, in the beautiful city of Sanford, Fla. It is one of two such facilities owned by Adventists. The Lord has blessed Waldon with not only a new ministry, but also with a beautiful 4,000-plus-square-foot facility to receive, teach, and educate families. The funeral home includes a chapel for visitations and services, a comfortable lobby, an arrangement room, kitchenette, and offices.

As a teenager attending Miami Union Academy, Waldon dreamed of becoming a funeral director/embalmer and owning her own funeral home. She graduated from Miami Union Academy in May of 2000, and headed to Oakwood University (formerly Oakwood College) in Huntsville, Ala. After attending Oakwood for one year, she set her sights on mortuary school to finally begin her career. She obtained an associate of science degree in funeral services in July of 2003 from St. Petersburg College in St. Petersburg, Fla. From there she went on to complete a one-year internship with Gail & Wynn’s Mortuary in Orlando, Fla. Shortly afterward, she became licensed as a Florida funeral director/embalmer.

Today, she has been licensed for almost 10 years and has obtained a bachelor of science degree in management, and a master of arts degree in business administration.

WALDON Professional Funeral & Cremation Services is a full service funeral home offering traditional and non-traditional services, but specializes in personalizing and after-care services, all while offering affordable prices. Her goal is to teach and educate consumers on different topics as it pertains to funeral services, and provide after care services to help families cope with the loss of their loved ones. Waldon believes an educated consumer is a prepared consumer; education is the key.

—BY JACKIE WALDON
Seven Pastors Participate in “Preach-Out”

Seven Southeastern pastors participated in the first Mt. Pisgah “Preach-Out” on March 30, 2013: Curtis Crider, Samuel Dade, Gerly Germain, Kevin Bryan, Orville Brissett, Pierre Francious, and Dion Henry. Pastors Paul Goodridge and Marlon Lamand assisted in other services.

Mt. Pisgah Church in Miami Gardens, Fla., held its first “Preach Out and Music Festival” on Sabbath, March 30, 2013. The program featured sermons from seven different pastors who came from various churches in the Conference. The vision to conduct the Preach Out was from Kevin Bryan, pastor of Mt. Pisgah. Seven pastors preached on the seven last statements of Christ before He was crucified, only to rise on the third day. The seven pastors were Orville Brissett, pastor of the Macedonia Church in Ft. Pierce, Fla., and First Church in Port St. Lucie, Fla.; Curtis Crider, pastor of First Coast International Church in Jacksonville, Fla., and Berea Church in St. Augustine, Fla.; Samuel Dade, pastor of Patmos Chapel in Winter Park, Fla.; Kevin Bryan, pastor of Mt. Pisgah Church in Miami Gardens, Fla.; Pierre Francious, pastor of Trinity Church in Fitzgerald, Ga., and First Church in Hazelhurst, Ga.; Gerly Germain, pastor of Bencah Haitian Church in Bradenton, Fla., and Bethanie French Church in Tampa, Fla.; and Dion Henry, pastor of Salem Church in Pompano Beach, Fla., and Morning Star Church in Sunrise, Fla. Paul Goodridge, pastor of Zion Hill Church in Hawthorne, Fla., and Bethany Church in Palatka, Fla.; and Marlon Lamand, chaplain of Miami Union Academy in Miami, Fla., assisted in other services throughout the day.

There is a lot that goes on behind a sermon. Sermons are not merely a collage of adjectives and verbs that poetically come together to tell a story of a story. There is a lot that goes on behind a preacher. There is a desperate desire to lead others to Christ, thus causing one to hope they can overcome all fear. Being a shepherd of a flock is an awesome task, and it’s not for the faint of heart. There is the sermon, there is the preacher, there is the emotion.

Mt. Pisgah, a church known for its praise and worship, had a special ambiance that day. This sentiment was echoed by Orville Brissett, one of the speakers: “The atmosphere was ready for worship.” Brissett had one of the best lines of the day. He was tasked with speaking about the phrase, “It is finished.” He noted in his sermon “finished, not I am finished.”

“During my study it leaped out at me,” Brissett stated. It served as the devil’s eviction notice. When one shares the pulpit with other preachers, there may be a temptation to try to outdo the other, but that wasn’t the case. As Brissett put it, “I never want my name to be remembered, I just want the Word lifted up.”

One must also consider the unity of the preachers. They are not simply colleagues. “They’re all my friends,” said Bryan when speaking of the other pastors. The spirit of unity was also clearly evident as both the pastor and choir of Antioch Missionary Baptist Church of Miami Gardens, Fla., participated in the event.

Bryan was extremely proud of his church as he made mention of the excellent job that was done by all. “March 30 was indeed special,” he said. “I’m happy to say, that what stood out the most wasn’t the preaching or the music, but the sacrifice. It was the reminder that He paid it all. That’s what truly made the day a success.”

—BY RUDY JEAN-BART
Multiplicado por Diez

“Yo soy la vid, vosotros los pámpanos; el que permaneces en mí, y yo en él, este lleva mucho fruto; porque separados de mí nada podéis hacer.”
(Juan 15:5)

El sábado 9 de marzo fue un día de inspiración y testimonio para la iglesia del Noroeste. Se celebró el décimo aniversario de la célula “Nuevo Renacer.”

En el 2003, Miledys de la Rosa decidió abrir un grupo celular en su casa. Un número pequeño de miembros de iglesia se reunía cada semana invitando amigos y conocidos. Fue una tarea continua e incansable. Algunos de los miembros que colaboraban, luego de ver el funcionamiento, decidieron abrir sus propias células. Al cabo de 10 años, este grupo se multiplicó dando lugar a 10 nuevas células. Dieciocho almas se unieron a la iglesia del Noroeste como resultado de este trabajo, y de la obra del Espíritu Santo. En la actualidad, muchas de estas almas son líderes de nuevos grupos celulares.

El pastor Allan Machado, director del Ministerio Hispano se hizo presente en esta celebración y motivó a la iglesia a seguir adelante. Cabe destacar la labor del pastor laico Marcos Veras y de los líderes de la iglesia quienes demuestran un profundo compromiso con la misión de compartir el mensaje de amor que Dios nos encomendó.

Sí, fue una tarde bendecida. Los testimonios fueron inspiradores, y el Espíritu de Dios se manifestó.

—HUMBERTO HURRITINER, PASTOR DEL DISTRITO

Impacto en Miami

Con el fin de recibir la presencia del Espíritu Santo para la obra que se estaba planificando, la iglesia Ebenezer en Miami, llevó a cabo dos eventos de comunión y consagración: “Diez Días de Aposento Alto” y “Diez Días de Poder.” Al cabo de ambos, el 28 de abril, jóvenes y adultos participaron en “La Clínica de Salud a la Comunidad.”

Se invitó a los vecinos a recibir limpieza dental, prueba de glucosa, massages, chequeo de masa muscular, etc. Todos estos servicios fueron brindados por personal calificado y profesionales de la salud. Participaron también American Dental Community, Blood Danation, Costco.

Chiropractor-East, Florida Heart, Force Unite, Unión Positiva, Full Life Vitamins y otros que con su presencia fortalecieron al evento.

La clínica fue organizada por el Departamento de Salud y Temperancia de la iglesia, a cargo de la enfermera registrada Penélope Zaiter.

Para alegría de la familia de Ebenezer, se está recibiendo la visita de vecinos que nunca habían asistido a la iglesia, y que ahora reconocen y dan testimonio de los beneficios que ésta aporta a la comunidad. Se tuvo la visita de un oficial de la policía local quien recibió atención en la clínica, y cuyo testimonio fue de gratitud por los servicios brindados a los vecinos.

La iglesia Ebenezer sigue adelante cumpliendo las etapas de la misión que se ha propuesto, reconociendo en todo momento que “hasta aquí los ayudó Jehová.”

—HUMBERTO HURRITINER, PASTOR DEL DISTRITO
De Obstáculo a Instrumento al Servicio de Dios

Después de más de dos años de estudiar de la Biblia, Rafael Ozuna estaba convencido del llamado del Señor a entregarse a él, pero lo detenía la preocupación por su negocio de peluquería. Los sábados, eran los días de mayor afluencia de clientes, y cerrar no parecía una opción a considerar. Por un tiempo, Rafael estuvo asistiendo a la iglesia hispana de Marietta, dejando el negocio a cargo de un empleado. Los miembros de iglesia continuaban visitándolo, estudiando la Biblia con él y orando en los cultos de oración y en forma privada por él.

Durante el mes de marzo, el pastor Urdaneta tuvo a su cargo una serie de conferencias a las que Rafael asistió fielmente. Al finalizar las mismas, Rafael decidió entregar su vida y sus posesiones al servicio de Cristo. No fue una decisión sencilla. Implicó un cambio total de dirección en su vida. Se bautizó, y con un corazón lleno de fe, ofreció su local en forma gratuita para que comience a funcionar una nueva iglesia los días sábados. Lo que antes fue un obstáculo para su total entrega al Señor, se convirtió en un instrumento para Su gloria. El pastor Urdaneta ya inició el proyecto que comenzó el sábado 21 de abril, con la participación de toda la Iglesia hispana de Marietta.

El Espíritu Santo trabajó durante un largo tiempo en el corazón de Rafael, y los resultados fueron de gran bendición para él en forma personal, y para la iglesia y su misión.

—RICARDO URDANETA, PASTOR DEL DISTRITO

Retiro de Matrimonios en Birmingham

El 27 y 28 de abril de 2013, 19 parejas del distrito Hispano de Fort Payne tuvieron la oportunidad de disfrutar y ser enriquecidos espiritualmente al participar de un retiro para matrimonios organizado y conducido por el Ezequiel Osorio, pastor del distrito, y su esposa. El mismo se llevó a cabo en el hotel Hilton Garden de Birmingham, AL. Participaron las iglesias de Birmingham, Fort Payne y Oxford.

El lema escogido fue: “Los 5 lenguajes del amor”. Este retiro fue una bendición para las parejas que participaron. Las mismas pudieron reconocer elementos que son importantes para la armonía y felicidad del matrimonio. Se pudo comprender aún más el amor que Dios tiene por sus hijos, y cuánto desea que los matrimonios y las familias estén unidas, permitiendo que Él los utilice dentro del hogar, el vecindario y la iglesia.

—CINTIA WOODS, ASISTENTE ADMINISTRATIVA DEL DEPARTAMENTO HISPANO

Impacto 2013 en Meridien

Como parte de “Impacto 2013”, la iglesia de Meridian, MS, llevó a cabo una campaña conducida por el Pastor Héctor Cabán, de la asociación Southeastern. La misma tuvo lugar del 11 al 19 de mayo. El lema fue “Levántate, Dios todavía está al control”. El pastor del distrito, Huascar Rodríguez, movilizó a la iglesia, y juntos trabajan para alcanzar a aquellos que aún no conocen el evangelio. Los hermanos de Meridian se organizaron en grupos de oración y están orando e intercediendo por 221 personas, 23 de las cuales asistieron a la campaña. Tanto las visitas como la iglesia fueron bendecidas con los temas del pastor Cabán, y están maravillados al ver los milagros que Dios está obrando en su medio.

—CINTIA WOODS, ASISTENTE ADMINISTRATIVA DEL DEPARTAMENTO HISPANO
Ministerio Callejero

Un grupo de miembros de la Primera Iglesia Central de Memphis, sintió el llamado de llegar a aquellas personas que están viviendo momentos difíciles en sus vidas. Recorren las calles en búsqueda gente sin trabajo, de hogares destruidos, hundidos en las drogas, etc. Individuos que no pueden explicar cómo llegaron a ese punto, ni salir del pozo. Este grupo de miembros les ofrece comida, música, amistad y esperanza.

Fue increíble ver un sábado muy frío del mes de abril en el que tuve la oportunidad de ir a predicar a este grupo que se reúne en la calle, cómo a pesar de las bajas temperaturas, la gente llegaba para recibir palabras de esperanza. Algunas de las personas ya asistieron a la iglesia, otros han expresado el deseo de ser bautizados en el bautismo del mes de junio, en donde se celebrarán los primeros resultados del evangelismo de calle.

—ARMANDO DE LEÓN, DIRECTOR DEL DEPARTAMENTO HISPANO

Noticias del Distrito de Louisville

Victoria en Cristo

Con notable entusiasmo se llevó a cabo la campaña “Victoria en Cristo” del 9 al 16 de marzo en la Primera Iglesia Adventista Hispana de la ciudad de Louisville, KY. Todos fueron grandemente bendecidos y muchos amigos que están creciendo en Cristo engalanaron la actividad con su presencia. El Señor permitió concluir la semana con un bautismo.

Programa de Jóvenes

Marzo 23 fue un sábado inolvidable para la juventud del distrito hispano de Louisville. Conducido por el pastor Ken Wetmore, director del departamento de jóvenes de la asociación. Se desarrolló un programa por jóvenes y para jóvenes que duró todo el día. Más de cincuenta personas fueron bendecidas por su participación.

Un Hogar Para los Amigos

“Un Hogar Para los Amigos” es el nombre del proyecto misionero que se inició el sábado 30 de marzo en la calle Séptima de la ciudad de Louisville, KY. Se trata de hacer una obra de conexión con la población hispana. Se está rentando un lugar adecuado y se ha organizado un equipo misionero bien preparado para este proyecto, que funcionará basado en la oración.

Conquista tu Tierra Prometida

La iglesia del sur de Louisville, KY, organizó una campaña evangélica y semana de énfasis espiritual que tituló “Conquista tu Tierra Prometida”, y tuvo como resultado un bautismo de tres personas. Fue una experiencia de enriquecimiento espiritual.

—SERGIO MONTERROSO, PASTOR DEL DISTRITO
Ministerio de Recreación en Nashville

Debido a que la población hispana de los Estados Unidos está constituida mayormente por inmigrantes que han dejado familias y amigos, y viven ahora socialmente limitados, hace 3 años la iglesia de Nashville, TN, decidió crear el ministerio de recreación que intenta llenar ese vacío social y afectivo. La comunidad se mostró muy entusiasta. Se organizaron 28 equipos de fútbol, y se atrajo un promedio de 200 visitas por domingo. El amor atrae a las personas, Ocho jóvenes dieron su paso de bautismo y otros están asistiendo a la iglesia. Varios familiares de miembros de iglesia que de otra manera nunca se hubiesen acercado, participan también de actividades espirituales. Cabe destacar de manera especial la labor de Fernando Pérez y su equipo de voluntarios que durante estos años han estado a cargo de este ministerio. —CARLOS PINTO, PASTOR DEL DISTRITO

South Atlantic Noticias

Bautismos

Carrolton
El Pastor Roger Meléndez dirigió una semana de conferencias que tuvo lugar del 4 al 11 de mayo en la iglesia de Carrolton, GA. Este esfuerzo trajo como resultado el bautismo de 5 personas. Meléndez vino desde Nicaragua con un plan evangélico organizado por la Unión del Sur y bajo el auspicio y dirección del Pastor.

Durham
El sábado 27 de abril se llevó a cabo una ceremonia bautismal a cargo del pastor Efraín Poloche en Durham, NC, en la que 4 personas entregaron sus vidas a Jesucristo. Estas decisiones fueron hechas durante una semana de reavivamiento, que resaltó el tema de la justificación por la fe y la razón por la que Cristo vino a morir por los pecadores. Fue presentada por Carlos Cruz, laico.

Cary
El sábado 20 de Abril Sabina Díaz Arriaga se unió a la familia de la iglesia de Cary, NC, en una emotiva ceremonia bautismal a cargo de Ismael Uribe, pastor del distrito vecino. Este bautismo fue un importante incentivo para la congregación más pequeña de la asociación, que está a cargo del pastor Poloche. El grupo cuenta con 12 miembros, y este bautismo es el primero de una sucesión que contando con la ayuda de Dios, se planifican para el 2013.

—EFRAÍN POLOCHE, DIRECTOR DEL DEPARTAMENTO HISPANO

Bautismo en Durham, bautismo en Cary, bautismo en Carrolton, grupo de Cary
Entrenamiento para Líderes de Jóvenes, Tesoreros y Secretarias de Iglesia

El departamento hispano organizó un entrenamiento para los tesoreros, secretarios de iglesia y directores de jóvenes, el pasado 13 de abril. La hermana Beverly McKenzie, directora de Risk Management, con la interpretación de Doraly Poloche, se encargaron de cubrir el tema de los seguros que deben tener las congregaciones. Hablaron acerca de cómo evitar riesgos y demandas en contra de la iglesia. Samuel Poloche entrenó a los tesoreros en el programa JEWEL que se usa para la contabilidad de las iglesias. La hermana Luz Rodríguez, esposa del pastor Juan Reyes, instruyó a los secretarios/as de iglesia en el programa de computación e-adventist que es de ayuda en la transferencia de miembros, reportes, y actas de junta de iglesia. Antonio Pereira dictó un curso de liderazgo para jóvenes y más de 30 dirigentes juveniles aprovecharon la instrucción. La inscripción al evento estuvo a cargo de Xiomara Poloche y Marlene Pereira. Fue una actividad beneficiosa para todos los asistentes deseosos de servir al Señor de la forma más eficiente posible.

—EFRAÍN POLOCHE, DIRECTOR DEL DEPARTAMENTO HISPANO

Actividades en la Iglesia de Raleigh

Ministerio Masculino

Los varones de la Iglesia hispana “Getsemani” en Raleigh, NC, escogieron el sábado 6 de abril para repartir literatura en uno de los mercados de la ciudad durante todo el día. Allí, la afluencia de público hispano es importante, por lo tanto las oportunidades de testificación son múltiples. Para esto dedicaron el tiempo regular de la escuela sabática y del culto divino. El hermano David Ubiera, primer anciano de la iglesia, junto al director de Ministerio Personal prepararon esta actividad anual que cuenta con la participación de todos los varones y jovencitos de la iglesia. Se aprovechó para invitar a las personas a quienes se les entregó literatura, a asistir al ciclo de conferencias que la iglesia está organizando. Las damas quedaron en el templo concentradas en actividades del ministerio de la mujer. La iglesia ora para que esta semilla sembrada redunde en la salvación de muchos.

Por Siempre te Amaré

El tema del retiro al que asistieron 66 parejas fue “Éxito en el Amor.” Todos disfrutaron de los seminarios, los cantos y el banquete del sábado de noche. La oradora invitada fue la doctora Miriam Acosta, proveniente de la universidad adventista de Montemorelos, México, donde es profesora en la facultad de sociología y encargada del programa de vida familiar del plantel. La inscripción al evento estuvo a cargo de Samuel y Doraly Poloche y el pastor Jorge Quintiana con su esposa; la organización y la decoración fue obra de Xiomara Poloche y los esposos Alexis, Vega y Escalante. El pastor Poloche ofició como maestro de ceremonia y dirigió el himno lema “Por siempre te amaré”.

La iglesia adventista apoya el concepto bíblico de que las parejas deben convivir sólo luego de estar unidas en matrimonio. El viernes por la noche, se llevó a cabo la boda de una pareja que convivió desde hace algún tiempo, pero nunca se había casado. De esta forma pudieron participar de este fin de semana, y se están preparando para unirse a la familia de Dios en Raleigh, NC, en un próximo bautismo.

Entre las parejas que asistieron, 5 eran visitas y quedaron altamente impresionadas por la bondad, la cortesía y el amor manifestado hacia ellos por el resto del grupo.

—EFRAÍN POLOCHE, DIRECTOR DEL DEPARTAMENTO HISPANO
Estudiantes en el Campo Misionero

Uno de los componentes del programa educativo de Southern Adventist University está enfocado en incentivar una actitud de servicio en los estudiantes. Esta meta se ve reflejada en el enunciado de la misión de esta institución: “Southern Adventist University, es una comunidad de aprendizaje que incentiva el desarrollo de una personalidad semejante a la de Cristo, promueve la búsqueda de la verdad, la integridad, y una vida de servicio.”

El enunciado de la misión de Southern es más que un conjunto de palabras agradables. Se traduce en varias actividades. Una de ellas es los viajes misioneros que se llevan a cabo durante el receso de primavera. La universidad y los estudiantes trabajan en conjunto haciendo caso al llamado de Cristo de ir a predicar el evangelio de amor a todo el mundo.

República Dominicana

Durante tres vacaciones de primavera consecutivas, 2004-2006, los integrantes del equipo acrobático “Gym-Masters” de Southern viajaron a la República Dominicana. Allí promovieron un mensaje de lucha contra las drogas a través de diversos programas, y entablaron relaciones con la comunidad local. Después de tres años de visitar otros estados y países, el equipo regresó a la República Dominicana.

“Ellos pidieron que regresemos”, dijo Richard Schwarz, entrenador de “Gym-Masters.”

El equipo visitó este país por una semana en el mes de marzo. Había mucho trabajo por hacer, y los estudiantes estaban involucrados en una variedad de tareas. Colaboraron en un proyecto de construcción de Maranatha, visitaron un hospital de niños, impartieron talleres para 250 futuros profesores de educación física, y para el equipo de gimnasia dirigido por estudiantes de la Universidad Adventista Dominicana.

“Aprendimos el valor de la comunicación con nuestros ojos, movimientos, y tacto” dijo Schwarz. “Los estudiantes nunca dejaron pasar una oportunidad de ayudar, e interactuar con los demás!”

Nicaragua

Durante más de 20 años, la escuela de enfermería y el departamento de tecnología han participado en viajes misioneros a Nicaragua. El pasado receso de primavera no fue la excepción. Quince estudiantes se anotaron para este viaje. Para Dale Walters, director del departamento de tecnología, esta fue su experiencia número 23 en la costa este del país, que está poblada por indígenas Miskitos. Llevó dos estudiantes de tecnología, y juntos trabajaron en la reparación de cuatro vehículos. Al final de su estadía, se fueron con la satisfacción de haber podido arreglar un camión que no había funcionado durante tres años. “El poder usar los conceptos técnicos que estamos aprendiendo en clase en un campo misionero, es una sensación increíble” dijo Walters. “Te hace ver qué es lo que más necesitas aprender.”

La patrocinadora de este viaje fue Brittany Ryder, coordinadora clínica de la escuela de enfermería. Fue su primera experiencia de este tipo. “Lo que viví allí me hizo ver cuán agradecida debo estar por todo, especialmente las cosas simples de la vida, como lavarse las manos.” Dijo Ryder. Ryder y un equipo de 13 estudiantes trabajaron en clínicas móviles, dando atención médica a 70 pacientes por día.

Brasil

Durante el 28 de febrero, un segundo grupo de la Escuela de Enfermería salió con destino a la parte norte de Brasil, en una misión a la que denominaron Ministerio de Salvación del Amazonas. Este ministerio está a cargo de un alumno graduado de Southern, Bradley Mills, María Valenca, profesora asociada en la Escuela de Enfermería, y Melissa Tortal, directora del Programa de Servicio Cristiano. Junto a ellos, 11 estudiantes participaron de la misión.

Uno de los comentarios de Valenca luego del viaje fue: “La experiencia constituyó la combinación perfecta de trabajo clínico y espiritual. Le dimos una copia del libro La Gran Controversia a cada uno de los pacientes que tratamos.”

Durante todo el viaje, el grupo durmió en hamacas en un barco, viajando a un pueblo diferente cada día y estableciendo clínicas móviles en las escuelas. Uno de los días colaboraron en la construcción de una iglesia. Seth Sutherland, estudiante de segundo año de enfermería, dio testimonio del efecto que esta experiencia había causado en su vida: “Fui bendecido personalmente al haber tenido la oportunidad de ver cómo el Señor está obrando entre los pueblos. Una sonrisa, un tratamiento médico simple, y una historia sencilla, tienen mucho poder en el campo misionero.”

—CHARLES CAMMACk, EDITOR

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Events Calendar

Carolina

Pathfinder Leadership Convention – July 23-25. NPR.
Adult Sabbath School Teacher Training – July 26-28. NPR.
Carolina Teachers’ Convention – Aug. 1-5. NPR.
Pathfinder/Adventurer Leadership Convention – Aug. 23-25. NPR.
Hispanic Men’s Retreat – Aug. 30-Sept. 1. NPR.

Florida

Complete calendar online – http://www.floridaconference.com/calendar/
Singles’ Ministries events and mailing list information. Spiritual study groups, fellowship dinners, outings, and more. http://www.floridaconference.com/lym/childrenandfamily/events/, djmiller4000@gmail.com, or 407-703-3050.
Florida Adventist Bookmobile Schedule
Resumes in autumn.
 Planned Giving and Trust Services Clinics
Sept. 7. Emmanuel.
Sept. 21. West Palm Beach.
Sept. 28. Fort Lauderdale.
Foundation of Faith Community Nursing – Sept. 30-Oct. 4, 8 a.m.-5:15 p.m.
Florida Hospital Trickel Building, 900 Winderley Place, Maitland. A course for nurses with active RN license that will empower you to view health through the CREATION Health philosophy and integrate a practical understanding of theology into the role of Faith Community Nursing. Cost: $649 or $499 if registered by Aug. 31. Details: http://www健康发展100churches.org/2-tr-fcn.php, yvonne, seball@flhosp.org, or (407) 200-1657.

Georgia-Cumberland

Health Rallies
July 13. 2-5 p.m. Ogletorpe, GA.
July 20. 2-5 p.m. Hixson, TN.
July 24. 2-5 p.m. Chestatee Church. Dawsonville, GA.
God in Shoes Outreach – July 15. Jellico, TN.
Cohutta Springs Conference Center. Crandall, GA.
Southern Deaf Fellowship Camp Meeting – July 31-Aug. 4. Cohutta Springs Conference Center. Crandall, GA.
Women’s Leadership Training – Aug. 2-4.
Personal Ministries Rallies
Aug. 3. 2-5 p.m. Duluth, GA.
Aug. 10. 2-5 p.m. Athens, TN.
Teachers’ Convention – Aug. 5. 6. Cohutta Springs Conference Center. Crandall, GA.
Pathfinder Leadership Convention – Aug. 16-18.
Cohutta Springs Conference Center. Crandall, GA.
Prayer Ministries Day – Aug. 17. Austell, GA.

Gulf States

Complete calendar online http://www.gscsda.org

Adventist Book Center Open – July 14. 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Teachers’ Meetings – Aug. 4-6.
Bass Memorial Academy
Pastors’ Meetings – Aug. 5-7.
Camp Alamisco.
Bass Memorial Academy Registration – Aug. 11.

Kentucky-Tennessee

Conference Executive Committee – July 16.
Literature Evangelists’ Retreat – Aug. 1-4.
Indian Creek Camp.
50+ Camp – Aug. 6-11.
Indian Creek Camp.
Indian Creek Camp.
Indian Creek Camp.
Highland/Madison Academy Boards – Sept. 5.
Women’s Retreats at Indian Creek Camp
Sept. 6-8. Hispanic Women.
Sept. 20-22. I.
Sept. 27-29. II.
Indian Creek Camp.
Outdoor Education – Oct. 28-30.
Indian Creek Camp.

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