

T Southern TIDINGS



QUINQUENNIAL REPORT
SEPTEMBER 2016

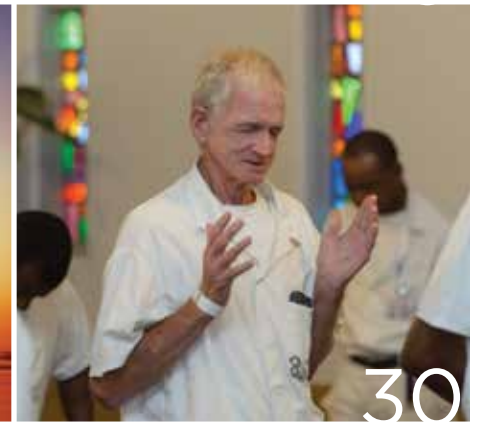
SOUTHERN UNION CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS



DEDICATED MARCH 29, 2014 | MORTGAGE BURNED MARCH 24, 2016

Since 1901, the Southern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and its partners in ministry have sought to allow God's Spirit to flow through them like "living water" in the healing, educational, evangelistic, and nurturing ministries they offer to communities throughout the southeastern portion of the United States.

Jesus' invitation, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water," John 7:37, 38, is symbolized by water designs on each floor of the Southern Union office. This living water is also reflected in the design of this quinquennial issue. As you read the reports, it is our prayer that you will accept anew Jesus' invitation to come, drink, and allow the Holy Spirit to flow through you like rivers of living water.



CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

ADVENTIST HEALTH SYSTEM
Anthony Vera Cruz
ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES
Meghan Brescher
CAROLINA Rebecca Carpenter
FLORIDA Martin Butler
GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND
Tamara Wolcott Fisher
GULF STATES Nilton Garcia
HISPANIC Mariel Lombardi
KENTUCKY-TENNESSEE Steve Rose
OAKWOOD UNIVERSITY
George Johnson Jr.
SOUTH ATLANTIC
Currine Harris
SOUTH CENTRAL
Marvin Allison Sr.
SOUTHEASTERN
Bryant Taylor, D.Min.
SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY
Lucas Patterson

CONFERENCE/
INSTITUTION DIRECTORY

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

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STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FOR 2011-2016

*Thanks for accepting our
invitation to a life of
intimacy with God,
caring for all people,
and sharing the gospel.*

THE SOUTHERN UNION

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

On the last and
greatest day
of the festival, Jesus stood and
said in a loud voice,
“Let anyone who is thirsty
come to me and drink.”

JOHN 7:37 NIV



Some of the more than 1,500 baptisms through Ron Smith's "A System for Survival" evangelistic campaigns

Reaching Up, Out, and Across

Office of the President

BY RON C. SMITH, D.MIN., PH.D.

When Christ connected face to face with His apostles and shared with them that "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations and then shall the end come," it was inconceivable to each of them how this could ever be accomplished. After Christ rose from the grave, there were only 500 believers still faithful to Him. How could this small group of followers reach this skeptical, hard-headed people if Christ had worked for three and a half years with such meager results? The great news of encouragement to the Seventh-day Adventist Church globally, and to the Southern Union membership particularly, is that a few committed

followers of Jesus were able to figuratively turn the world upside down for Jesus.

With escalating increases in immorality and violence, the waning of the church, the obsession to acquire material possessions by professed Christians, there seems to be no way that God's Church will be able to accomplish the task given to it.

During this quinquennium, we affirmed the reality that God has given and will continue to give power to His Church. We observed how the first disciples went forth preaching the Word while preparing themselves for this all-important work. Before the day of Pentecost, they met together and put away all differences. They prayed in faith. They did not ask for a blessing for



Yolanda and Ron C. Smith

Southern Union Quinquennial Year-end Membership Totals 2011-2015

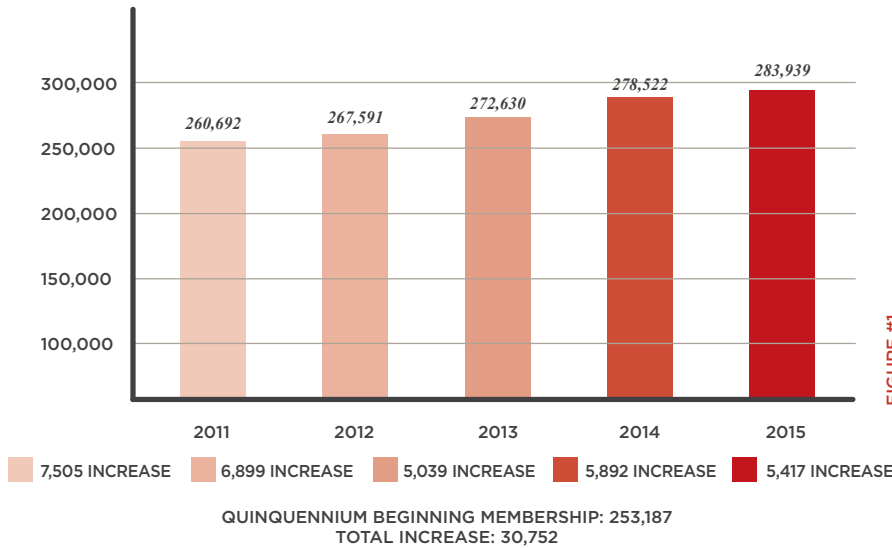


FIGURE #1

Southern Union Quinquennial Baptisms/Professions of Faith

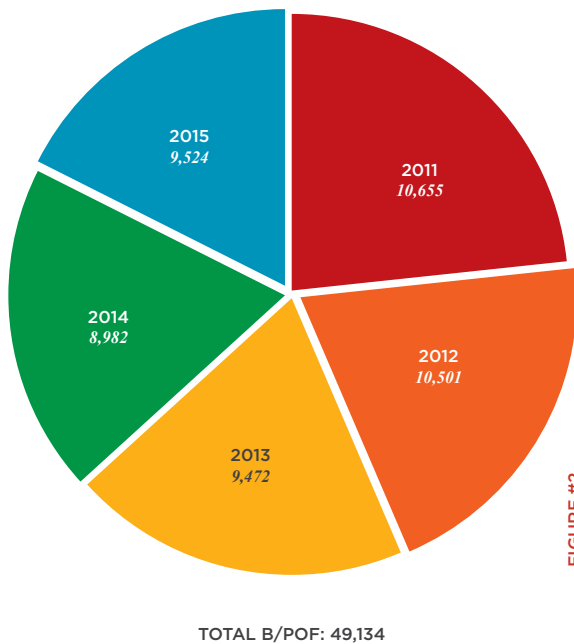


FIGURE #2

phasis and orientation has been invested in a Christ-centered approach to evangelism, winning the confidence of people to whom we quest to witness, sharing our testimony, showcasing a clear path to Christ, exploring simple methods of giving Bible studies and securing people to study with, working for backsliders while actively pursuing missing members, studying the science of securing decisions for Christ, and also identifying obstacles while assisting people in meeting common objections to accepting Jesus as Lord and Master of their lives. At the end of 2015, the Southern Union membership had grown to 23 percent of the North American Division's membership, and baptisms in the Southern Union represented 27 percent of all the baptisms in the North American Division. This year, the Southern Union's membership at the end of the second quarter has surpassed 286,686, and baptisms and professions of faith have surpassed 49,536.

Since the beginning of this quinquennium, we have sustained our posture of extending an ...

- Invitation to Intimacy,
- Invitation to Discipling, and an
- Invitation to Caring.

An Invitation to Intimacy – Reaching Up

In the Southern Union, we have reaffirmed that our number one priority should be our relationship with God. While this message has been often shared, we recognized that sometimes it can be easy to wonder if members are applying it to their daily lives.

During the quinquennium, there have been a variety of ways where members across our Union have demonstrated that they've made God their number one priority. The Southern Union Ministerium in January of the opening year of this quinquennium, and the Union-wide women's conference during that same year, are just two examples.

At both events, a special emphasis was placed on prayer, including dedicated prayer rooms and prayer sessions. At the Ministerium, an all-night prayer meeting was conducted that resulted in a bonding among pastors, and a commitment by sev-

themselves merely; they were weighted with the burden for the salvation of souls.

Tremendous growth in total membership, baptisms and professions of faith, tithe, and overall giving has heightened

the expectancy and desire for the second coming of Jesus Christ here in the southern hemisphere of the United States. Because of the Southern Union's prioritizing the sharing of Jesus with the world, much em-



The Southern Union Conference ribbon-cutting ceremony was held March 29, 2014.

PHOTO BY: R. STEVEN NORMAN III

While the Prayer Conference provides opportunities for prayer, the purpose and outcomes are far more reaching. The Conference is geared to prepare and equip students to return to their schools, churches, and communities to become key spiritual leaders.

Christian education's benefits extend beyond academy and into college. All three Adventist universities in the Southern Union — Adventist University of Health Sciences, Oakwood University, and Southern Adventist University — place an emphasis on helping students grow spiritually. We've encouraged the constituents of the Southern Union, while tirelessly engaging in responsible ministry, to stay intimate with God by moving forward on our knees, and encouraging our church members to continue strengthening their walk with God.

An Invitation to Discipling — Reaching Out

With the world becoming less interested in helping others, we have a calling to provide care and compassion when the world is not.

Members from across the Southern Union have accepted the call to Reach Out and share God's message of hope.

For more than 20 years, several schools have partnered in an Appalachian outreach program. This quinquennium, in the second year, 23 students from Madison Academy joined with 35 students from Geor-

eral of them to increase the emphasis placed on prayer in the local congregations. In addition, many pastors indicated that special night was a turning point in their ministry.

While events such as these offered opportunities for intimate conversation with God, we discovered that communion with God can also take place in community settings. In observance of a National Day of Prayer, Gordon Hospital in Calhoun, Georgia, coordinated a community effort to bring hospital staff and local citizens together in prayer. More than 550 people

encircled the hospital in a human prayer chain. While no one denied the importance of events such as these, we also identified the very important need to ensure the youth of our Church have opportunities to grow and express their faith in God.

One such event was organized by the Southern Union Youth Ministries Department. The annual Academy Prayer Conference currently attracts more than 400 students from 13 academies, with multiple names on waiting lists who wish they could attend.



Participating in the mortgage-burning ceremony on March 24, 2016: Ron C. Smith (left), D.Min., Ph.D., president of the Southern Union; Jim Davidson, Southern Union executive secretary; Tom Evans, North American Division treasurer; Dennis Millburn, Southern Union undertreasurer; and Randy Robinson, Southern Union treasurer.

PHOTO BY: R. STEVEN NORMAN III



Ron Smith's "A System for Survival" evangelistic series baptismal candidates



gia-Cumberland Academy and 12 students from Meadow Glade Church in Battle Ground, Washington, to provide community service to Appalachian communities.

Another example of partnering with other organizations took place in the Carolina Conference. Working with It Is Written, the Carolina Conference worked on an initiative to do big things in Charlotte, North Carolina. As a result of including churches and members in a battery of seed-sowing events, a large-scale evangelism campaign took place through the dynamic ministry of It Is Written. Carolina Conference also hosted a "Prophecies Decoded" prophecy seminar in Hendersonville and Asheville, North Carolina, where scores of people were baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

As part of the Southern Union's five-year initiative, we've placed a special emphasis on the Memphis, Tennessee, area. Ministerial theology students from Southern Adventist University took part in the Field School program, and conducted evangelistic meetings in at least six different locations. It has become quite apparent within the Southern Union that evangelism doesn't just happen in meetings. Literature evangelists across the Southern Union knock on doors every day, following up on interest cards, and praying with those they come in contact with.

Another exciting event that that took place

this year was the launching of the Tri-Conference Camp Meeting, a joint collaboration between the South Atlantic, Carolina, and Georgia-Cumberland conferences. Taking place in Augusta, Georgia, approximately 1,200 members of the three conferences attended. Moving forward, event organizers hope these kinds of events can be building blocks to help create unity among Adventists in our evangelistic thrusts.

Midway through this quinquennium, three churches in Tallahassee, Florida, celebrated the opening of a new elementary school. Tallahassee Adventist Christian Academy opened as the first school in the Southern Union with constituent churches from two conferences. Pastors from the Florida and Southeastern conferences recognized it would be beneficial to work together in opening an Adventist school in Tallahassee. The only Adventist school in town, Tallahassee Adventist Christian Academy continues to extend the love of Jesus before the community while educating young minds for eternity.

The Hispanic population across the Southern Union has been active in spreading God's message of hope. In both Tampa and Memphis, area churches have participated in multiple joint evangelistic meetings with other conferences. Hundreds of people have been baptized as a result of these soul-winning initia-

tives. Dynamic evangelistic efforts have encompassed the Southern Union and beyond through year-long strategies fostered and coordinated by Jorge Mayer, Southern Union Hispanic ministries director. Thousands have joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church as a result of these efforts.

The "System for Survival" evangelistic series has been quite busy throughout the last five years. Yolanda and I have averaged four three-week evangelistic meetings per year during this quinquennial period. As a result of these efforts, more than 1,500 men, women, boys, and girls have joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church through baptism and profession of faith. My officer colleagues, Randy Robinson and Jim Davidson, have partnered with me in many of these mission ventures.

"Reaching Out through the Invitation to Discipleship" has been prioritized in the Southern Union as evidenced by the fact that mission and evangelism remains at the top of the agendas for all Executive Committee meetings, Union President's Council meetings, directors and staff meetings, and all other auxiliary meetings. As people of the "end-time," it is an imperative that we sound the clarion call for Jesus.

An Invitation to Caring — Reaching Across

It may seem like people in the world are becoming less interested in caring for their neighbor, but God asks each one of us to love each other as ourself.

Members from across the Southern Union have accepted the call to reach across demographics to love and help others, regardless of age, race, or gender.

Summer camps are an excellent example of how people from all walks of life and



PHOTO BY: R. STEVEN NORMAN III

New Southern Union headquarters

backgrounds come together and lay their differences aside. Young campers make friends with camp counselors, learn life lessons from camp pastors, and interact with children they may not have ever met before. Some camps, such as Indian Creek Camp, work with Christian Record Camps for the blind and offer blind camp. One visually-impaired camper said, “We are treated here like human beings.”

Many other events and ministries are taking place, such as diversity days recognizing and learning about the different cultures in the Church, community gardens, CREATION Health programs in schools, the “STANDOUT” wellness initiative on Oakwood University’s campus, partnering with existing community organizations to reach the community, and “Let’s Move” programs. These each show unique ways that members are reaching across to fellow church members and the community.

New Southern Union Headquarters

To meet the needs of departments, a new Southern Union headquarters was established to heighten the quality of the mission of Reaching Across. Already, departments have held multiple committee meetings and training events in the building. Meetings like this used to have to be held at hotels or other facilities. The new office provides benefits that extend beyond its four walls. The technological needs of the Southern Union are a lot different today than they were 50 years ago. This new space allows the Southern Union Information Systems Department to meet the technology demands of our rapidly growing Union.

While the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Southern Union has not changed, the needs of the Union have grown from what they were 50 years ago. These new facilities exist for greater coordination, for greater synergy, and for greater organization. It is my prayer that the new headquarters of the Southern Union will create an opportunity where people will be touched more efficiently by the loving hand of Jesus Christ. This wonderful facility is totally inconsequential if we forget the mission to which God has summoned us. The good news is that the new Southern Union headquarters was formally dedicated on March 29, 2014. All indebtedness has completely been paid off, and because of the blessings of God and the faithfulness of his people in the Southern Union, the mortgage-burning ceremony was held March 24, 2016, during the Executive Committee meeting.

Looking Forward

As we face the new quinquennium of 2016-2021, I propose mission and vision statements voted by our Administrative Committee, President’s Council, and Executive Committee.

Mission Statement: “Our mission is to foster collaborative leadership with our conferences and institutions to reach the Southern Union with the Christ-centered Seventh-day Adventist message.”

Vision Statement: “Our vision is to collaborate, lead, and **reach** the Southern Union through **hope** and **wholeness**.”

Family Ministries

One of the additional opportunities I have had is to serve as the Southern Union family ministries director.



Melvin Preston, Southern Union family ministries coordinator

The family ministries focus for this quinquennium was “Healthy Families for Eternity.” To accomplish this goal, we encouraged families to make Christ the center of their homes — thus experiencing a revival that would result in a life-changing transformation that leads to eternal life. We also provided resources and training through events, as well as networking opportunities for those who work to strengthen and rebuild families within the territory of the Southern Union Conference. It is our goal that, through various initiatives, families throughout our territory would be given the support they need and, ultimately, be empowered to reach God’s purpose for the family. Specifically, we encourage our constituents through the following:

- Educating and encouraging church members and their leadership to become disciple makers.
- Equipping families to embrace and practice the concept of unity and diversity. This concept was introduced to each member of the Church as they were encouraged to become actively engaged in Church life and ministry.
- Encouraging families to become an evangelistic center for their communities and to share Adventism, a distinctive message of hope and wholeness with those they encountered in an attempt to grow their church and ultimately God’s kingdom.
- Empowering families through development and cultivation of leaders in hopes of building stronger churches and healthy families.

We believe that by working under the direction and power of the Holy Spirit, our efforts help to restore people to wholeness, to intimacy with God, and to unity with one another.

We would like to thank our local conference family ministries directors for their untiring work in helping to build stronger families throughout the Southern Union Conference. We also want to express our appreciation to our family ministries Union coordinator, Melvin Preston, for his unswerving commitment to keeping family ministries vibrant and alive within our Union. 🕊



The Tallman family from Cedartown, Georgia, was baptized August 8, 2015, after watching videos and reading articles from Amazing Facts. Rick and Elizabeth and their two children were baptized by Larry Findley, Cedartown Church pastor.

No Sight More Joyful...

Office of the Secretariat

BY JIM DAVIDSON

To Seventh-day Adventists there is no sight more joyful than seeing an individual give their heart to Jesus Christ through baptism — to realize that they are making a public commitment of their desire to follow Him. It becomes even more meaningful when we know their story of how God has led them.

I think of Mary, who was recently baptized. She had grown up in an Adventist home, and her parents had even donated the land upon which the church was built. However, she had not made that public expression of following Jesus and joining the Church. On the day of her baptism, she asked that it not be announced in advance as she desired to surprise her fami-

ly. What an incredibly joyful event it was as she entered into the waters of baptism to the thrill of her family! There were few dry eyes in the congregation.

Or, there was the young man who had been heavily involved in drug use deciding it was time to break free and allow Jesus to have complete control of his life. Or, the family who had been watching 3ABN and the Hope Channel at home: They were convicted about the Sabbath, and had begun keeping it when an evangelistic flyer arrived in their mailbox. They attended the meetings and said, “We have been looking for a Sabbath-keeping church for over a year. Thank God we have found our church family at last.”



Bonnie and Jim Davidson

It would be possible to fill not only this special edition of the Southern Tidings, but entire volumes with the stories of those who have given their lives to Jesus in the Southern Union during the past quinquennium, for each baptism contains a story of the power of God to change lives, and bring hearts into harmony with Him.

Because of the faithfulness of laity and Church employees to the Great Commission of Jesus, 49,536 precious souls were added to His church during the past five years through baptism and profession of faith. It is this often called “kingdom growth,” which is the foundation of the growth of the Southern Union.

At the last Southern Union Session, it was reported that membership stood at 255,953 at the end of the second quarter of 2011. At the end of the second quarter of 2016, the Church had grown to 286,686. This is an increase of 30,733. We praise God that His Church continues to grow and flourish.

Virtually anywhere you travel throughout the eight states of the Southern Union you will find a Seventh-day Adventist church nearby. Currently, there are 1,114 churches and 190 companies that worship each Sabbath in our territory. In addition, there are numerous church plants that are taking place that have not yet been designated as a company or church.

Seventh-day Adventist education is a vital component of church ministry. Having elementary schools, academies, and universities for the young people of our churches and communities is an essential part of the life of the denomination. It is during these school years that hundreds of students make lifelong decisions for Christ. There are 149 elementary schools and 12 academies in the Southern Union. In addition, there are now 86 early childhood education centers operating throughout the Union. We are also blessed to have Adventist University of Health Sciences, Oakwood University, and Southern Adventist University serving within our borders. Each of these institutions of higher education provides a large number of degrees to prepare individuals for a variety of careers and service.

The Southern Union is one of nine

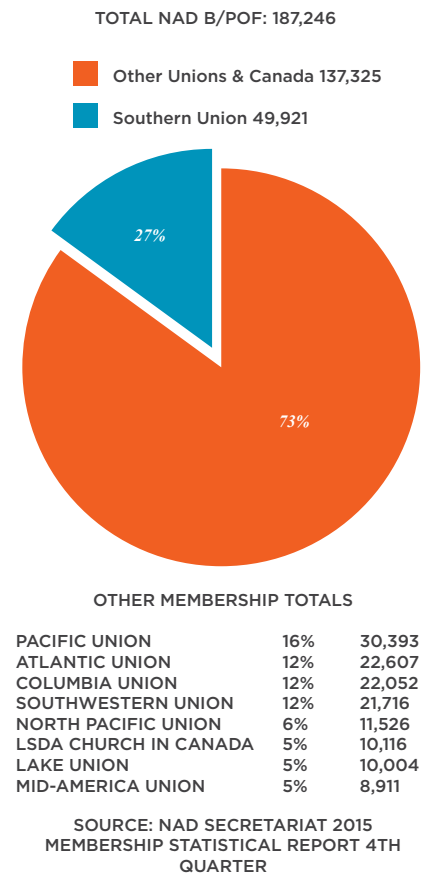


unions which comprise the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists. Today, we are the largest union within the Division, comprising 23 percent of its membership. In addition to this distinction, we are thankful for the continued and accelerated growth of our churches. This dedicated work on the part of each member has resulted in the fastest growing union within the NAD. For this we simply thank the Lord for His continued blessings. We are also thankful to the 739 full-time pastors and evangelists, and 1,035 full-time teachers who are called to labor within our territory. In addition to these, there are many part-time pastors, teachers, and lay pastors who, along with their churches and schools, are laboring daily to share the Good News that Jesus is coming again.

During the past five years (ending December 31, 2015), 49,536 members were added to the churches in the Southern Union through baptism and profession of faith; 36,875 transferred into the Union, while 31,980 transferred out; 10,185 individuals were reported missing; and 5,646 were lost to apostasy.

Through the Secretariat Office, it is my privilege to offer a workshop available to conferences and local churches on reconnecting those who once walked with us as active members of the Church. It is the desire of the Southern Union leadership, laity, and clergy to remain intentional in providing a welcoming home to all who

Southern Union Portion of Quinquennial NAD Baptisms/Professions of Faith

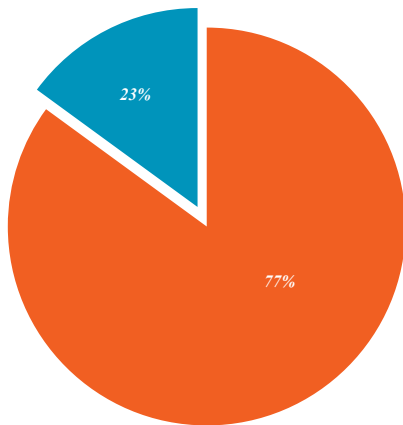




Southern Union Portion of NAD Membership in 2015

TOTAL NAD MEMBERSHIP: 1,218,406

- Other Unions, Canada, Military Church & Mission 934,467
- Southern Union 283,939



OTHER MEMBERSHIP TOTALS

| | | |
|-------------------------|-----|---------|
| PACIFIC UNION | 19% | 226,207 |
| COLUMBIA UNION | 12% | 145,924 |
| ATLANTIC UNION | 10% | 118,201 |
| SOUTHWESTERN UNION | 9% | 113,877 |
| NORTH PACIFIC UNION | 7% | 99,882 |
| LAKE UNION | 6% | 86,652 |
| MID-AMERICA UNION | 6% | 69,321 |
| SDA CHURCH IN CANADA | 6% | 68,977 |
| GUAM-MICRONESIA MISSION | 0% | 5,401 |
| NAD-MILITARY CHURCH | 0% | 25 |

SOURCE: NAD SECRETARIAT 2015 MEMBERSHIP STATISTICAL REPORT 4TH QUARTER

desire its fellowship.

The separation of death is always a painful experience. However, as the apostle Paul says, we need not “grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope,” I Thessalonians 4:13 NIV. We know that the time of parting will only be temporary. Our statistical records show that 7,777 precious souls fell asleep in Jesus during this past quinquennium. But, what a hope we have that the day is soon coming when they will hear the voice of the Lifegiver calling them forth from their rest. Then we shall all be reunited once again to live together throughout eternity. What a wonderful day that will be!

Special Ministries

The Office of Secretariat also directs the Medical/Dental/Health Professional Department of the Southern Union. This department, in concert with each of our eight conferences, actively recruits physicians and dentists to practice within our eight states. Each year, a volunteer team of practicing physicians and dentists travels to Loma Linda to meet with and recruit medical and dental students. We greatly appreciate the service which these recruiters provide.

Recruitment of students actually begins before medical school. Contact is made with students on the undergraduate level, as well with those who are pre-med or pre-dental students.

To assist a physician or dentist in mov-

ing to the Southern Union territory, a financial reimbursement is provided from the Union and conferences for moving expenses. Forty-four students were assisted during the past five years, and have set up practices or undertaken residencies within the Union. Every one of our conferences have been blessed by having some of these new medical specialists coming to their region. As new physicians and dentists relocate and join local churches within the Southern Union, it makes a tremendous impact upon the ministry of these churches, schools, and communities.

This department is also responsible for planning the biennial medical/dental/health professional convention. This is the longest continuously planned convention in the Southern Union. This year will mark the 50th anniversary of this event. Every two years continuing education credits, spiritual enrichment, and Christian fellowship for physicians, dentists, optometrists, nurses, physical therapists, and other health care professionals is provided. It is a time when those involved in medical ministry can network with each other, and share ideas for how the medical professions can further the kingdom of God.

The words of Ellen White tell us of the vital work of medical missionaries. She says, “Medical missionary work is the right hand of the gospel. It is necessary to the advancement of the cause of God.”

We greatly appreciate the ministry that thousands of health professionals in our Union provide. Daily they are touching the lives of untold numbers of people who may otherwise never have a Christian influence in their life. We simply say thank you as they join hands with our dedicated members to impact hearts for Jesus.

Disabilities Ministries

Disabilities are affecting an ever larger number of people in the world we live in. The World Health Organization reported that one billion men, women, and children throughout the world have a disability because of aging or chronic health conditions. Injuries resulting from the impact of war and natural disasters increase those num-

bers even more. In the United States, 57 million adults and six million children have a disability.

For more than 25 years, the Southern Union has engaged in disabilities ministries. Each of our eight conferences has a disabilities ministries director:

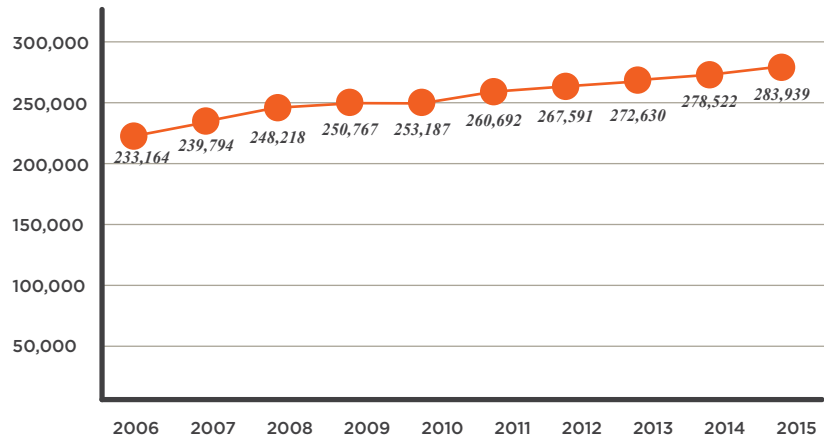
- Carolina, Gary Moyer
- Florida, Carmen Rodriguez
- Georgia-Cumberland, Gary Rustad
- Kentucky-Tennessee, Steve Rose
- Gulf States, Martin Fancher
- South Atlantic, Rosemary Graham
- South Central, Nettie Henderson
- Southeastern, David Peay

Rosemary Graham continues as the volunteer coordinator of disabilities ministries for the Southern Union, and brings a wealth of resources and information for leaders. Although Rosemary has a disability (she was diagnosed with lupus in November 1984), she remains active. Rosemary also is the disabilities ministries director for the South Atlantic Conference. She serves on the North American Division (NAD) Disabilities Ministries Advisory Committee, was the former chair of the National Council of Churches in Christ Committee on Disabilities, is currently a member of the Congregational Accessibility Network (www.canaccess.org), is a certified instructor for the Beyond Suffering Disabilities Ministries Certification Program with Joni & Friends, and is associate director of the Neil Nedley Depression & Anxiety Certification Program. Rosemary is the recip-



Rosemary Graham, Southern Union and South Atlantic Conference disabilities coordinator

Southern Union Membership 2006-2015



ient of the 2014 NAD Disabilities Ministries Lifetime Achievement Award.

With the assistance from Rosemary, conference directors receive quarterly emails and resources on awareness and conferences for leaders and members.

But, perhaps the best way to share the mission of disabilities ministries is to tell the story of Joan. Soon after starting her career as a paralegal, Joan Brown met Wayne Llewellyn, an ambitious young photographer. A year later they were married in their homeland of Jamaica. As with most marriages, the early years were blissfully happy, but soon joy turned to sorrow, and the beauty of marriage turned to heartaches and tears for Joan. After 13 years of embarrassment, heartaches, disappointments, and finally a threat of physical violence, Joan left the abusive marriage, and returned to her mother's home in St. Mary, Jamaica.

Shortly after Joan's return to her mother's home, Wayne tried unsuccessfully to persuade, and then to force, Joan to return to the matrimonial home. When she refused, he took another course of action.

On the morning of April 7, 2011, he travelled across the island of Jamaica, and committed an act that would change Joan's life forever. He took a gun and murdered Joan's mother, her father, an older brother, and her only child. He shot Joan in the neck and left her for dead. Although she survived, she was now paralyzed from

the neck down, and her sister, Evelyn, arranged for Joan to be flown to Atlanta for better hospital care. After several weeks, Joan was released into Evelyn's care, who was a critical care nurse.

Joan began to attend the Mountainside Seventh-day Adventist Church in Decatur, Georgia, with her sister, and there decided to make a public confession of her faith in God, and her commitment to serve Him in spite of her circumstances. Joan took Bible studies from Olin McGraw, elder, and they were Skyped so that her sister Joy in Belgium could participate. Joan made the decision to be rebaptized, and Joy wanted to be baptized also. Joy came to the United States, and on August 4, 2012, Joy and Joan were both baptized at Mountainside Church. Joan is now an active choir member at the church, and disabilities ministries coordinator, along with sister Evelyn. Even though her life was changed forever on that fateful day, her constant, radiant smile is a witness to all who meet her.

What a blessing all those who work in this ministry are. May we all accept the charge of the Master when He said, "Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house will be full," Luke 14: 21-23 NIV. 🕊



Sacred Funds Used for His Work

Office of Treasury

BY RANDY ROBINSON

There is no doubt that the Southern Union Conference embraces the Words of Jesus as recorded in Matthew 28:19, 20, where He proclaimed the Great Commission to make disciples of all nations. While the Treasury Department is tasked with managing the funds so generously provided by the constituents of the Southern Union, I am also very happy that each member of our team also takes the Great Commission seriously, and has actively participated in preaching the message of our Lord Jesus in the context of public evangelism! I am so proud of this group of individuals who not only competently manage the resources of this Union, but

also are passionate for lost souls.

During the last five years, the Southern Union reached two significant financial milestones. The year 2013 was the first time our constituents returned tithe that exceeded \$200 million in a single year. Also, this was the first time tithe giving exceeded \$1 billion in a single quinquennium! We ended this five-year cycle with membership returning a total of \$1,027,831,330 in tithe (Figures #1 and #7). God is to be praised for the resources He has provided to us, and for prompting such faithfulness in the members of this Union!

Another significant event occurred during this five-year cycle. In March



Randy Robinson, treasurer

2014 we completed construction of the new Southern Union headquarters in Norcross, Georgia. The entire project took of about 18 months, and I am happy to report that it ended within budget and on time! A mortgage-burning ceremony took place on March 24, 2016, celebrating the payoff, another huge blessing God has granted. The Southern Union has zero building debt!

Operationally, the Southern Union is in good financial shape. There are two primary indicators that help us understand how financially healthy we are. The first is “Days Cash on Hand.” This measures how long we could operate the organization at the status quo level with the cash we have in the bank and if no other income were available. As you can see in Figure #2, we ended 2015 with 113 days of cash. While there is no specific North American Division (NAD) policy benchmark for this indicator, my comfort level is one-third of annual operational costs, or 122 days of cash. While our cash lags below that indicator slightly, I am not uncomfortable because, despite the extraordinary cash we spent in 2015 on mortgage payoff and subsidies to and on behalf of the conferences, we still ended up just shy of the goal.

The second indicator is working capital. This is an indicator of our ability to cover current liabilities with readily usable assets (current assets), and is described as an estimated percentage of unrestricted income, as well as an actual ratio between current assets and current liabilities. A healthy organization should have between 1.75 and three current assets to one current liability. We ended 2015 with a 2.05-to-1 ratio (Figure #3). It is also described as a percentage of working capital (Figure #4), where we ended the year at nearly 17 percent over the NAD policy requirement.

Our financial statements are considered most often in two basic ways. The first is pure operation. That tracks the ebb and flow of income and expense that represent the daily cost of

Gross Annual Union Tithe

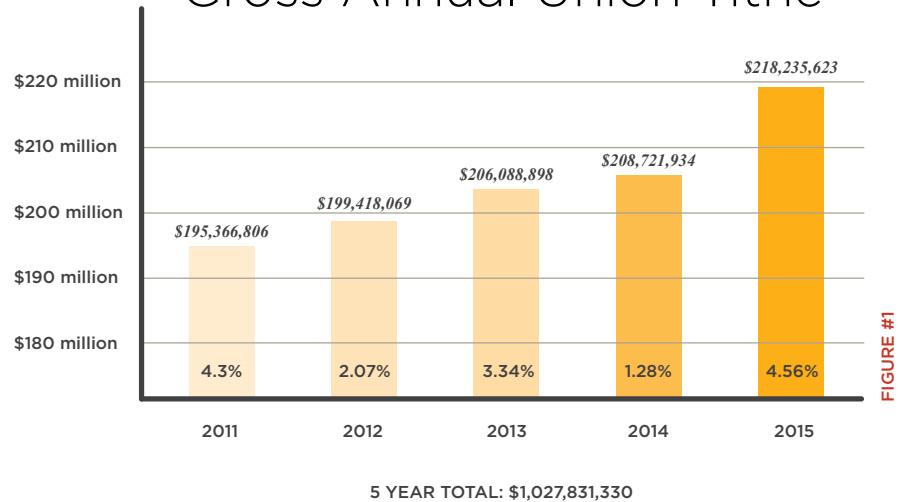


FIGURE #1

Operating Days Cash

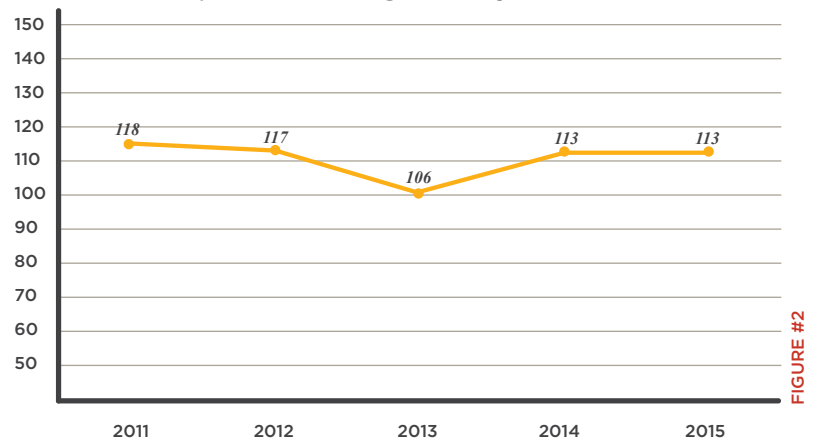


FIGURE #2

Current Ratio - Working Capital

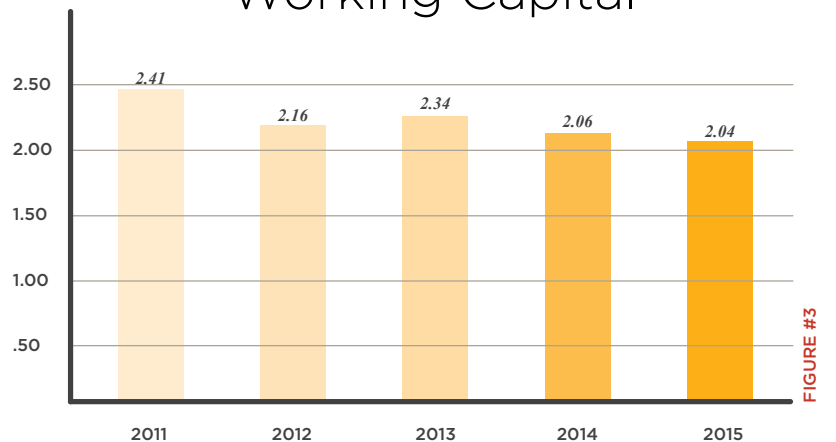


FIGURE #3

THIS INDICATES HOW MUCH IN LIQUID ASSETS WE HAVE FOR EVERY \$1 WE OWE. SOMETHING HIGHER THAN A 2:1 RATIO IS OUR GOAL.



The Office of Treasury staff include Kim Twomley (left), executive assistant; Randy Robinson, treasurer; Kristina Mace, associate treasurer; Dennis Millburn, undertreasurer; and Cindy Bray, accountant.

Required Working Capital

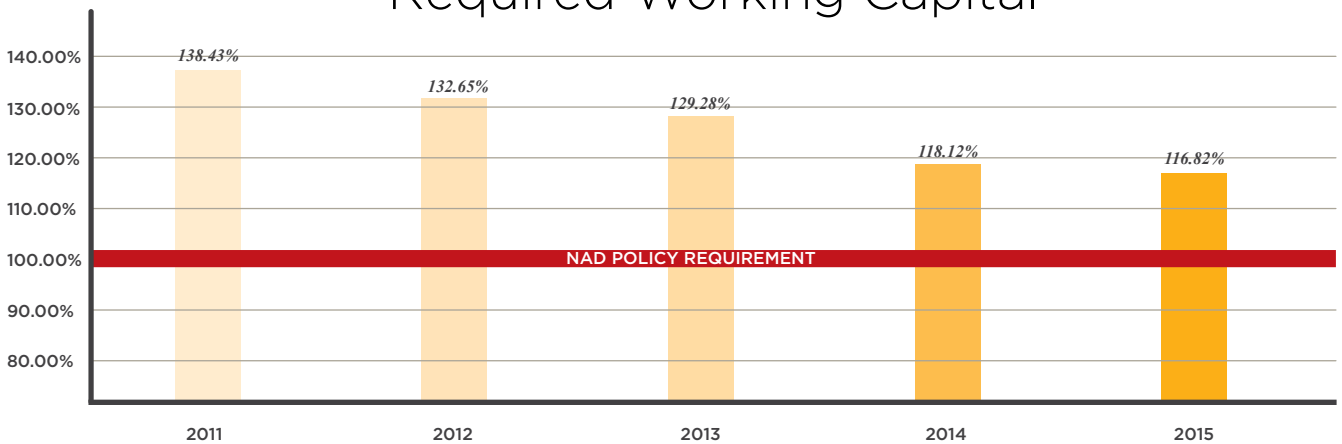


FIGURE #4

100% = 50% OF ESTIMATED ANNUAL UNRESTRICTED INCOME

Union employees, appropriations, services provided by the Union, as well as tithe and other income. The second is the consolidated statements, which include not only the operation, but plant and capital transactions, endowments, and other non-operational funds. The “Year-by-Year Gains” graph (Figure #5) shows the year-end performance of each of those two for the years ended 2011-2015.

Constituents may also be interested in how tithe funds are used by the Southern Union. The chart titled “Union Retained Tithe Use - 2015” describes exactly how tithe funds flowed through and/or were used by the Southern Union in 2015 (Figure #6). While the percentages vary slightly year by year, this is a relatively good benchmark for describing the use of tithe funds in our Union. You will note the two “exploded” sections of the pie represent 30.23 percent of tithe retained by the Union used for internal Union operational costs. The balance of 69.77 percent is used for appropriations to conferences/universities, benefiting the wider organization beyond the Union, and the annual operational gain.

We will never stop our efforts to discover more efficient ways to manage these resources, and continue to strive to use these sacred funds in accordance with the policies our Church has established to benefit the work of God through His Church.

Please accept my heartfelt thanks to each of you for your ongoing support of the Southern Union Conference. May God continue to bless each of you as we await His appearing. 🙏

Gross Tithe by Conference

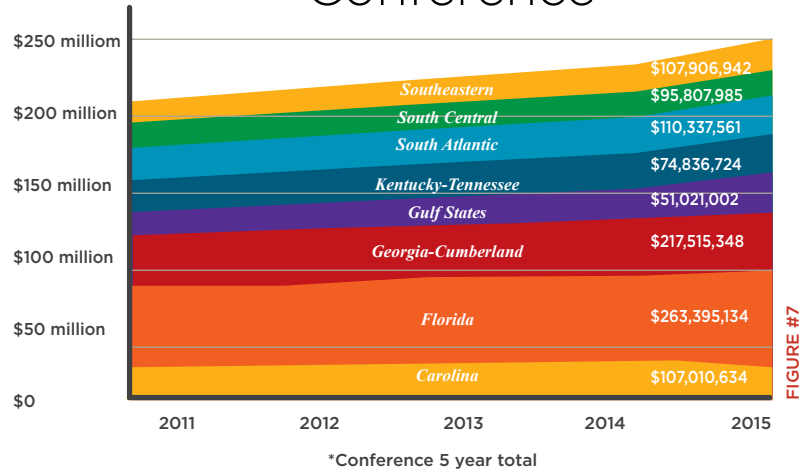


FIGURE #7

Year by Year Gains (All Funds)

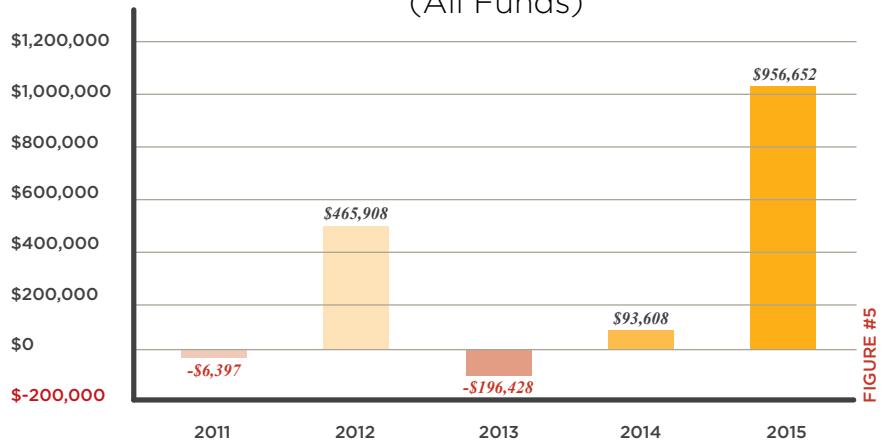


FIGURE #5

Union Retained Tithe Use - 2015 | \$19,641,213

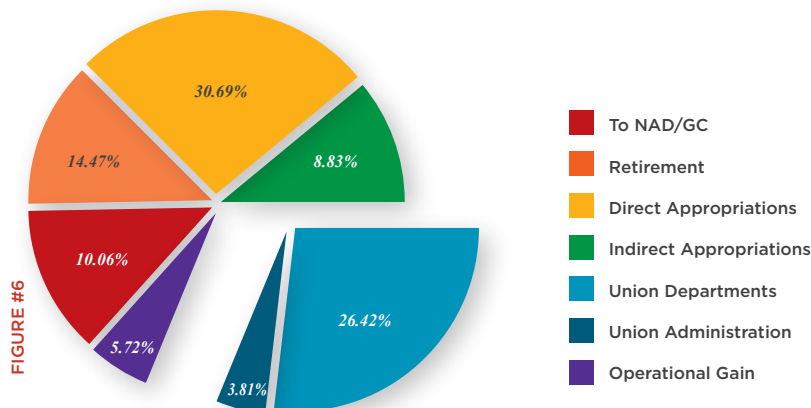


FIGURE #6



PHOTO BY: R. STEVEN NORMAN III

Partnering With Investors in Ministry *Association / Southern Union Revolving Fund (SURF)*

BY CARLOS SALAZAR

What is SURF?

Southern Union Revolving Fund, Inc. (or SURF, or the Revolving Fund) is a Tennessee nonprofit corporation organized in 1999. It is a subsidiary of the Southern Union Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists, Inc., a Tennessee non-profit corporation organized in 1908. The Southern Union Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists, is sometimes referred to as Association, and operated the Revolving Fund as part of its operations for approximately 20 years prior to 1999. However, on June 22, 1999, the Association created the Southern Union Revolving Fund, Inc., as a separate

Tennessee nonprofit corporate subsidiary. SURF was created to facilitate the selling of Notes to Seventh-day Adventist members and affiliated investors residing within the Union territory, and to provide funds for building purchases, construction, or remodeling. The borrowing process is totally free of fees, and the interest rate charged is generally lower than market rates. The interest rate paid is generally much more favorable than the market is offering for the same type of funds.

Working for Investors and the Church

Since February 1, 2012, SURF has been



Carlos Salazar, director



The SURF staff include Michelle James (left), administrative assistant; Peter DeVries, assistant treasurer; Mariel Lombardi, customer service and accounts manager; and Carlos Salazar, director.

cash, regulated by North American Division Policy and federal agencies, and serves as a protection for investors against catastrophic defaults.

In 2012, the Sinking Fund achieved its minimum funding level. During this quinquennium, which ended December 31, 2015, SURF has distributed a portion of SURF earnings to the participating conferences for the restricted purpose of church building funds, consistent with the purpose of the overall Revolving Fund. Distributions from the Sinking Fund totaled \$450,330, \$429,220, and \$551,937, for the years ending December 31, 2015, 2014, and 2013 respectively.

SURF has grown its assets to its highest level. As of December 31, 2015, total assets amounted to \$243,109,656, compared to last quinquennium ending December 31, 2010, \$208,812,445, or a 16.42 percent growth.

charging borrowers 3.25 percent interest, and paying 1.25 percent, the lowest rates since 1979. The two percent interest

spread sustains SURF's operations, and at the same time provides funding for the Sinking Fund. This fund is set aside in

We are grateful to our investors, who not only provide funds for capital projects, but also partner with us in the ministry. ☛



William K. Duncan (left), Joel Baptist, and Lewis Edwards, pastor of the Poinciana Church in Poinciana, Florida, share with Carlos Salazar, director of the Southern Union Revolving Fund, how God has blessed their 370-member church to build through the generosity of members, and by partnering with SURF for a low interest loan.

PHOTO BY: R. STEVEN NORMAN III



Our Example: “We would hand it out.”

Planned Giving and Trust Services

BY KEN FORD, D.MIN., C.S.P.G., C.G.P.A.

Ellen White wrote in 1885: “This is how we got our means; as God saw the use we made of the means He gave us, He entrusted us with more. My husband was a financier. I made the statement last night that we had invested \$30,000 [\$798,181 in 2015 dollars] in the cause, and this is the way we have done it — when we saw a place where the cause needed means, we would hand it out,” *The Spirit of Sacrifice & Commitment*, page 159.

James White’s name “is found at the head of innumerable fundraising endeavors, whether it be \$10 to help relieve a drafted church member, or \$50 [in 1885 to approximately \$1,300 in 2015 dollars] to

assist a fellow minister secure a home, or \$2,000 [in 1874 to approximately \$42,318 in 2015 dollars] to help build Battle Creek College,” *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, page 1423.

The Whites would encourage even children to give their pennies, nickels, and dimes. Their final will (although it didn’t turn out that way) intended 25 percent to their relatives and 75 percent to the Church.

Our Mandate

The North American Division *Working Policy* shares this concerning the Trust Services Department: “... unique approaches should be taken to achieve the goal of securing to the Lord the material



Ken Ford, director

blessings bestowed upon the members of His Church.” Ellen White said that the duty to talk with people about how they plan to dispose of their property “is just as sacred as the duty to preach the word to save souls,” *Counsels on Stewardship*, page 324.

We Have Responded

During the past quinquennium, God’s faithful remnant people in the Southern Union have joyfully returned to Him \$37,327,042.15 in lifetime gifts and maturities through the Planned Giving and Trust Services Department. The eight conferences and two universities, along with the Southern Union, currently have

more than 23,000 estate plans in their vaults.

Meet the Staff

Tom Carter, J.D., was the director from 2011 to 2013; Ken Ford, D.Min., C.S.P.G., C.G.P.A., has led the department since 2014. Cheryl Hubbard, Francine Long, and Michelle James (currently) have served as the administrative assistants. There are 44 planned giving and trust services certified personnel working in the Southern Union territory.

Tomorrow and Beyond

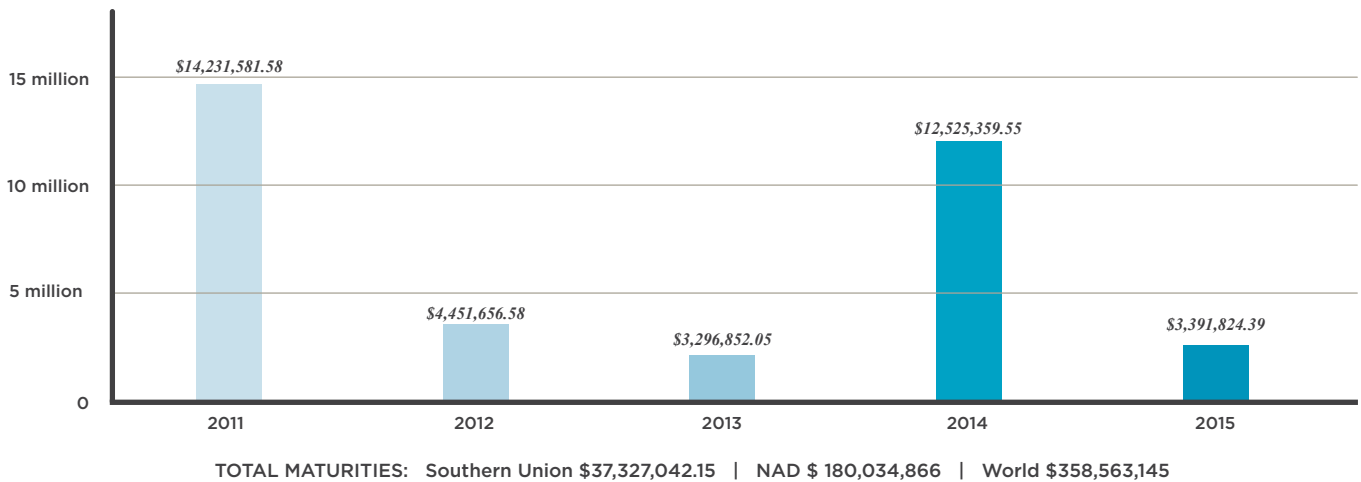
The U.S. census bureau predicts that there are currently 36 million people in the

United States who are over 65 years old, and between 2010 and 2030 that number will actually double to 72 million people. The intergenerational wealth transfer could be \$40 trillion to \$130 trillion, depending on growth in estates.

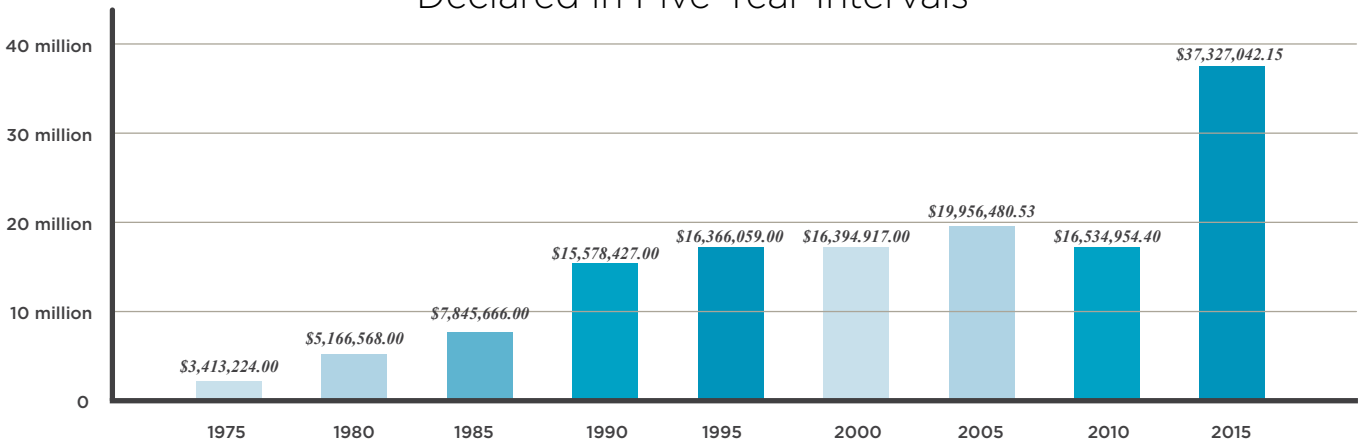
We eagerly look forward to joyfully joining arms with Heaven in sharing current and testamentary gifts (maturities) to help fund His work in the Southern Union!

“The price paid for our redemption, the infinite sacrifice of our heavenly Father in giving His Son to die for us, should give us exalted conceptions of what we may become through Christ,” *Steps to Christ*, page 15. 🕊

Maturities and Outright Gifts Report 2011-2015



Southern Union Conference Trust Income & Maturities Declared in Five-Year Intervals



DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Whoever
believes in me,
as Scripture has said,
rivers of living water
will flow from
within them.

JOHN 7:38 NIV



Jared Thurmon (left), Mary Watkins, Ty Gibson, and Verlyne Starr (moderator at podium) participate in an ASI panel discussion.

Professionals Partnering With God

Adventist-laymen's Services and Industries

BY DENNIS MILLBURN

Adventist-laymen's Services and Industries (ASI) is an organization of Seventh-day Adventist church members who are leaders in the private sector in business and professional vocations, as well as in supporting ministries.

The organization has approximately 1,000 members, including men and women from nearly every walk of life. They represent all the diversity that is found within the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

ASI's philosophy promotes a Christ-centered lifestyle, manifested by a commitment to be in daily partnership with God. Members seek to live out God's love in their own lives, and share that love with the millions of people they encounter in their business and professional activities each year; hence, the motto, Sharing Christ in the Marketplace.

Mission

ASI — the organization of Seventh-day Adventist lay persons involved in professions, industry, education, and/or services — exists to provide challenge, nurture, and experience in Sharing Christ in the Marketplace — as well as support the global mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Vision

ASI and its members will be known for their unswerving honesty in business principles and practices, unflinching participation in the various ministries of the Church, unwavering positiveness toward Church leadership, unhesitating provision for the needs of others, and untiring focus on the Christ they represent in the marketplace.

History

A self-supporting school was established near Nashville, Tennessee, in 1904. Despite struggling at its inception, the school soon grew and began to plant satellite schools and institutions throughout the country. Part of the atmosphere of this burgeoning organization was a yearly meeting that brought all the entities together. Arthur W. Spalding wrote in his book, *Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists*, p.183, "Once a year for forty years, the schools, sanitariums, rest homes, and other enterprises of the rural missions joined in a self-supporting workers' convention held at Madison College." This laid the foundation for what is now the annual ASI International Convention.

Current Activities

ASI has been active with Union-sponsored spring and national fall conventions, and leadership has developed a five-year plan to recruit and support new members who will help to proclaim the soon coming of the Lord. Offerings from conventions help support worldwide outreach projects in the Church and supporting ministries. Thank you to the progressive leadership team that continues to bless the Adventist Church! 🙏



Dennis Millburn, ASI executive secretary/treasurer



PHOTO BY: R. STEVEN NORMAN III

Church Growth/Evangelism Training/Jewish Ministries

Church Growth

BY RALPH RINGER

Boot camps for lay evangelism are held to train lay evangelists and those who assist them, two to five times a year — 15 in the past five years throughout the Southern Union territory. More than 300 have been trained in how to get involved in the community in various ways, which helps boost attendance to their meetings and makes kingdom friends — friends in this world and the new Earth.

The lay evangelists learn how to organize and conduct the meetings using computer graphics and scripts by ShareHim, so they can have graphics on the screen and content in the scripts equal to a profession-

al evangelist. They are trained to preach to audiences of five to 500. They also learn how to disciple the new members and interests as a part of a nurturing follow-up. The evangelistic meetings can be held in churches, classrooms, fellowship halls, schools, homes, apartment building meeting rooms, store fronts, community rooms, tents, or anywhere else people can be gathered. The Gospel commission says that we should GO to where the people are.

Lay evangelists are shown how to conduct low-budget meetings using intercessory prayer, prayer ministries, and prayer countdown to reach communities. Lillie



PHOTO BY: R. STEVEN NORMAN III



PHOTO BY: R. STEVEN NORMAN III



Witherspoon and Linda Davis from the Kenyon Memorial Church in Thomasville, Georgia, attended the ShareHim Boot Camp on November 7-8, 2014, at the Georgia-Cumberland Conference office. In May 2015 they held a His Way of Hope meeting in their church. Later, Witherspoon did His Way of Hope meetings in her home. She and her team are working with the Pioneer program of the Conference, led by E.W. Dempsey; have been working in Cairo, Georgia, with Bible studies and health programs; did His Way of Hope meetings in Cairo on March 21, 2016; and, if God opens the door, will plant a new church in Cairo.

David Hartman was also supported in his evangelism summits in the Kentucky-Tennessee Conference. Two of these are done each year, and they help train church members to know how they can get involved in evangelism, and be ready for their evangelistic meeting in six months to a year.

Church Revival and Decision Meetings

Most churches want revival to happen in their congregations. “The Way of Hope from Parables to Salvation” is a series that brings revival to members, and gets decisions from guests. Annually, two to five of these meetings were held — 12 in the last five years. The church members do a special eight-week countdown of praying for family, friends, coworkers, and neighbors who need to know Jesus. Then they invite those individuals they have been praying for to the meetings. They pray for others in the prayer countdown and review the wonderful parables that Jesus gave, doing both to encourage a closer relationship with Him and with each other; this brings revival to the members and decisions from the guests.

Church Evangelistic Meetings

Revelation of Hope meetings that cover the entire book of Revelation are available for

churches in the Southern Union. In the last quinquennium, 15 Revelation of Hope meetings were held. During these meetings, members and guests see how Revelation brings the entire Bible together in the final conclusion of the “great controversy,” how Satan will try to destroy us, how Jesus saves us, brings an end to sin, and makes the new Heaven and new Earth where He lives with His people in a perfect environment. The church members are involved in the preparation, meetings, and follow-up. Evangelism is a team effort.

Elders’ Training

The purpose of the Southern Union Elders’ Certification program, is to help every elder be the best elder they can be. Elders’ Certification training is organized into four areas — elder’s administration/pastoral duties, redemptive visitation, lay preaching, and personal evangelism — in more than 40 hours of class work.



Ralph Ringer talks with Lillie Witherspoon and Lynda Davis.

In cooperation with the pastor and their church, the elders do their homework in the local church. About 200 are trained each year. Many pastors and elders have expressed how the elders' training has made a difference in the elders and their church.

We are in the process of adding one more session on prophecy and the Church. This session deals with prophecy, how it was involved in the roots of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and how it is to be involved in the 21st century church.

Jewish Ministries

We are reaching out to the Jewish community in three ways: Jewish-friendly churches, Jewish Adventist congregations, and Jewish-friendly home groups.

The Shalom Learning Center trains individuals, pastors, and leaders to reach the Jewish community and their friends. A building for Jewish ministries training in

Hollywood, Florida, is also used for Beth T'fillah v'Tikvah congregation, where the trainees can see a congregation in action. We also have the mobile Shalom Learning Center that will go to areas where individuals desire to start a Jewish work.

We now have five Jewish Adventist congregations in the Southern Union, with about 200 people involved in Jewish ministries; 25 congregations in the North American Division, with about 1,000 involved in Jewish ministries; and 60 congregations worldwide. There has been growth each year in both the number of congregations and members. These congregations have Adventist theology with Jewish worship style. We also have grown a Shalom Learning Center West in Vancouver, Washington, and a Shalom Learning Center Canada in Red Deer/Lacombe, Alberta, and by the end of 2015 these will have branch locations.

Church Growth

We held 15 weekend seminars in local churches to help them grow. The pastor and members are challenged to practice the practical ways learned to grow their church: making the church service evangelistic, disciplining members, having community prayer ministries, doing friendship evangelism, conducting community outreach programs, and applying the cycle of evangelism (like a garden model: preparing the soil, sowing seeds, cultivating, harvesting, and preserving the harvest). The key for helping churches grow is for the members to have "the attitude of evangelism," practice "evangeliving" (living an evangelistic lifestyle 24/7/365), and realize that all members are to be active disciples.

The Southern Union Church Growth Department helps churches in their spiritual, membership, and financial growth to be the kind of churches God wants them to be. ●



PHOTO BY: R. STEVEN NORMAN III

Roger Hernandez, director of the evangelism and ministerial departments, instructs pastors during the inaugural EC3 Convention in 2015.

The Main Thing

Evangelism/Ministerial

BY ROGER HERNANDEZ

The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing.

When we talk about ministry, what is the main thing? In the Ministerial Department of the Southern Union, we have decided that the main thing we do is share Jesus with as many people possible, in the fastest way possible, in as many ways as possible. We do this through three basic components: church planting, public evangelistic series, and ministerial support.

Let's take a look at each one.

Church Planting

Did you know that in the Southern

Union more than 150 churches have been planted in the last four years? That is considering the fact that church planting never has universal support. I've personally planted six, and supervised another 15 church plants. I've never had complete and absolute support. Usually there is organized and vocal opposition. Phrases like these are common: "We don't need another church," "Let's strengthen the ones we already have," "We will lose our best members," "We will be weakened by a new church plant," and, "We will lose pastoral care if we open another church."

Those comments are usually based on fear and not facts. The facts are that

church planting is the best evangelistic tool we can have! It is growth by multiplication rather than addition.

Did you know that "17.7 percent of the U.S. population attends church? This breaks down into nine percent evangelical, 5.5 percent Catholic, and 3.1 percent mainline denominations. The rate of those who attend church is declining. In the West, there is a 1.2 percent decrease in the population of who attended church in the 1994-2004 timeframe. Nationwide, to just to keep up with population growth, we would need to plant 51,826 more churches than we did in this period. Including churches that were planted,

this means we would have needed to plant over 100,000 churches! The greatest increase and conversion occurs in church plants,” (<http://www.goodmanson.com/church/the-state-of-the-american-church-why-church-planting-is-critical-to-the-future-of-american-christianity/>).

That is why we believe in church planting, support it, help fund it, coach it, plan for it, and pray for its success. Churches like Journey in Memphis, Tennessee; Lifespring in Tampa, Florida; Raleigh Spanish in Raleigh, North Carolina; and The Ridge in Clinton, Mississippi, are examples of what happens when we go and grow for God.

Evangelism

We work in two specific areas in Evangelism:

- A yearly conference of evangelism in November is organized at Southern Adventist University. For more information go to www.southernunion.com under ministerial.
- Four to six evangelistic meetings are held a year.

Evangelism is like having a baby. The evangelism plan we follow is a nine-month comprehensive plan. God has allowed us to share in cities like Orlando, Atlanta, Charlotte, Raleigh, Knoxville, Jackson, and Tampa, among others, with more than 1,000 people making decisions for Christ in the last five years. Here are some highlights.

“We All Have Problems HOPE” is a one-week practical Bible presentation of some of the most common problems people have, and how God’s grace impacts them in a positive way. We connect our dearly held truths with real life problems, and help people see the connection.

The Vision

- Unite the body of Christ in a city wide evangelistic series, across conference lines.
- Approach educational institutions, churches and hospitals to all work together.
- Train members, so they see service & evangelism as a way of life, not an event.

We also have a specific PPP Plan: Preparation, Proclamation, Preservation. You can find the details of this plan in the sidebar.

Ministerial Support

Someone wrote that being a pastor can sometimes feel like “being the captain of a ship, in the middle of a storm, in shark-infested waters, with a mutinous crew, and a leaky boat.” That’s pretty extreme, but it’s no secret that ministry has some challenges. Part of what we do is to help pastors in the following areas:

Manage Expectations

We help pastors focus on the main thing. Seminars, materials, a monthly blog, and in-church training help us do this.

Conflict

A recent study revealed that pastors are involved in a serious conflict in their church at least once a month. Acting as a referee and making a decision one way or another can send the signal that the pastor favors one side over the other, which creates some uncomfortable situations. Conflict is stressful, and many times the effects from it are carried into the pastor’s home, affecting the quality of life of the family. This is accentuated when the conflict is with the pastor itself, which, if not managed properly, can influence negatively the pastor’s family’s perception of ministry, especially that of the kids. We work with several organizations to help pastors manage and solve conflict in their churches.

Significant relationships

It’s difficult for the pastor to connect deeply with other people. Therefore, accountability can suffer, which can be dangerous. This is even more of a problem in pastor’s spouses, who many times move into a new town, with no one they can call friend. We encourage pastors to make sure that spouses are intentionally affirmed.

Participation

In a “normal” church (is there such a thing?), 20 percent of the members do 80

percent of the work and give 80 percent of the funds. This creates a problem on two fronts. One, it can cause frustration in the pastor, as he sees the lack of cooperation and commitment. Two, it can create some push-back from the congregation when the reality of their present state is presented to them and commitment is asked for. Through our lead conferences we train members to not just be passive participants, but leaders in their congregation.

Please pray for us as we make the main thing the main thing. If you want to connect with us, you can do so here:

Twitter: www.twitter.com/leadSU

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/leadSU>

Blog: www.leadSU.org

Slide Share: www.slideshare.net/RogerHernandez6

Youtube channel: www.youtube.com/user/pastorRogerHernandez

Ustream Channel: www.ustream.tv/channel/leadSU (last Monday, 7 p.m. EST)

The training is an important factor to the organization and excellence of each area of the series. 🙏



Kathy Hernandez, Southern Union evangelism coordinator



PHOTO BY: R. STEVEN NORMAN III

This inmate sings and praises God during the worship service.

Enlarging Our Territory

Church Ministries — Adult

BY DAVID LONG

Prison Ministries: You Came to Me

Jesus said, “I was in prison and you came to Me,” Matthew 25:36. The Southern Union Conference established an annual Union-wide Prison Ministries Convention on March 21-22, 2014. Prison ministries volunteers from all eight conferences were in attendance at the initial gathering.

In cities throughout the Southern Union territory, they minister to thousands monthly and tens of thousands yearly. The majority of volunteers work in facilities. Inmates are transferred unexpectedly; many are incarcerated for a limited time. If there is any advantage in dealing with transitioning individuals, it

is that it allows the volunteers to impact a greater number of individuals, because others are arriving regularly to replace those who are transferred to long-term institutions. Even though the limited access is not ideal, they are thankful to sow a seed that can produce a harvest to God’s glory.

Not only do men lead out in this ministry, but women, like Deborah in the book of Judges, courageously and faithfully go into jails and prisons. They do not let the menacing tattoos, unusual haircuts, angry-looking faces, or the alleged criminal history of inmates keep them from going into prisons week after week.



David Long, director

According to the National Institute of Corrections, there are 421,287 inmates in state and federal facilities in the Southern Union territory. The focus of this ministry includes more than just ministering to individuals behind prison walls, which includes pre-release and re-entry; it also involves prevention and retention — working to keep individuals from going to prison in the first place, and to keep others from returning to prison.

Prayer Ministries: The Church With Power

If my people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and heal their land,” 2 Chronicles 7:14. In response to God’s call, prayer warriors throughout the Southern Union have fallen on their knees in public and in private, and lifted their voices to God in their closets and churches, in solitude and in groups, to petition the Most High God on behalf of themselves, their loved ones, and their world.

Every conference in the Union has conducted an annual Prayer Conference — a conference-wide call to prayer as a family of believers. This past quinquennium, tens of thousands of members put pressing issues on the back burner of their lives to join their brothers and sisters in Christ on bended knee at the foot of Calvary. The testimonies of physical healing, restored relationships, broken addictions, and shattered yokes have caused the joy of the Lord to abound and reverberate from heart to heart and breast to breast. These answered prayers have resulted in a chorus of praise and thanksgiving to the One who sits on the throne of the universe.

The Southern Union sponsored its first Men’s Prayer Summit on October 3-4, 2014. Men poured in from all around the Union to pray for purity, integrity, and total surrender to God. Ron C. Smith, D.Min., Ph.D., president of the Southern Union, was the opening night speaker. Smith, along with Barry C. Black, D.Min., Ph.D., United States Sen-



PHOTO BY: REBECCA CARPENTER

ate chaplain; Mike Tucker, speaker of Faith for Today; and other guest presenters, encouraged and challenged those in attendance to commit and renew their lives for Christ. Approximately 200 men gathered to have an encounter with Jesus that was similar to Zacchaeus of whom Ellen G. White said, “But no sooner did Zacchaeus yield to the influence of the Holy Spirit than he cast aside every practice contrary to integrity,” *The Desires of Ages*, page 555.

Throughout the Southern Union, the increasing number of telephone prayer lines being established is encouraging, as churches, peer groups, and additional ministry teams sense a greater desire to experience God for themselves. Multitudes also participate in the General Conference 10 Days of Prayer in January each year. The Southern Union

leadership encourages every member to participate in the Union-wide day of fasting and prayer every third Monday of the month.

My gratitude to the administration for their support and their far-reaching vision is difficult to put into words. I truly thank God that they glory in the cross and have a tender heart toward God’s people. I also want to express my appreciation to Pershawn Mattison, my administrative assistant, for her commitment to excellence, and kindness to those who call our department for assistance and information.

Stewardship: Time, Talent, and Increase

Stewardship can be portrayed as “pressing toward the mark of our high calling in Christ Jesus.” Paul understood



that such a worthy pursuit transforms the stingy into the generous, the crooked into the straight, and the defeated into the victorious. Throughout the Southern Union, scores of sermons and seminars were presented during the past quinquennium to encourage faithfulness to God.

In Jackson, the South Central and Gulf States conferences united to conduct a city-wide Generosity Summit. Stewardship directors Michael Harpe (South Central) and Brian Danese (Gulf States) led out with other presenters: John Mathews, North American Division; David Long, Southern Union; Theodore Brown, Oakwood University; and Stephen Ruff, South Atlantic Conference. A stewardship sermon was preached at all the area churches. In the afternoon, everyone gathered together for seminars and praise reports.

Because of pastors and local conference endeavors, in each of the last five years, the Southern Union has experienced an increase in tithe. Many of the members have even accepted the challenge of allowing God to manifest divine increase in their financial portfolio for expanding the Kingdom of God. However, the Southern Union could not have its tremendous financial impact for Christ without committed members whose faith in God is steadfast and sure.

Tithe at the end of 2010 was \$195,795,563.45, although the United States economy had recently experienced major setbacks. Those who kept their eyes on Jesus were confident that the One who began a good work in them could complete it. Records show that members of the Southern Union returned \$218,235,623.07 to God in 2015.

This world encourages to “get all you can, can all you get, and sit on the can,” but many of God’s people have not allowed themselves to be controlled by greed, selfishness, and covetousness. The Southern Union could not have the tremendous impact for Christ without its faithful members who trust God to honor His Word to provide for them. The same God who numbers the hairs on each head, has not forgotten the sacrifice of those who are investing in the world to come.

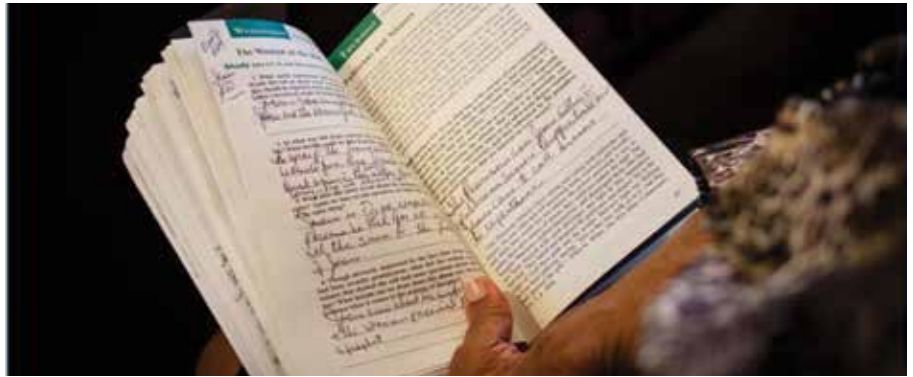


PHOTO BY: BIRDIE HENRI



PHOTO BY: GIANNA SNELL

Claudette Moore, head deaconess of Harvest Church, Harvest, Alabama, enjoys teaching Sabbath School as part of her deaconess ministry.

Sabbath School: The Church at Study

Study to show thyself approved unto God rightly dividing the word of truth, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth,” 2 Timothy 2:15. Sabbath School was started to facilitate intentional and regular study of God’s Word. Those who spend precious time with it, accompanied by faith, develop a greater love for God and His ways.

Throughout the past quinquennium, the Southern Union engaged the services of spiritual, experienced leaders to help strengthen and undergird the Sabbath School Department. At the Carolina Conference Sabbath School Conference, Don and Ruthie Jacobsen, former North American Division (NAD) president and current NAD prayer ministries director, respectively, were presenters. Faith Crumbley, retired editor of LEAD magazine (General Conference Sabbath School Resources), presented seminars during their week of Camp Meeting. The crowning jewel of that five-day session is a call-in weekly review of the Sabbath

School lesson, which was established for one hour every Friday evening. Shirley Scott, South Central Conference Sabbath School director, encourages all Sabbath School teachers and interested individuals within their borders and beyond, to join them each week. Curtis Hall, a member at Atlanta Berean Church and author of *Hit the Mark*, has traveled throughout the Southern Union conducting seminars to train Sabbath School personnel. His book and workbook have proven to be a tremendous Sabbath School resource.

The General Conference established the four tenets of Sabbath School which should underlie the framework of every Sabbath School, no matter its size. They include Bible study (growing in personal intimacy with God), Christian hospitality (sharing God’s love), community outreach (working for the human needs of the community), and world mission (financially supporting missionaries). Sabbath School is not about sitting and listening. It’s about allowing the power of the Word to transform the lives of those who study and energize themselves to share what they have learned with others. ❶

PHOTO BY: JULIE BURKS
PHOTO BY: JULIE BURKS

Growing Lifelong Disciples

Church Ministries — Youth

BY KEN ROGERS

The Southern Union territory is blessed to be served by dedicated men and women who build the Kingdom of God through relationships with children, youth, and young adults. We indeed have a tremendous workforce who consistently demonstrate the love of God to those entrusted to their care. It is a sacred honor to partner with these leaders in “Growing Lifelong Disciples” through programs, activities, and mentorship for a meaningful life here and now, as well as a hope for the future.

Both historically and currently, the Southern Union collectively is to support and value our young people. Together, the conferences demonstrate a

commitment to empowering youth to have voice and position in the Church of today. While some are labeling today’s youth as the “lost generation,” we choose to look to the young as the “saved generation,” and equip and enable them to make a difference in this world as a “chosen generation.”

Children’s Ministries

We have often quoted the words of Solomon from Proverbs 22:6 NIV: “Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old, they will not turn from it.” Surveys show that if children accept Jesus when they are young, they are most likely to remain lifelong



Ken Rogers, director

Christians. Across the Union territory we have leaders pioneering effective children's ministries programming. Each local conference has established departmental directors to develop and facilitate children's ministries programs. There is intentional training that is made available for leaders to be inspired, and to develop skills that will provide excellence in their service. Sabbath School leadership training is an important part of ongoing education that is valuable.

Recent emphasis on producing Adventist ministry materials has resulted in powerful children's ministries resources, including materials for Sabbath School, children's church, child evangelism, and the denominational Vacation Bible School curriculum. Leadership resources continue to be developed to assist in equipping parents, teachers, and volunteers in ministry to children.

Adventurer and Pathfinder Club Ministries

Adventurer ministries originated in the Southern Union territory, with visionary leaders in the Carolina and Florida conferences. Today, this vital club ministry is growing and proving to be a blessing for many families and local churches. Through emphasis on learning about Jesus through family worship and family activities, as well as building friendships with others and sharing faith-building activities, children are discovering the joy of being a Seventh-day Adventist Christian, with programming for ages five to nine.

Perhaps one of the greatest ministry programs for youth is the Pathfinder program and organization. Throughout the years, Pathfinding has involved young people in life-changing experiences encompassing relationships, and learning environments equipping youth to live their lives for Jesus Christ. During these formative years in a young person's development, unique opportunities for social interaction, relationship training, and skills knowledge are created. In October of this year, Pathfinders and their leaders will gather at Camp Kulaqua in



PHOTO BY: JULIE BURKS

Florida for the Southern Union Camporee, and we are expecting more than 8,000 Pathfinders to be in attendance. The International Camporee held at Oshkosh, Wisconsin, in 2014 was attended by more than 10,000 Pathfinders from the Southern Union. Participation in these camporees provide an anchor point for young people to remember and reflect upon during their Christian journey.

The Pathfinder Bible Experience program has certainly gained attention and participation. This Bible knowledge competition has expanded across the Southern Union, with active club participation. Last year we enjoyed hosting the Union-wide playoff with 19 teams who had advanced from their local conference event, and this year we will have more than 25 teams competing for the opportunity to participate in a North American Division competition. The Pathfinders are committing Scripture to memory, and many are memorizing entire chapters of the Bible. What a great habit to develop.

Youth Ministries

Nearly 40 percent of baptisms in the Southern Union are youth related!

A variety of youth activities occur

within the Southern Union to help foster a relationship between youth and their Creator. Many traditional events such as youth rallies, Week of Prayer, AY, federations, and outreach activities capture the attention of young people. Additional programming continues to develop with mission trip events, leadership retreats, prayer conferences, and local ministry outreaches being created. Young people are actively engaged in worship service planning, and leading out in praise and worship components in their local churches. We celebrate the churches that provide active leadership opportunities for youth to share their talents and gifts in meaningful and practical applications.

Summer camps have a significant impact on the spiritual life of campers, and of their families when they return home. Camper Research says that nine out of 10 campers rated their camp experience as "the best time ever," and almost two-thirds of the campers saw their spiritual identity increase after their camp experience. The young people who are employed at our summer camps experience leadership training, career choices, and positive spiritual experiences, and 83 percent of alumni staff are or were employed as workers in the Adventist Church.

Recently, the Gulf States and South Atlantic conferences joined for a unique youth rally at the Birmingham First Church. Challenging messages, fellowship, meals shared, community service, and an evening recreation highlighted this event. The theme was simply "ONE," with relationships formed for eternity in unity.

The annual Union Prayer Conference event is a highlight for many of the academy students throughout the Union. This event combines dynamic preaching with small group participation, which results in many students acknowledging that Prayer Conference is a life-changing experience for them. Nearly 400 students gather, and this year more than 160 decisions were made to follow Jesus; and, by God's grace, 34 young people chose

to be baptized in the cool spring waters of Camp Kulaqua on Sabbath morning.

Young Adults

Exciting ministries are happening to engage the young adults in the life of the Church. Young adults on Adventist campuses of higher learning are surrounded by caring professors and campus ministries leaders who engage them in relevant spiritual pursuits. Campus ministries chaplains and volunteers are providing timely ministry on many public campuses — the longest running ministry being at Advent House on the University of Tennessee campus in Knoxville, Tennessee. Florida Conference is also active in promoting public campus ministries at UCF in Gainesville, and at other institutions.

Young adults are not waiting for programs to be handed down to them, as they are most capable of creating local ministry programs and activities, as well as funding them. Neighborhood Bible study groups provide fellowship and spiritual teaching that enrich young adult lives. SALT is an acronym for Service And Love Together, a dedicated young adult ministry in Florida which provides valuable resources for homeless ministry, food collection and distribution, relationship seminars, local church connections, and emergency assistance for those in need.

Each local conference is encouraged to create a young adult advisory council, composed of young adults who are actively engaged in ministry. The Southern Union will also have a young adult advisory to collaborate and vision young adult involvement. A chosen representative from the Union will become a member of the North American Division Young Adult Advisory, which will convene yearly.

We are encouraged by the emphasis being given to young adults in local church ministry, and affirm the vital impact young adults possess. With the tagline that we are “Growing Lifelong Disciples,” we must see youth ministries on a continuum and not simply age categorized.



PHOTO BY: JULIE BURKS

The Southern Union enjoys a rich history of supporting youth ministries with leadership, finances, and moral support. We would also like to express appreciation to Allan Williamson, who directed youth ministries in the Southern Union for an unprecedented 26 years. Through Allan’s dedication and his reputation for

complete dependence on God to provide, the youth of the Southern Union through the years have been blessed by exemplary leadership and programming. May we continue to “lean not on our own understanding, but acknowledge God in everything that we do,” and then marvel at how our God will bless! 🙏

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PHOTO BY: R. STEVEN NORMAN III

Tiffiney Miles (left), a graduate intern with the Office of Communication during the fall of 2014, receives information about types of paper and the offset printing process from Twyla Lambert Clark of Lithographics, Inc., in Nashville, Tennessee.

Communicating Hope and Wholeness

Office of Communication

BY R. STEVEN NORMAN III

The Office of Communication provides communication and support services for the Southern Union Conference, as well as the local conferences, universities, and other entities in its territory, through training, consulting, and information sharing. The department also coordinates public and media relation campaigns, strategic planning, and crisis management efforts.

News and information is shared through the Union website, *Southern Tidings*, videos, marketing and promotion, and presentations at events to keep members informed and equipped for effective ministry.

Southern Tidings

For 109 years, the *Southern Tidings* has been the collective news voice for the conferences and institutions within the Southern Union. Today, it is a 48-page publication with a monthly circulation of nearly 96,000.

During the past five years, several steps have been taken to keep the magazine relevant and fresh.

A readership survey was conducted. An independent marketing firm was hired to conduct a readership survey with 10,000 randomly selected readers who shared their thoughts about the magazine. We had a three percent completion rate.



R. Steven Norman III, director



Howard Bullard executed the redesign of the *Southern Tidings* to provide a fresh new look to help attract younger readers, while retaining loyal readers who have been a part of the readership for years.



PHOTO BY: R. STEVEN NORMAN III

Reginald Mattison, Southern Union sign engineer, cleans the Silver Springs Shores Church sign in Silver Springs, Florida, as part of the lifetime maintenance agreement that comes with all marquee signs purchased through the Southern Union.

An analysis of the responses indicated findings. One, that the baby boomer population group is engaged with the magazine and reads it every month. Two, of those that responded, 21.8 percent read the digital publication. The three top areas of interest to readers are the cover feature; news from the eight conferences; and news from Adventist Health System, Adventist University of Health Sciences, Oakwood University, and Southern

Adventist University. When asked about their satisfaction level with the magazine, most readers responded that they would like even more news from the conferences and institutions.

The survey indicated that our current challenge is to engage millennial members of the Southern Union. Connecting with modern readers will require a multi-platform news delivery system. It will also require hiring a staff person who coordinates and engages our readership through social media.

The Southern Tidings was redesigned. The redesign, executed by Howard Bullard, provides a fresh new look that helps attract younger readers, while retaining those loyal readers who have been a part of our readership for years.

There is a new Southern Tidings website. The *Southern Tidings* has been delivered in several digital formats with various levels of success in the past decade. The two most used digital formats have been an online, downloadable, portable document file (pdf), and the monthly *Southern Tidings* email. Research indicates that a significant number of our readers use these formats.

Currently, we are working to launch a *Southern Tidings* website.

Thanks to our *Southern Tidings* team for their contribution in producing the publication. This team includes the local church communication leaders and pastors who submit news about the churches, the local conference communication directors and institutional public relations directors who prepare news and features for final submission, and our team at the Southern Union. Our Southern Union team includes Irisene Douce, managing editor; Julie Burks, designer; Nathan Zinner, advertising representative; Bobbie Millburn, circulation manager; Sheila Elwin, proofreader; and the staff at the College Press who have handled the printing of the *Southern Tidings* for more than a century.



Nathan Zinner, associate director

Society of Adventist Communicators

The Southern Society of Adventist Communicators (SSAC) was initiated by George Powell, former Southern Union communication director. Powell dreamed of creating an organization for Adventist communication professionals who work inside and outside of the denomination,



The Office of Communication staff include Bobbie Millburn (left), circulation manager; Julie Burks, graphic designer/webmaster; R. Steven Norman III, director; Nathan Zinner, associate director; Reginald Mattison, sign engineer; and Irisene Douce, managing editor.

to have a common place to fellowship, network, and mentor students.

In 2000, the organization transformed into a national organization, and the name was changed to Society of Adventist Communicators (SAC). In 2014, SSAC/SAC celebrated its 25th year in Jacksonville, Florida.

The Southern Union Department of Communication sponsors Oakwood University and Southern Adventist University students every year to attend the annual conventions. During the last five years, 56 students were sponsored to attend the conventions in Lombard, Illinois; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Salt Lake City, Utah; Jacksonville, Florida; and Chantilly, Virginia.

Crisis Management

A continuing priority is to provide crisis management training to the staff of all the conferences, schools, early childhood education centers, safety officers, and pastors in the Southern Union territory. We are thankful to all the leaders who invited us to their territories to conduct this training.

Internship and Mentoring

Through our internship and mentoring programs, we prepare Adventist communication majors to get practical experience in the field of communication. Interns Whitney Jordan and Tiffiney Miles served at the Union office, and Jordan went on to South Atlantic Conference and now works at Florida Hospital Tampa. Unfortunately, the internship program has been scaled back due to changing budgetary priorities.

Communication Training

One of the roles of the department is to provide communication training. During the past five years, we have conducted workshops for most of our conferences, held an annual Spring Communication Advisory for conference communication directors and institutional public relations directors, and held workshops for local church audio visual and communication teams.

Church Sign Service

The Southern Union Church Identification Service has been providing identification and directional signs for local churches and schools. During the past five years, sign engineer Reggie Mattison has installed and/or maintained scores of marquees and hundreds of directional signs throughout the Southern Union territory.

I want to take this moment to thank my department staff and conference and institutional directors for all they do to communicate hope and wholeness in our territory. An expression of gratitude is also in order for Dan Weber and the entire North American Division Communication Department for their leadership. But, above all, I thank God for the opportunity we have to serve, and the anointing of His Spirit that provides the gifts and power necessary for effective service. 🙏

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Making Christ's Promise of Abundant Life Real

Health Ministries

BY LYNELL LAMOUNTAIN

The First Lady

During my time at Florida Hospital before joining the Southern Union, Michelle Obama visited Orlando to promote a children's health initiative where CREATION Health was featured. A note from her office reached my desk shortly thereafter requesting the Adventist health seminar kit. As I left the package for the White House at FedEx, I was reminded how special our health message is. We've been given a powerful blessing for reaching people — from the White House to the homeless shelter down the street.

With our extensive library of exceptional health programs, we can help make

the promise of Jesus Christ in John 10:10 (NKJV) come alive: "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."

Christ's Method

Jesus met people where they were. Through His ministry of health and healing, He relieved suffering and restored people to full health in mind, body, and soul, gaining trust and opening hearts.

There is no greater way to make friends and build bridges than through our health message, which, at its heart, is an invitation to intimacy, sharing, and caring.



Lynell LaMountain, director

Health Crisis or Opportunity?

According to CDC.gov, these are the 10 leading causes of death: heart disease, cancer, stroke, chronic lung disease, accidents, diabetes, Alzheimer’s disease, influenza and pneumonia, kidney disease, and suicide.

And, these are the nine contributing factors according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: diet and activity patterns, alcohol and substance abuse, infectious agents, pollutants and toxic agents, firearms, sexual behavior, motor vehicles, illicit drug use, and tobacco use.

Candace Huber, a former Florida Hospital colleague of mine, performed a meta-analysis with another researcher to learn what is triggering people into harmful lifestyle habits and practices.

They discovered eight root causes: anger and frustration, low self-esteem or self-worth, economic disparity, helpless and emotional despair, lack of information or education, meaningless existence, external and internal stress, and powerlessness and loneliness.

People are suffering, and do not know how to stop the pain; they feel stuck, helpless, and hopeless, so they fall into habits to numb their hurt. But, through the grace of Jesus Christ, we can lead them out of misery.

God wants people to be *fully alive*, which is why He gave us a whole-person-focused health message to share with people who are searching for happiness and hope.

Where We’re Headed

The great Southern Union is rich with opportunities for extending the healing ministry of Christ. Our churches and schools are becoming outposts of hope and healing — demonstration sites of what it means to be healthy in mind, body, and soul.

During the past five years, under the leadership of three different health ministry directors, the Union has supported key health initiatives.

Directors have networked with their counterparts in local conferences to sponsor Union-wide comprehensive health ministry trainings for church leaders, such

as Adventist Recovery Ministries for those struggling with addictions, and trainings for CREATION Health, Reversing Diabetes, and Stop Smoking; we’ve partnered with evangelistic initiatives, local schools, and the Publishing Department. Additionally, our Union has received top awards from the North American Division for the In Step for Life program. And, we continue to support free health clinics throughout the Union annually.

But, there are many more people to reach. The future is bright because God is at the wheel, and has blessed us with a vast resource of dedicated health experts and leaders. Moving forward, it is the continuing desire of the Health Ministries Department to steward and leverage the health expertise within our Union.

The health ministry directors and Union have decided to coordinate and support health initiatives more intentionally via a joint website for people to access training opportunities and seminars across our Union.

In 2017, our very own Union health and wellness experts will conduct a health training weekend with topics covering the whole person, with a special emphasis on mental and emotional health.

Additionally, our local health institutions have continued partnering with the Church. Among those is Adventist Health System, which is working with the Health Ministries Department to bring resources to local regions for churches to extend the healing ministry of Christ to their communities.

As we respond to the invitation from the highest levels of government to shape the conversation and vision for health in the United States — which is a sacred privilege for such a time as this — we cherish this prophetic counsel: “Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me,’” *Ministry of Healing*, page 143. ●





More than 1,035 teachers in the Southern Union are daily engaged in the ministry of Adventist education.

Leading Children to Christ

Office of Education

BY EDUCATION STAFF

Each year educators across the Southern Union launch an evangelistic campaign that lasts 180 days in schools, and 362 days in early childhood centers. During this evangelistic series, teachers engaged in the ministry of Adventist education extend to students an invitation to intimacy to help them understand the depth of the Savior's love for them, an invitation to discipling to empower students to share their love for Jesus with others, and an invitation to caring to enable students to experience the joy of serving others.

The importance of ministry to our young people is emphasized by research conducted by George Barna. In his book,

Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions, we discover that faith commitments are cemented in minds and hearts by age 13 — whether or not people are ever going to make a commitment to Christ in their life, their feelings about church, their perceptions of Scripture, their ideas about the existence of God, their concept of how to and whether to integrate faith in every dimension of their lives — all these things and more are determined in their minds by the time they reach age 13. Those determinations rarely change, and if they change after the age of 13, they don't change much.

Teachers and administrators understand their great responsibility in helping



Debra Fryson, director

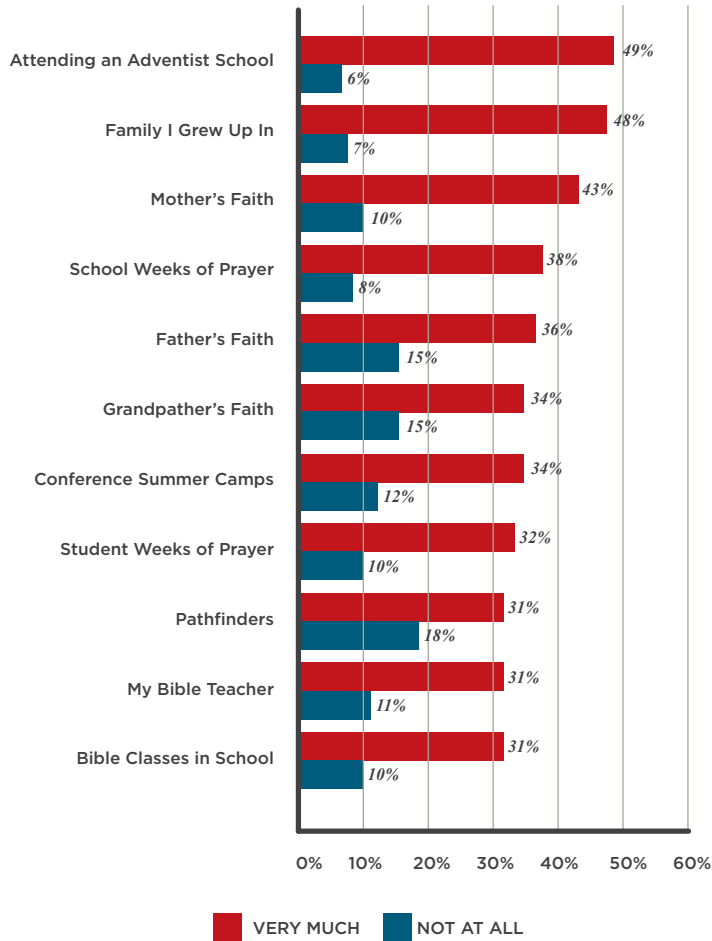


Tamara Libonati
director, early childhood education

students build a rich, growing faith life. They also understand the importance of working in partnership with the home and church to help students to this end. Valuegenesis studies in 2000 and 2010 asked students, “How much has each of the following helped you develop your religious faith?”

“In 2000, 74 percent responded that attending an Adventist school ‘very much’ and ‘somewhat’ helped them in this crucial area. In contrast, in 2010, 82 percent of all of the students made this claim. In 2010, the students’ response was first among all 29 possibilities. The chart below explores the top 11 choices with the total student percentages that responded only ‘very much’ and ‘not at all,’ to this question.” Of the top 11 choices, we see the impact the home, church, and school have on a young person’s faith.

Every day, in centers and schools throughout the Southern Union, mission-minded educators work to provide students with a **GREAT** education that is **God-centered**, **Results-oriented**, in an **Environment** that is safe and nurturing, **Aligned** with Adventist and national standards, with a **Team** effort, to prepare them for service now and through eternity. This report shares how God has guided the Department of Education during the past quinquennium.



Early Childhood

Chapter 54 in the book of Isaiah (New King James Version) has the heading, “A Perpetual Covenant of Peace,” and verse 13 in particular speaks to us in education: “All your children shall be taught by the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your

children.” “All” includes the education and training of even our very youngest children, from birth; praise God for the early childhood education and care ministry of the Southern Union! Currently reported are 86 programs, with close to 2,100 children from birth to five years



Early Childhood Education Center director provides a nurturing environment for the children entrusted to her care.



Students in Southern Union schools are prepared to be responsible citizens, and to be of service now and through eternity.

old. But, the data doesn't stop there; we have recorded, during the last five years, that an average of 33 percent of kindergartners that enroll in our elementary schools come from Seventh-day Adventist early childhood programs and pre-K classrooms. Providing a seamless flow for children and families who begin with Adventist early childhood programs, on through the levels of Seventh-day Adventist Christian education, is a top priority in the Southern Union.

In our mission and goal to provide a Christ-centered, educationally-sound ministry and service for the children and families of our church and communities, we have developed and implemented various tools and helps for our school-based pre-kindergarten classrooms and licensed early childhood programs.

1. *Pebbles — A Faith-based Early Childhood Curriculum* is driven by the natural cycle of learning and research-based standards for the developmental growth and learning in all areas: spiritually, mentally, and physically.

2. *Safety & Emergency Resource* gives additional guidelines and materials for programs to use in keeping an effective, updated strategic plan.

3. *Early Childhood Endorsement* in denominational certification for Southern Union teachers of early childhood education with four-year degrees provides

a meaningful professional development track.

Additionally, another means of improving and sustaining the ministries provided by our licensed child care centers has been gained through the option of incorporation and obtaining denominational status, as voted by the North American Division.

Elementary

Why Adventist education? The aim of true education is to restore human beings to the image of God, the ultimate source of truth, existence, and power. This Adventist worldview is central to the Southern Union Education Department's mission, "Every student a success." Therefore, as students experience God in their day-to-day study about Him through curriculum, instruction, and assessment, they will be led to a higher experiential level to love and know Him personally. The ideal education God wants for each student is to journey above the highest human thought that's imaginable. This education is the blending of the spiritual, mental, and physical powers.

As leadership reaches forward towards higher student achievement, the focus is ongoing teacher professional development. Richard DuFour, in *Education Leadership*, describes the professional learning community model as one that



Diane Ruff
director, elementary education





Teachers participate in ongoing professional development.



During this quinquennium, 2,328 students in Southern Union schools have been baptized.

not only ensures that students are taught, but also ensures that they learn. Educators realize they must work collaboratively to achieve the goal of learning for all (“What is a Professional Learning Community,” May 2004, Volume 61, Number 8). This is not only the responsibility of the educator, but the home and church as well. Several conferences have established professional learning communities that meet virtually and face-to-face several times during the school year for the purpose of improving instruction and student learning.

Technology has greatly influenced teacher professional development, with virtual sessions increasing as new curriculum is launched. New textbooks are current in major subject areas, and timeline projections forecast future updates, thus allowing for adequate budget planning for maintaining up-to-date curricula. New standards are also available in core subjects, and can be viewed on the AdventistEDGE website. The new Encounter Bible curriculum for elementary will be launched in 2017, with teacher training as a requirement prior to implementation.

Multi-grade classroom teachers are now facilitated with new curriculum materials developed on a cycle platform in several disciplines. The intent is to reach across student interests, needs, and diverse ability levels in classes with two or more grades. The journey cannot be completed without intentionally inviting each student to make a lifetime decision to accept Jesus as their Savior. Four three-week evangelistic meetings in these

Adventist schools were conducted during this quinquennium: Osceola Adventist Christian School, Daughter of Zion Junior Academy, Mt. Sinai Junior Academy, and Mt. Calvary SDA School. Sharing God’s Word resulted in 39 baptisms.

The main goal of Christian education is to offer each student the chance to become a member of God’s family forever. However, this goal is not met without these challenges: 1) Student exit should never be completed without a personal invitation for baptism; 2) Every Adventist teacher should be trained regarding this special invitation to include preparation for baptismal conferences with candidates’ parents; and 3) Identifying and/or training pastors, laypersons, or students who are willing to conduct ongoing evangelistic meetings in every school in the Southern Union is needed.

Secondary

Encounter Bible Curriculum — It has been more than 15 years since the secondary Bible curriculum for Adventist schools has been updated. That need has been addressed by the North American Division (NAD) through the adoption of the Encounter Bible Curriculum for all secondary schools. Jesus commissioned His followers to “Go, make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you...” Matthew 28:19, 20. This is the primary purpose of the Adventist Encounter Bible Curriculum. Never has there been

a greater time in our world’s history to make this the focus of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In response to this call, the Adventist Encounter Bible Curriculum is a seamless curriculum that is intentional about exploring big-picture, spiritual concepts with the goal of making a difference for eternity. This curriculum uses the four walls of the classroom to help build a lifelong relationship with Jesus Christ, using the Bible as the source of truth. Through rigorous pedagogical practice, it explores and develops personal spiritual experience and reasons for faith, lifestyle choices, and ethical decision-making from an Adventist worldview, all the while nurturing interpersonal relationships (the essence of a faith-building environment) and service to others. In short, it seeks to



Jim Ingersoll
director, secondary education



Students prepare victims for disaster response training.

develop these disciples of the Great Commission, and we find young people looking forward to Bible class because they are now understanding and experiencing a relationship with Jesus unlike before.

PhysicalGenesis Study — The sedentary lifestyle existent in society today has manifested itself in the quality of life experienced by students in Adventist schools, resulting in diminished health, a reduced capacity to learn, and a shortened lifespan compared to their ancestors. Regulatory and societal pressures added to academic requirements in schools have created an imbalance between the mental, physical, and spiritual components of students. The foundational health beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church call for a renewed emphasis on fitness and health to restore balance and overall wellness in the lives of our students and staff.

The PhysicalGenesis Study completes the third part of a triad of studies relating to the spiritual, mental, and physical components of Adventist education for the North American Division. The first two were ValueGenesis and Cognitive-

Genesis. The North American Division Office of Education, in cooperation with Loma Linda and La Sierra universities, is now into the second year of the PhysicalGenesis Study, whose first-year findings show Seventh-day Adventist young people as having symptoms of the same health challenges as do their peers in public school. This calls for a systemic review and change of Adventist school programming to bring back a proper focus on how to develop and maintain a healthy lifestyle in students and staff alike.

2Serve Conferences — The Southern Union has 20 junior academies with a small number of students at the ninth- and 10th-grade levels spread out across the Union. The Union’s secondary education office has created opportunities for these students to come together in efforts of service to others, as well as for social time that allows them to get to know one another. These gatherings have been named 2Serve (because Jesus sent disciples out two by two, and we are “to serve”) Conferences, where the students have been given disaster response train-

ing, participated in a disaster simulation, put on three complete church services, and have gone on outreach activities on Sabbath afternoon. They have been well received by students, teachers, and church members alike. In addition, some students participated in a mission trip to Belize, March 6-15, 2016, assisting La Loma Luz hospital with some projects to improve their facility, as well as conducting a Vacation Bible School for four days. They also experienced the educational benefits of another culture by staying in Belize for eight days, visiting a zoo, visiting Mayan ruins, and snorkeling on the second best barrier reef in the world. Please pray that our young people involved in these experiences will see how they can be a part of God’s Work here on Earth in preparation to being in His Kingdom, along with those they may have touched for Jesus along the way.

Certification

Teaching is a special ministry that prepares students for now and eternity. “Certification is a badge that identifies teachers as a distinguished, select group of people to whom families entrust their children and youth,” *K-12 Educators Certification Manual*, 2010, page 2. Adventist educators are expected to earn and



Luberta Biggs
registrar, office of certification

maintain certification. Certification is also the evidence that teachers have prepared themselves to do this special work, and ensures we have quality teachers in the classroom.

Qualified teachers develop an enthusiasm for learning, and provide a guide for living a Christian life for their students. Southern Union teachers continuously work on improving pedagogy through maintaining current certification. In 2015, Bible teachers were inserviced on the new North America Division Encounter Bible Curriculum. In addition, many teachers have completed both the NAD course of “Integrating Technology into the Curriculum” and the Southern Union Conference Office of Education “Trends and Issues in Education” 4MAT renewal requirements. With the implementation of NAD eCertification and Dashboard programs in 2014, teachers have 24-hour access to manage and maintain their certification.

Certification ensures that highly professional, credentialed educators are equipped to serve in the ministry of Adventist education. Certification reflects teachers who are God-centered, and therefore keep Christ in the center of each classroom. Every day teachers continue the work Jesus asked us all to do by helping to train up our children and youth in the way they should go. With the guidance of qualified, certified teachers, our children and youth develop into great parents in the home; leaders in the Church; principals and teachers in our schools; and presidents, departmental directors,

and superintendents in our conferences, unions, and divisions throughout the World Church.

Library Services

Recognizing that our society is at a critical juncture in the changing information landscape, and that our students need to develop skills in order to thrive in this digital age, the Office of Education has embarked on a journey to align more closely with national education standards in the delivery of library and information resource services. The department has embraced the American Library Association’s “Libraries Transform” initiative by transforming its library program in an effort to meet the needs for 21st century teaching and learning. The new library program assists schools with maintaining both a physical and virtual learning space, which provides both students and teachers with in-school, at-home, and on-the-go access to electronic resources such as eBooks, audiobooks, and databases for research. In this way, the Southern Union Library Services program is providing both equity and access, while developing digitally inclusive school communities which provide learning opportunities for



Andrea Henry-Smith
director, library services

their students in an ever-changing digital landscape. 📖

Barna, George. *Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions*. Grand Rapids, MI; Baker Books, 2003.

John Hancock Center for Youth and Family Ministry. *Valuegenesis3 Research Update*, January 2012, Issue #3.



Encounter Bible training session



Students participated in a mission trip to Belize, March 6-15, 2016, assisting La Loma Luz Hospital with some improvement projects, as well as conducting a Vacation Bible School.



PHOTO BY: R. STEVEN NORMAN III

Expanding the Mission in Spanish

Hispanic Ministries

BY JORGE MAYER

Statistics

The Hispanic Ministries Department concluded 2015 with 37,847 members in the Hispanic congregations, an increase of 23.2 percent during the last five years. If we include Hispanics who meet in English-speaking churches to these statistics, the estimate would exceed 60 million (according to the projections of the North American Division, we have 1/3 Anglo, 1/3 Black, and 1/3 Spanish-speakers). In addition, we had 13,570 people join the church through baptism and profession of faith, representing an annual growth of more than 2,700.

Tithes increased from 17 million to 24 million in five years, which means an

increase of more than 1.3 million a year (37.8 percent). In the last five years, we had 21 new churches and 25 organized companies.

Preparation of Ministers

With the support and instruction of the Hispanic Institute Theological Seminary at Andrews University, laborers continue to prepare in two areas: master of arts (MA) with emphasis in pastoral ministry, and level II certification as family life educators. The time in which we live requires us to be better prepared in both areas, to serve and meet the realities of our congregations and community.



Jorge Mayer, director



PHOTO BY: R. STEVEN NORMAN III

Evangelism in Memphis

In the last four years we have organized harvest campaigns for churches in the Memphis, Tennessee, metropolitan area, which involve three conferences (Kentucky-Tennessee, South Central, and Gulf States). Thanks to the vision and commitment of pastors and members of the four congregations, more than 400 people have joined the Church through baptism, and two new congregations were organized.

Evangelism in Tampa

We have conducted harvest campaigns in the metropolitan area of Tampa, Florida, for Florida and Southeastern conferences for two consecutive years. We concluded the first one together at the Mount Calvary Church with an attendance that exceeded the total membership involved (seven congregations), and 89 people joined the Church. The second year we planned this experience with our pastors, the enthusiasm was such that each of them asked for an evangelist in every congregation, making a total of 17 preaching centers. The Hispanic coordinators for seven conferences were the evangelists, along with a group of guests from abroad and within our territory.

The result far exceeded previous experiences, as 149 people were baptized.

Annual Evangelistic Caravan

Every year we have organized, with the coordinators of each conference and their pastors, evangelistic caravans in which one experienced evangelist



Nicole Brise has conducted several successful crusades in Spanish.

preaches one theme-message in each congregation, reaching a large group of churches interested in the message of salvation. The preaching is accompanied by the baptism of those who are prepared for baptism by church members months before, and, at the end of the message, the calling is extended to those who have not made the decision, to do so in the near future. As a result of these initiatives, we have hundreds of new believers who have joined the Church, and even larger numbers have made the decision to be baptized soon. The members are encouraged to see the results, and to have a seasoned evangelist visit their respective churches.

Family Enrichment

The attacks of the enemy of God lurk in every possible corner where God wants to dwell and transform. The home, being His gift to humanity, is also the epicenter of the great controversy. For this reason, our department organizes various events — about 15 per year — for family enrichment. The vast majority are replies to extended invitations.

Evangelism Abroad

Each year since 1999, the Hispanic Ministries Department has expanded its mission to other territories with the purpose of increasing or maintaining the missionary zeal of our workers, as well as to help us remember that our organization is bigger than the district where each of us serve. In the most recent five-year period, this initiative has led us to support several countries in Europe (2011), Nicaragua (2012), Venezuela (2013), the Dominican Republic (2014), and Argentina (2015). The president of one of these territories wrote the following: “I have been touring our pastoral assemblies and the presidents of the fields where the teams went to last year; they would like to have the possibility of having some of the pastors who came to preach to return and conduct a week of evangelism harvest... The work they have done is excellent, and not only results in winning souls, but also give a good example to our workers and members.”

PHOTO BY: R. STEVEN NORMAN III



Youth Congress

Young people are an extraordinary force for the Master. We organized during these five years the first congress for young adults, with the support of each conference's youth director. More than 800 young people listened to messages relevant to their reality, and they left committed to share the message of salvation with their friends. One of the commitments the youth had was to be accompanied by friends of their age who were still not part of the Church. As a result, we performed a baptism in Camp Kulaqua's water park. The response was so positive that we will be organizing this event once every two years. 📍

PHOTO BY: R. STEVEN NORMAN III



PHOTO BY: R. STEVEN NORMAN III



Expandiendo la Misión en Español

Ministerio Hispano

BY JORGE MAYER

Estadísticas

Al concluir 2015 tenemos 37,847 miembros en las congregaciones hispanas, lo cual equivale a un aumento de 23.2% en este quinquenio. Si incluyéramos los hispanos que se reúnen en las iglesias de habla inglesa, el estimado sobrepasaría los 60 mil (de acuerdo a las proyecciones de la DNA tenemos 1/3 de anglosajones, 1/3 de morenos, y 1/3 de hispano parlantes). Además, se unieron a la iglesia por medio del bautismo y profesión de fe 13,570 personas, lo que representa un crecimiento anual de más de 2,700.

Los diezmos crecieron de 17 millones a 24 millones en cinco años lo cual significa un aumento que supera 1.3 millones al año (37.8%). En estos últimos cinco años

se organizaron 21 nuevas iglesias y 25 compañías.

Preparación De Ministros

Con el apoyo e instrucción del Instituto Hispano del Seminario Teológico de la Universidad Andrews nuestros obreros continúan preparándose en dos áreas: Maestría en Arte con Énfasis en Ministerio Pastoral (MA in Pastoral Ministry) y Certificación Nivel II como Educadores de Vida Familiar. El tiempo en que se vive requiere de una intensa preparación en ambas áreas para servir y atender las realidades de nuestra feligresía y comunidad

Evangelismo En Memphis

En los últimos cuatro años organizamos

campañas de cosecha para las iglesias del área metropolitana, la cual involucra tres asociaciones (Kentucky-Tennessee, South Central y Gulf States). Gracias a la visión y compromiso de los pastores y miembros de las cuatro congregaciones se unieron a la iglesia por medio del bautismo más de 400 personas y se organizaron dos nuevas congregaciones

Evangelismo En Tampa

Durante dos años consecutivos se llevaron a cabo campañas de cosecha en la zona metropolitana de Tampa que incluyeron las asociaciones de Florida y Southeastern. La primera concluyó en una ceremonia conjunta en la iglesia Mount Calvary con una asistencia que sobrepasó el total de la



feligresía involucrada (7 congregaciones) y donde se unieron a las filas de la iglesia 89 personas. En el segundo año, durante la planificación previa llevada a cabo con los pastores, el entusiasmo fue notable. Ellos solicitaron tener un evangelista en cada congregación haciendo un total de 17 centros de predicación. Los coordinadores hispanos de 7 de nuestras asociaciones e invitados de dentro y fuera del territorio de la unión fueron los evangelistas. El resultado superó con creces la experiencia anterior, ya que se bautizaron 149 personas.

Caravanas Evangelísticas Anuales Junto a los Coordinadores de las Asociaciones y sus Pastores

Todos los años se organizaron caravanas evangelísticas junto a los coordinadores de las asociaciones y sus pastores. En las mismas, un evangelista de experiencia predica sólo un mensaje por congregación, alcanzando así a un numeroso grupo de iglesias y sus interesados con las nuevas de salvación. Cada predicación está acompañada de bautismos de quienes fueron preparados por los miembros de iglesia en los meses previos. Al final del mensaje se extiende un llamado para que aquellos que no han tomado la decisión de unirse a la iglesia lo hagan en un futuro cercano. Como resultado de estas iniciativas cientos de nuevos creyentes se han unido a la iglesia y un grupo mayor toma la decisión de bautizarse prontamente. Además, la experiencia es positiva para las congregaciones que

participan, ya que reciben ánimo al ver los resultados, y pueden participar del trabajo con un evangelista experimentado.

Enriquecimiento De Las Familias

Los ataques del enemigo acechan todo rincón donde Dios quiere morar y transformar. El hogar, siendo Su regalo para la humanidad, es también el epicentro del conflicto de los siglos. Por ese motivo nuestro departamento organiza varios eventos (más de 15 por año) de enriquecimiento familiar. En su gran mayoría son respuesta a invitaciones que se reciben.

Evangelismo Más Allá

Desde 1999 nuestro departamento ha expandido su misión a otros territorios con el propósito de incrementar o mantener el celo misionero de los obreros, y ayudarles a recordar que la organización va más allá del distrito donde cada uno sirve. Esta iniciativa nos ha llevado a apoyar varios países de Europa (2011), Nicaragua (2012), Venezuela (2013), República Dominicana (2014), y Argentina (2015). El presidente de uno de estos territorios escribió: “En las asambleas pastorales y mis conversaciones con los presidentes de los campos en los que su equipo nos acompañó el año pasado, recibí comentarios de los obreros expresando su deseo de que algunos de los pastores que estuvieron predicando este año regresen para conducir una semana de evangelismo de cosecha... El trabajo que han hecho es

excelente, no sólo por los resultados en lo que se refiere a la ganancia de almas, sino por el buen ejemplo que han dado a nuestros obreros y miembros.”

Congreso De Jóvenes

La juventud representa una fuerza extraordinaria para el Maestro. En este quinquenio organizamos el primer congreso para jóvenes adultos con el apoyo de los directores de jóvenes de cada una de las asociaciones. Más de 800 asistentes escucharon temas pertinentes a su realidad y salieron comprometidos a compartir el mensaje de salvación con sus conocidos. Los jóvenes habían asumido el compromiso de venir acompañados de amigos de su edad que todavía no forman parte de la iglesia. Como resultado, se llevó a cabo un bautismo en el parque acuático del Camp Kulaqua. Debido a la respuesta positiva generada por este evento, se planea organizar uno cada dos años. ●





Caring for His Sheep

Human Resources

BY DIANA AHLER

Four years ago, the Southern Union recognized the imminent growth within the human resources industry. As a result, a new department was created that would be devoted to the service of our employees and the organization. It has been my honor and privilege to construct this new department, and the many areas it encompasses. The Lord has entrusted us to care for our employees, His sheep, and to do it with eagerness, diligence, and a willing heart.

Some of our major accomplishments include developing and implementing a new company-wide annual evaluation system, offering regular training programs that provide our employees the tools needed to be successful in their jobs, and being a dedicated support system through the hiring and retirement process. We consistently monitor compensation and employee benefits for accuracy. Along with recruiting new hires, we include orientation for a smooth transition. We are committed to protecting the interests of our employees and the organization in accordance with Southern Union policies, governmental laws, and regulations.

Most important is employee relations —

keeping the line of communication open so that trust can be sustained. In the same fashion, we serve as a resource to our conferences by keeping them current on North American Division policies, providing counsel on legal best practices, and offering emotional support through difficult situations. Spring and fall meetings are planned to inform and discuss new laws and policies on a face-to-face basis, and to be the means by which to strengthen relationships.

We assist administration by helping to maintain healthy employee relations. This is accomplished by developing and implementing policies, programs, and objectives that help the day-to-day activities to run smoothly throughout all departments.

Currently, we are anticipating growth in our department due to recent changes in employment and healthcare laws. These changes in the industry will ultimately lead to many modifications within our department in the next five years. As a result, it is essential that all new human resources staff be fully certified through the Society of Human Resources Management Foundation (SHRM). Our goal is to build a solid system through which we can provide

team support for our conferences to better prepare for the coming growth.

It is our prayer that the Holy Spirit fills us with His wisdom, and guide our thoughts and actions so we do not lose sight of our mission of helping others. “Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, watching over them — not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve,” 1 Peter 5:2. 🙏



Diana Ahler (right), director
Francine Long, assistant director



Georgia-Cumberland publishing retreat

Telling People the Good News!

Publishing

BY WILLIAM SMITH

Acts 8:14 NCV, “...all the believers, except the apostles, were scattered... And wherever they were scattered, they told people the Good News.”

“Let every believer scatter broadcast tracts and leaflets and books containing the message for this time,” *Counsels on Ministry*, page 21.

As we reflect on the past five years of literature ministry, we give God 100 percent of the glory for the great things He has done. The Lord spared no means, including His Precious Son, Jesus, to give us the everlasting Gospel. We are sparing no means, including literature, TV, DVDs, the Internet, phone apps, and social media, to continue to spread the everlasting Gospel.

Thanks to the vision and support of the Southern Union Executive Committee, an expanded view of the publishing ministry was voted that would help all members to reach the 62 million people in our territory. This new initiative embodies five energetic components that represent an entire spectrum of literature evangelism.

The strategy can be summed up in the acronym BLAST:

- B** - Books and tracts
- L** - Linking departments
- A** - All involved
- S** - School fundraisers
- T** - Technology



William Smith, director



Keith Reid, associate director

B — Books and Tracts

Throughout the past quinquennium, we have partnered with the local conferences to help develop and subsidize more than 20 new books that are attractive, relevant, up to date, and inexpensive. Most of them are sharing resources that are available through bulk purchasing, so that *all of our members* can get involved.

An outstanding sharing tool that is being widely distributed by most of our conferences is the GLOW (Giving Light to Our World) tract series. We have helped subsidize hundreds of thousands of these resources.

L — Linking Departments

We have been very intentional about providing our different departments and ministries with sharing books that can be used to assist in their evangelistic endeavors. New books have been developed for the following ministries: grief, health, men's, women's, prayer, personal, youth, evangelism, and education.

A — All Involved

We have opened new avenues, giving *all members* more opportunities to participate in sharing the Good News of Jesus. For example:

GLOW Tract Ministry: A number of the administrators are promoting GLOW because of the ease in membership involvement, and the variety of titles and languages available. We have partnered with the conferences to help provide specialized training that shows members how to incor-



David Long, Southern Union personal ministries, prison ministries, Sabbath School, and stewardship director, participates in the publishing ministries

outreach at an Atlanta Hawks game in Atlanta, Georgia. Double amputee Jessie was eager to help pass out the sports version of the *Steps to Christ* book, *Let's Win*.

porate GLOW distribution as a part of their everyday routine. Some call this kind of lifestyle evangelism, "Evangeliving."

PTRE (Preaching, Teaching, Reaching Event): We have been invited to many churches to lead out in literature outreach on Sabbath afternoons for one hour. During that one hour, visits are made to offer a free literature gift to begin the friendship-building process. One church in Georgia, by using this method, gathered 125 interests on a Sabbath afternoon that eventually resulted in 10 baptisms.

MDE (Mass Distribution Event): We have helped recruit, train, and organize members to distribute thousands of sharing books and tracts at large stadium events. A woman found one of our books on the ground in a stadium parking lot. She read it and sent an email asking how she can order 50-100 copies.

Full-time Literature Evangelism: There are those who receive a call from the Lord to dedicate their lives to full-time literature evangelism. We have partnered with the conference publishing departments to help provide leadership assistance in the areas of promotion, recruiting, training, and encouragement.

S — School Fundraisers

Each year we have had more than 250 students from elementary to secondary level participate in literature ministry campaigns. These evangelistic endeavors help the students to have a more solid relationship with Christ, develop leadership skills, and be enthusiastic workers for the Lord

while earning scholarships to attend Adventist academic institutions. During the past five years, we have worked with the conference publishing departments to help recruit, train, and encourage the students.

T — Technology

In an age of smart phones and watches, tablets and social media, the publishing ministries is sparing nothing to reach the lost.

- Blastofhope.com has been developed to provide information, inspiration, and training for church members.
- Capturethehope.com provides books and free Bible studies for non-members.
- Familyhomechristianbooks.com is an online resource for books, e-books, tracts, CDs, DVDs, as well as training resources. It provides a way for all members to participate in literature ministry, part-time or full-time.
- Sharewaves.com provides super discounts for bulk purchasing of sharing resources.
- Adventistbookcenter.com has been an outstanding online resource for years, providing members with an easy way to order thousands of resources.

We have also helped to subsidize the production of USB armbands that contain a PDF of all or portions of three of the most popular books, along with other resources.

Challenge

Imagine what would happen if each of the 1,000 Adventist churches in the Southern Union had a passionate publishing ministries coordinator (PMC) rallying church members to participate in distributing the sharing resources on a consistent basis as a part of their everyday routine, as well as during special occasions. We would reach millions in the Southern Union territory.

Appeal

While outside a stadium event distributing *Let's Win!* books, we met Jessie, a non-member amputee in a motorized wheelchair. He asked if he could help share the "Jesus books." We said, "Sure!" He instructed us to place a box of 100 books on the platform where his feet used to be, and then zipped off to distribute them.

If Jessie could do it, by God's grace, so can we! 🙏



Imagine Your World Without It

Public Affairs and Religious Liberty/Adventist Community Services

BY AMIREH AL-HADDAD

Take a look at religious liberty around the world. One of the latest international reports from the Secretary of State's office lists nearly 76 percent of the world population suffers government restrictions on religious liberty. In areas like the Middle East and North Africa, freedom has declined at an accelerated rate over the last four years. So, believe me when I say that we are still privileged to have so much religious liberty here in the United States. In the spirit of Christ, the Public Affairs & Religious Liberty (PARL) Department strives to defend, preserve, and expand religious liberty both inside and outside of the Church. The department is staffed by its director, Amireh Al-Haddad, associate

director Kevin James, and an administrative assistant.

There are several areas of work that religious liberty covers. In the Southern Union, almost all of the religious liberty work is done at the Union level rather than the conference level. Over the last 30 years, this directive has been intentional in order to maintain a consistent level of assistance and training throughout all the conferences in our territory. Both the director and the associate director travel about two-thirds of the year, visiting local area churches, delivering sermons, and giving a wide array of seminars on religious liberty topics — from Sabbath accommodation to issues involving same-sex marriage. We have also



Amireh Al-Haddad, director



Kevin James, associate director

been engaged in spreading the good news of freedom in the news and media as well.

Religious Discrimination Cases

Like all facets of life, Sabbath accommodation problems follow local employment trends. In increasing numbers from the last session, members who were fired from jobs because of Sabbath issues are finding work much faster and more easily now. As the spotlight has been focused on religious accommodation in the workplace, employers are getting smarter in ways to evade or meet the minimal requirements to accommodate church members. However, the Equal Employment Opportunity Com-

mission is also getting more aggressive towards employers who discriminate, and has upped the number of religious discrimination cases they are litigating. The good news for our members is that more of their cases are being taken to court. This helps the Church as well, because it means that we do not have to bear the burden for all the litigation ourselves. One trend that has carried over from the last quinquennial report is the number of unemployment cases the PARL department is handling. This seems to slowly but steadily be on the increase.

With the increase in the economy, employers have also been more willing to mediate cases, which is also good for both the Adventist Church and our members since cases are resolved long before we start spending any money. For the most part Sabbath accommodation cases make up the majority of the workload, but the office still gets calls on other issues, such as union membership exemption, child custody, and prisoners' rights, to name a few. However, for the best results in any case, the key is calling for help as soon as you know there is a problem, and not waiting or trying to handle the problem alone.

Religious Liberty Offerings and Liberty Magazine

I'm happy to report that the Southern Union continues to lead the North American Division in the annual religious liberty offering and overall subscriptions sent out for Liberty magazine. With nine unions

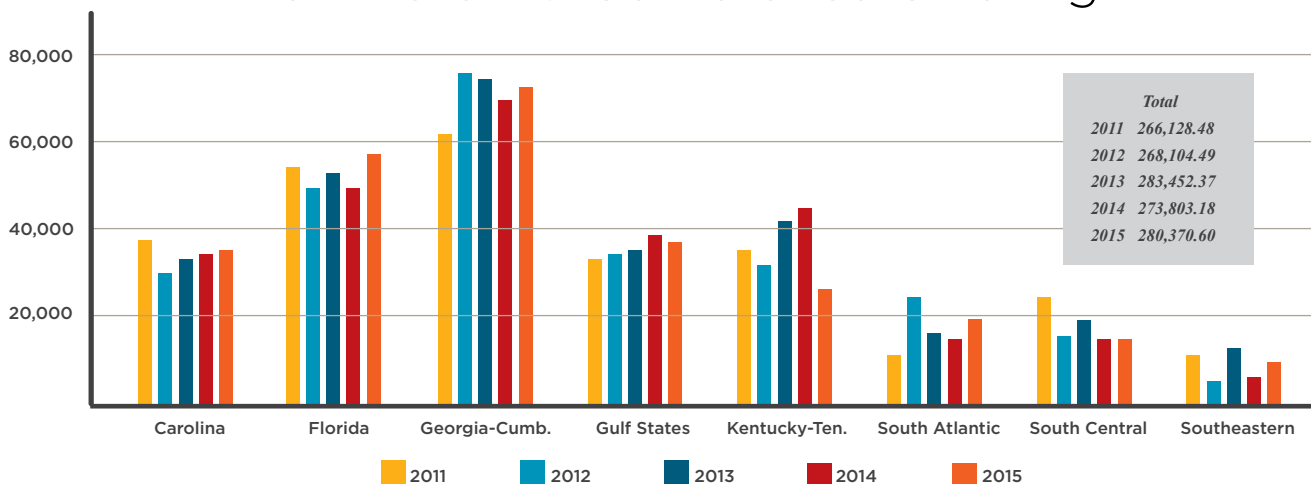


in total within the Division, the Southern Union has provided a five-year average of 29 percent or almost \$1.4 million of the annual religious liberty offering. Another big ongoing job that this department handles every year is the maintenance of the database that keeps the most up-to-date elected officials in your state. In this way, we are able to ensure that Liberty magazine makes it into the hands of the legislatures and other government officials who have been charged with protecting our vital first freedom. We continue to thank our wonderful church members who have shown their support and faithfulness to this ministry in their personal giving.

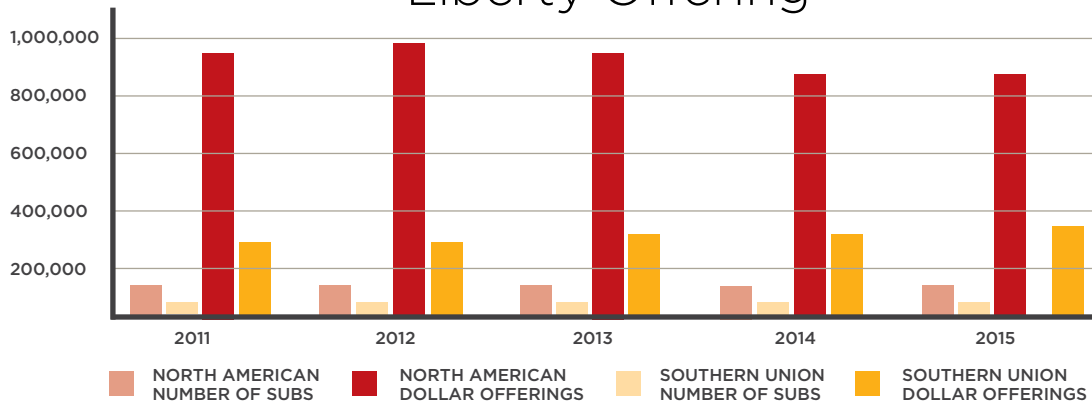
Government Liaison Program

Another important program we run here in the Union is the government watchdog program. Carefully chosen lay-people assist us in each of the eight states to help monitor the legislation taking place in our territory. At the beginning of this quinquennium, our biggest concerns were

2011-2015 SU Conference Offering



North American Division Religious Liberty Offering



| Southern Union % of Total | |
|---------------------------|------------|
| 2011 | 29% |
| 2012 | 28% |
| 2013 | 30% |
| 2014 | 30% |
| 2015 | 30% |
| TOTAL | 29% |

North American Division Total

| | | |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|
| Number of SUBS | 2011-2015 | 780,801 |
| Dollar Offering | 2011-2015 | 4,684,808 |

Southern Union Total

| | | |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|
| Number of SUBS | 2011-2015 | 228,643 |
| Dollar Offering | 2011-2015 | 1,371,857 |

related to “10 Commandments” bills in different state legislatures. We have seen new trends in legislative work over the last five years. Specifically, Religious Freedom Restoration Acts (RFRA) are becoming the important and much contested bills. While we have been trying to get RFRAs passed in each of our eight states since 1997, the new fight over same-sex marriage has brought the need for such bills to light for many who ignored them before. In 2013 Kentucky passed one of the best examples of a state RFRA, which protects the conscience of an individual without trampling on the rights of another. Mississippi passed its state RFRA in 2014. As of this report there are still two states in the Southern Union territory without such protection, Georgia and North Carolina.

School voucher bills have changed their names but not their methods; now most states refer to them as Opportunity Scholarships. While most Adventists think that school vouchers might be bad, who would want to deny a student an “opportunity”? In the Public Affairs & Religious Liberty Department, the “opportunity” we believe that these types of bills offer is on the government side — an opportunity to insidiously get into our Church schools.

North Carolina in 2013 made headlines when a bill was presented to the legislature that would allow the state to declare an official religion or favored religions. The bill, had it passed, would have also allowed the state to have made laws regarding the es-

tablishment of religion with impunity from the federal government. You know God is still working to protect us when such bills die or are defeated! By the end of these last five years, we are now faced with very serious religious liberty bills that impact the civil rights of both religious and secular people here in the United States. Now more than ever we need to share in this work of remaining vigilant.

Southern Society of Adventist Attorneys

The Southern Society of Adventist Attorneys exists in order to provide spiritual and professional interaction for Adventists who practice law. Adventist attorneys and law students within the society currently number 178 members. Each of the last five years we have held an annual retreat. Starting in 2012 we added continuing legal education to the retreat, offering courses in ethics, free to members of the society. We continue to encourage our law students with a small book stipend available for those who apply here within the Southern Union territory. To contact SSAA or for application to join, email us at ssaa@southernunion.com.

Religious Liberty Congress

Every few years a religious liberty congress is held to encourage and educate members on different religious liberty topics. The first congress to be held in Atlanta was in October 2012. With high quality presenters such as Edward Reid, Timothy

Golden, and David Assherick, the congress was full before the early-bird registration deadline, resulting in about 100 applicants being turned away. Participants to the congress were exposed to issues involving religious freedom from both the spiritual and secular. The next congress being planned in the Southern Union territory is an International World Congress in Hollywood, Florida, in August 2017. You may want to plan now to attend.

The Future

Seventh-day Adventists hold religious liberty dear to their hearts. We invest both time and money to this ministry because of its importance. As people of prophecy we believe that the role of religious freedom plays heavily into end-time events. The loss of religious liberty will one day soon herald the soon return of our Lord and Savior. But, until that time, Ellen G. White says we have been charged to work with the angels to hold back the strife that shall come. It is inconsistent with the character of Christ to allow bad things to happen, simply because it had been prophesied. We must always act in a Christ-like manner to defend the truth, protect freedom, and fight for justice until the very end. This department and those who work within it have pledged themselves to continue to protect liberty of conscience, not only for our members here in the Southern Union, but for all people. Please feel free to email us anytime: ReligiousLiberty@southernunion.com. ☛



Adventist Community Services

BY AMIREH AL-HADDAD

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord,” Luke 4:18-19.

Throughout the Southern Union territory, Adventist Community Services (ACS) has been filling the role as a transforming agent in local church communities. This ministry uses Christ’s example of bringing not just help, but also hope to those in need. Commonly referred to as ACS, this department of the Church provides a wide range of public services. On the surface its ministry is more to the body than the soul.

But, what touches the heart will evidently affect the brain.

As ACS meets the needs of the community, it concentrates its efforts on services like food pantries, soup kitchens, clothing distribution, thrift stores, crisis counseling, tutoring and mentoring, refugee resettlement, elder care, and ministry to the homeless and disabled, just to name a few. More likely than any other Church department, it is the face of the Adventist Church to the community that is more remembered and appreciated because of its service-oriented goals.

Like ACS, Adventist Disaster Response (ADR) is also a very public face of the Church. In the Southern Union, those services are all coordinated at the local conference office, with some administration

needs being handled at the Union level. But never forget, when disaster strikes, it’s the local churches and conference who are responding to the crisis. It’s important not only that our disaster response teams are prepared to handle disasters, but also that we encourage each church member to prepare their families for the sudden crisis that could befall anyone at any time.

State agencies look to the Seventh-day Adventist Church as responders in times of crisis. ADR personnel are called by the state to run warehouses and centers for donated goods and distribution of those goods to affected peoples in a disaster zone. During the last quinquennium, the Southern Union made it a priority to ensure that our ADR leaders were trained and certified for this work. ●



The Information Systems Department team includes Milton Sand (left), associate director; David Koliadko, accounting support specialist; Leonard Fernandez, support engineer; and Richard Stephenson, director.

Supporting the Church with Technology

Information Systems

BY RICHARD STEPHENSON

During the last quinquennium, the Southern Union Information Technology Services Department has seen dramatic growth. This growth has occurred in the work that we do for our eight conferences. We celebrate the opportunities to work alongside the conferences and their many churches and schools, partnering together to finish the work!

As a department, we exist to equally serve the offices of the Southern Union Conference, as well as the conferences. By following the scriptural example of Stephen found in Acts 6, our department seeks to serve the Church, often behind the scenes. Over the past five years, we

have changed our department's name from Information Systems to Information Technology Services. We did this to better emphasize the service aspect of the department. We exist to serve the work of the Church. We exist to strengthen and make efficient the operations of the Church. With this framework in mind, a brief portrait of our ministry follows, and a summary of the impact we seek to have for Christ and His Bride.

Accounting and Payroll

Perhaps the largest growth area we have experienced in the past five years is the increase in hosting the Church's payroll and accounting packages from our



Richard Stephenson, director

datacenter at the Southern Union office. Through the first quarter of 2016, at the time of this writing, we hosted 27 entity instances of APS and AASI, the Church's payroll and accounting systems. During this quinquennium, we have doubled the number of payroll and accounting systems that we host for your conference or academy. We praise the Lord for this growth! For payroll alone, we provide services to more than 5,500 employees working at conference educational centers, academies, elementary schools, early education centers, churches, and administrative offices across the Union. We provide these services at no cost to our conferences or academies.

Southern Union Datacenter

In March of 2014, we brought our new Southern Union datacenter online. The Southern Union has made an investment in creating a datacenter that will not only serve the needs of our local Union office, but will serve the needs of our conferences, universities, and schools. The North American Division also extensively uses our datacenter. The Southern Union datacenter is available for use by any of our entities at no cost to them. We provide redundant Internet connectivity, redundant power, and redundant cooling within the datacenter. A Liebert 40 KVA UPS and a Cummins Diesel 150 KVA generator are capable of sustaining full operations in the datacenter for five days, with no utility-provided electricity. This means that should we lose power, we can continue to serve your conference. Our datacenter was expressly built to serve the mission and ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church here in the Southern Union.

Data Co-location Services

When we built our new Southern Union datacenter, we designed it in such a way that our conferences would be able to use the datacenter for their own internal operations. Currently, we provide services for all eight of our conferences, plus Southern Adventist University, and many of our conferences' senior academies. We

praise the Lord that we can provide these co-location services to our Southern Union institutions at absolutely no cost to them. Without this service, many Southern Union institutions would be forced to pay for public, third party, cloud-hosting fees.

Offline Backup as a Service

In the fall of 2015, we launched a new service for our conferences — offline backup as a service. This service will automate local backups of critical church information from our conferences, and will carry those backups securely back to the Southern Union datacenter for long-term archival. These backups will then be placed offline, meaning that the systems on which they are stored will be powered off and disconnected, thus providing further protection against data breach intrusion and loss. Data backup is job one for any IT department. But, equally as important as having backups is to make sure that the backups are stored offsite and offline, and are archived for long-term storage. The Southern Union is now able to provide this service to the conferences at no cost to them. By keeping the Church's critical information local (stored within the Church, and not in a public, third party, cloud-hosting facility), we believe that we can safeguard the digital resources of the Church. Offline, offsite backups help to insulate and protect from catastrophic events such as natural disasters, fires, and data loss, as well as protecting from Ransomware, or individuals that may seek to harm the Church and her mission.

Video Conferencing

In our constant search for new, improved ways of supporting the ministries inside the Southern Union, we have found a sizable opportunity with video conferencing.

In this last quinquennium, we implemented a locally hosted, full-featured video conference system that allows us to be much more connected with our eight conferences and their many schools, pastors, and students, as well as with our peers from sister institutions (NAD,

ARM, etc.). It is a tremendous cost-savings tool, often eliminating travel costs as well as saving time, which frees resources to be used in other areas.

We have four professional video conference rooms at our new office that are being frequently used to connect to other institutions' video conference systems, as well as to computers or mobile devices. At the same time that they can see and talk to each other, they can work on documents shared on the screen. Its wide range of supported devices and quality of service makes it the perfect tool for our field. Jim Davidson, secretariat for the Southern Union, shared this while working on a project: "Videoconferencing has been a tremendous tool for the constitution and bylaws committee to more efficiently perform their work. It has resulted in a savings in both time and money. We are grateful to be able to utilize this service."

Ministry Continuity

Because of the breadth and scope of the work that we do on behalf of your conference, the Southern Union administration has directed the Information Technology Services Department to create a "Ministry Continuity" plan, so that services and resources continue to be available even when the Southern Union Datacenter is offline. A ministry continuity plan is similar to a disaster recovery plan, except that the focus is on preserving ministry during difficult, challenging times. To that end, we have partnered with Adventist institutions both inside and outside the Southern Union to make available their datacenters, so that we can replicate our data to our equipment located in these datacenters. We feel it is important to note that we have partnered with two Adventist institutions, thereby avoiding the expense and potential data exposure that comes from public third party public cloud providers. By using our sister institutions, we ensure that we have multiple copies of data that can be brought online as quickly and efficiently as possible. ●



PHOTO BY: R. STEVEN NORMAN III

Laura Smith (left), Southern Union women's ministries director; Bonnie Davidson, Southern Union assistant advisor; and Yolanda Smith, Southern Union advisor

Nurture, Empower, Outreach

Women's Ministries

BY LAURA SMITH

The Spirit of God has continued to hover over the Southern Union Department of Women's Ministries during the past quinquennium. We praise God for His faithfulness in guiding and directing women's ministries in the Southern Union.

The activities and ministries of the Women's Ministries Department are couched in the vision and mission statements.

Vision: To be intentional about inviting women to follow Jesus Christ.

Mission: To model Jesus Christ to all women through meaningful relationships and significant ministries.

The Women's Ministries Department

touches hearts and impacts lives through three main areas of focus, nurture, outreach, and evangelism.

Nurture

Nurture affords the department the opportunity to address the spiritual and personal development of women in the Union. Young women are mentored, mothers are encouraged, older women and those who are hurting are supported. In the Southern Union we nurture with a purpose:

Spiritual Development — Reaching Up

- Emphasis is placed on women get-



Laura Smith, director



PHOTO BY: R. STEVEN NORMAN III

Nearly 1,100 women from around the Southern Union and beyond attended the Southern Union Women's Ministries Conference in Charleston, South Carolina, September 5-8, 2013.

ting to know Jesus Christ on a personal level and sharing their experience with others so that they might get to know, love, and serve Him. Spiritual growth activities include annual women's retreats, small groups, friendship evangelism, and discipleship classes.

- Women are encouraged to experience God through prayer and praise, and through a study of His Word. Two conferences in the Southern Union have initiated well-organized and highly spiritual early morning call-in prayer ministries with hundreds of consistent prayer warriors online daily. Major victories have been won. Churches participate in the Women's Ministries International Day of Prayer, and conduct small group Bible studies utilizing studies designed specifically for women.

Personal Development — Reaching In

- Women are encouraged and challenged to be intentional about caring for their health.
- Health seminars are presented with standing room only during women's retreats.

- Walking and aerobic exercise classes are scheduled as early morning activities during Camp Meetings and women's retreats.
- Women are encouraged to focus on healthy dietary practices for themselves and their families.

Social Development — Reaching In and Out

- Women thrive on meaningful, inclusive relationships. Meaningful relationships are fostered and developed through small groups, prayer breakfasts, secret sisters, and ladies' night out.
- New members are discipled and included in the activities of the church.

Empower and Equip — Reaching In and Out

- Women are empowered and equipped for service through training programs.
- Women's ministries leaders assist women in discovering, developing, and using their spiritual gifts and talents in service to God and mankind.
- Conference women's ministries

directors are provided continuing leadership training during the annual Southern Union Administration and Departmental Council, Women's Ministries Advisory meetings, and during local conference empowerment weekends.

Outreach

Outreach provides women opportunities and resources to reach out to those who come within the sphere of their influence. Specifically, women are empowered to reach women in the community who need a touch from Jesus Christ.

Union, conference, and local church leaders provide opportunities for women to reach out during Women's Retreats, Women's Conferences, God in Shoes Ministry, Free Spa Day, and Nursing Home Visitation.

A September to Remember — Two Victories in Historic Charleston, S.C.

Two awesome, incredible opportunities were planned and executed for Charleston, South Carolina, during the months of August and September 2013. The plans included an evangelistic meeting, Charleston for Christ, supported by



PHOTO BY: R. STEVEN NORMAN III

The Southern Union women's ministries leadership team includes Nicolle Brise' (seated, left), Southeastern Conference; Mary Jo Dubs, Georgia-Cumberland Conference; Laura Smith, Southern Union; Yolanda Smith, Southern Union advisor; Debbie Rapp (standing, left), Carolina Conference; Shirley Scott, South Central Conference; April Hobbs, Gulf States Conference; Gail McKenzie, Kentucky-Tennessee Conference; and Sylvia Wilson, South Atlantic Conference.

the Carolina and South Atlantic conferences; and the second Southern Union Women's Conference, FREE INDEED, sponsored by the Southern Union in collaboration with women's ministries directors of the eight conferences in the Union.

Charleston for Christ

The first victory occurred during the evangelistic meeting when 32 men, women, boys, and girls accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and became baptized members into the family of God.

Following the evangelistic victory, the stage was set for the second victory to be experienced. The Southern Union Women's Conference convened September 5-8, 2013, when nearly 1,100 women from across the Union and beyond arrived for the Conference.

The theme for the gathering was "One Voice, One Vision — Reaching

UP, OUT, ACROSS." The theme encompassed the entire conference. The vertical reach was realized through the messages of the speakers and presenters, the prayer intensive, and the inspiring music. The horizontal reach touched the lives of hundreds of women when more than 230 women and collegiate young women reached out to impact lives of women in the community. The reach across was evident in that attendees reached across generational lines. New to the women's conference was the addition of the awesome collegiate young women's track. Sixty-two university students from Oakwood University, Southern Adventist University, and several other universities within the Southern Union territory came together to worship, study, and fellowship together. The collegiate track afforded opportunities for students to attend seminars designed especially for them; engage in in-depth Bible study and group discussions; and

enjoy great food, fun, and fellowship. To God be the Glory!

FREE INDEED Women's Convention

The women of the Southern Union joined forces with women from across the North American Division in Orlando, Florida, at the Rosen Shingle Hotel for the NAD Women's Ministries 2014 FREE INDEED Women's Convention. The Southern Union was a gracious host Union:

- Supported the convention with attendance
- Served as seminar presenters, ushers, and monitors
- Coordinated the Intensive Prayer Sessions
- Made and delivered colorful hats for cancer patients in the Florida Adventist Hospitals with other Union attendees

Advisory and Mission Trip

The Southern Union Women's Ministries executive committee scheduled a combined Women's Ministries Advisory with a mission trip to the Bahamas in 2015. The mission trip afforded opportunities for the committee to impact the lives of senior citizens who are housed in the Mary Ingraham's Home for Senior Citizens. The residents were blessed by a morning worship experience, received gift bags with personal items, and enjoyed a personal touch (hand massages and finger nail manicures). The preschool boys and girls housed on the same campus were given books for their classroom library, were involved in age-appropriate hands-on learning activities, and received a cuddly bear dressed in a Southern Union shirt. The third opportunity for mission outreach came as we purchased and presented to the Centreville Seventh-day Adventist Church a large brazier to enhance their soup kitchen ministry for homeless and needy men, women, and young children. The Southern Union women also assisted by serving soup and cleaning the kitchen.

ENDITNOW (Adventists Say No to Violence Against Women and Girls)

Women's ministries continues to join forces with the General Conference and the North American Division Women's Ministries departments in their global efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. In the Southern Union we raised an awareness of the various forms of abuse, and the magnitude of the problem. In 2015 conferences highlighted ENDITNOW with a major emphasis on abuse awareness and prevention.

The Southern Union initiated the writing and publication of a sharing book, *The Dynamics of Domestic Violence*, by Mable Dunbar, to be distributed by the thousands in the Southern Union. Churches have held seminars to educate the members and the public about abuse, and have held public rallies against abuse in all of its forms. High

profile ENDITNOW rallies have been held in Montgomery, Alabama; Miami, Florida; and Atlanta, Georgia.

Evangelism

Evangelism, with an emphasis on both public and friendship evangelism during this quinquennium, has challenged women to make evangelism a way of life and not an event. Women were trained and called into conducting public evangelism campaigns in addition to being intentionally involved in friendship evangelism that included prayer ministry, home Bible studies, mentoring, nurturing, and kindness ministry. The evangelistic efforts resulted in baptisms.

Young Women's Ministries

Each conference has developed ministries for young women and girls. The goals for this ministry are to spiritually uplift and nurture; to assist young ladies in recognizing and appreciating their self-worth and their purpose in Christ; to identify and develop their God-given talents and abilities; and to enjoy a connection with Jesus Christ and others through Bible study, prayer, community services, kind deeds, wholesome recreation, and other activities.

Women's Retreats

Retreats continue to be a source of spiritual renewal, inspiration, and fellowship for the women in the Southern Union. At the retreats, women have been blessed to have their specific and diverse needs addressed through the messages of dynamic speakers, seminar presenters, prayer groups, and other activities.

Women's Ministries Sabbaths

Churches observe the Sabbaths designated by the General Conference and the North American Division — International Day of Prayer, Women's Ministries Emphasis Day, Special Women's Ministries Offering Day, and ENDITNOW Emphasis Sabbath.

Sincere Gratitude

To God be the glory, for truly great things He has done for His daughters in the Southern Union. Women's ministries initiatives have been showered with countless blessings.

I am sincerely grateful to the Southern Union Women's Ministries executive/planning committee members for their continued commitment to guiding and nurturing the growth and development of the department. There continues to be an emphasis on maintaining a high level of spirituality within each element of the ministry. I am thankful for the directors' tireless efforts and leadership in their local conferences, and for their assistance at the Union level.

My heartfelt appreciation is also extended to Ron C. Smith, D.Min., Ph.D., president of the Southern Union; Jim Davidson, executive secretary; Randy Robinson, treasurer; Dennis Millburn, undertreasurer; and Lessie Scurry, executive assistant to the president and executive secretary, for their outstanding support of women's ministries.

As We Look to the Future

Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, women will continue to utilize their God-given gifts and talents to touch lives, and to invite individuals to accept and follow Jesus Christ.

Twenty years have passed since the Women's Ministries Department was voted full departmental status by the General Conference at the 1995 Session in Utrecht, Netherlands. Women's ministries impacts the lives of the majority of constituents in the Southern Union. As we look to the future, we praise God for what He has done and for what He will do.

I solicit your prayers that God will continue to shower His blessings upon the Department of Women's Ministries. 🙏

INSTITUTIONAL REPORTS

He said in a loud voice,
“Fear God and give him glory,
because the
hour of his judgment has come.
Worship him who made the
heavens, the earth, the sea and the
springs of water.”

REVELATION 14:7 NIV



Extending the Healing Ministry of Christ: A Mission of Hope, Health, and Healing Anchored by Our Legacy

Adventist Health System

BY DON JERNIGAN, PH.D.

This month, Adventist Health System and its sister health care organizations are celebrating 150 years of health ministry, beginning with the opening of the Western Health Reform Institute in Battle Creek, Michigan. Medical pioneers of the Seventh-day Adventist Church established an innovative health care program in 1866, looking to the healing ministry of Christ for inspiration.

During a time when many medical treatments were as harmful as the diseases they

were intended to cure, the revolutionary health care center not only treated illnesses and ailments, but also taught people how to prevent them through good nutrition, exercise, and hygiene. It was a place where each person was valued as a creation of God, and where caregivers created a healing environment focused on providing extraordinary whole-person care. Their commitment and philosophy continue today in hundreds of hospitals, nursing homes, and clinics around the world.

Among those, Adventist Health System is known as a national leader in quality, safety, and patient satisfaction; and is composed of 46 hospital campuses and numerous physician practices, other health care facilities, and providers across 11 states. Our 78,000 caregivers have touched more than 20 million lives during the past five years. Although separated by geography, each of our facilities is united under the mission of *Extending the Healing Ministry of Christ*. We continue the



Don Jernigan, Ph.D., president/CEO of Adventist Health System in Altamonte Springs, Florida



Mac the Medic, Gordon Hospital's Superhero of Safety, teaches children about safety issues.

tradition of whole-person care by practicing and sharing CREATION Health, a blueprint for living a healthy, happy life based on the principles given in the Bible's Creation story: Choice, Rest, Environment, Activity, Trust, Interpersonal relationships, Outlook, and Nutrition.

A Unique Ministry Opportunity

Everyone will be touched by health care at some point in their lifetime. It doesn't matter your race, ethnicity, family history, or religion — until the Lord returns, we will all have this need. It is a simple truth that many who live in the communities we serve may never visit an Adventist church. Many may never send their children to an Adventist school. But, most will experience the Church's ministry of healing through our facilities, caregivers, and community programs. We believe this is our unique ministry opportunity amidst the broader work of the Church.

In our Union alone, Adventist Health System operates 32 hospitals with a long history of community impact, which also translates to a measurable increase in awareness of Adventism across the Southern Union.

Focused on Growing Communities

One of Adventist Health System's core values is stewardship, and we have been intensely focused on this principle for the past five years. We believe that, by being good and charitable stewards of our resources, we are able to seek out new opportunities to improve the wellbeing of the communities we serve. Through our CREATION Health

Grants program, between 2012 and 2015 we were able to fund 19 initiatives that help infuse our CREATION Health philosophy into the areas that need it most. In 2016, we established the CREATION Health Institute that will develop innovative, evidence-based approaches to extending this important health ministry to those we serve.

At the corporate office, we have established a comprehensive community involvement program, establishing partnerships with six local organizations such as a charitable medical home for low-income residents; a science incubator that promotes career readiness in the high-demand fields of science, technology, engineering, and math in students from grades 6 to 12; and central Florida's United Way, the largest funder of the region's most critical health and human services programs. Our employees participate through donations and, most importantly, their time to these organizations and their spirit of service, and resulting impact has been tremendous.

Beyond the Cure

In February, Adventist Health System holds its most important annual meeting — Conference on Mission — an opportunity to bring delegations from our health care entities together with those from across our Church network to collaborate on ways to further extend our mission in the work we do, as well as to educate on new programs being put in place. The 2016 meeting was focused on going beyond the cure — delivering care to an individual does not end when our ability

to cure them falls short. We discussed our important responsibility to continue to provide emotional and spiritual support beyond what physical medicine can offer.

We have also devoted significant time at our recent conferences to discuss the wellbeing of our physicians — identified as a great need across the industry as a whole. Adventist Health System was asked to partner with Harold Koenig, M.D., a researcher with Duke University, in his unique study of the attitudes and behaviors of physicians related to the role of spirituality in the care they provide. Physician participation far exceeded original expectations, providing Koenig a wealth of information to analyze. We are looking forward to his report and the insights it will provide.

Our Vision for the Future

At the top of Adventist Health System's vision statement, you will find a text that serves as inspiration to all that we do.

"Seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you... because if it prospers, you too will prosper," Jeremiah 29:7.

We believe that we have a clear responsibility to do everything we are able to not only provide healing, but offer peace, comfort, and prosperity to those we touch, as Christ did when He was on Earth.

We invite you to join with us as we celebrate our long legacy of health ministry as a Church, while looking ahead toward the next five years and the opportunities they will bring to continue sharing His touch. ●



CELEBRATING A
LEGACY
150 YEARS
OF ADVENTIST
HEALTH CARE

CELEBRATING
150 YEARS OF **HOPE**
**HEALTH &
HEALING**

ON SEPTEMBER 5, 1866, James and Ellen White, along with other church pioneers, opened the Western Health Reform Institute in Battle Creek, Michigan—signaling the beginning of our Seventh-day Adventist church's rich legacy of health ministry.

Adventist Health System hospitals in the Southern Union are celebrating this milestone and wish to thank and honor the hundreds of thousands who served with excellence and compassion in building this legacy. But most importantly **WE HONOR GOD FOR HIS ABUNDANT BLESSINGS** evidenced through the last 150 years.

AdventistLegacy150.com



ADU is nestled between two lakes in Orlando located within Florida Hospital's Health Village.

Training to Treat the Whole Person

Adventist University of Health Sciences

BY MEGHAN BRESCHER

Adventist University of Health Sciences (ADU), formerly Florida Hospital College of Health Sciences (FHCHS), has been blessed with remarkable growth and change since opening its doors in 1992. Located in Orlando, Florida, with an additional site in Denver, Colorado, ADU has a unique mission to develop skilled professionals who live the healing values of Christ.

Students from all around the world have been called to study at ADU, drawn to its mission of treating patients as a whole person — mind, body, and spirit, much like the way Jesus healed the sick. The institution saw a demand to meet the needs of these individuals and the ever-evolving

healthcare industry, and answered that demand by becoming a university in 2012.

“Our new name doesn’t change who we are; it is a reflection of who we have always been, and allows us to offer more options to our students,” states David Greenlaw, D.Min., president of ADU.

Next year marks the 25th anniversary of the University that grew from a college offering just four associate degree programs to where it is today, an institution offering bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees. While ADU continues to offer high-value undergraduate degrees, the greatest area of growth has been within its graduate programs. With only the master of science in nurse anesthesia program in existence in

2010, ADU has since added master’s degrees in occupational therapy, healthcare administration, and physician assistant studies.

The University continued to see rapid growth, and in 2015 the institution added its first doctoral degree in physical therapy. In order to accommodate the new programs, a 60,000-square-foot building was constructed in 2014, complete with state-of-the-art lab space, simulation centers, a conference center, and a new home for the Office of the Registrar.

The ADU Denver location has also expanded, and is now offering degrees in radiography, sonography, and nursing. Its students have the privilege of conducting



Students take time out of their day to connect with God inside ADU's Chapel.



A favorite studying spot for students, The Garden of Miracles, displays a stylized depiction of one of the healing miracles performed by Jesus.

their clinical visits in the five Adventist hospitals within the Denver area.

ADU has educated thousands of graduates who view their work as God's work. The University understands that it takes more than just clinical skills to be an effective healthcare professional; it takes heart. This idea of teaching students how to care for a person as a whole person, as a loved one, not only sets ADU graduates apart, but also enhances patients' overall experience.

"Healing is not just treating an illness; it goes beyond that. It is the prayer shared with a patient, a smile, the compassion given to those in need — and our unique mission to 'live the healing values of Christ' provides our students with the skills needed to care for every patient, every time," explains Edwin Hernandez, Ph.D., provost of ADU.

This mission accompanied by the four vision words of Nurture, Excellence, Spirituality, and Stewardship, serves as a beacon for faculty, staff, and students, guiding them toward a clear purpose.

The University is associated with the number one hospital in Florida, Florida Hospital, and one of the largest healthcare organizations in the nation, Adventist Health System. This partnership gives students access to thousands of clinical opportunities in world-class facilities where they learn on state-of-the-art equipment. This hands-on learning prepares students for the cutting-edge healthcare field they strive to be part of.

ADU takes pride in its physical space

and its unparalleled clinical access to premier healthcare facilities, but the backbone of ADU's success is in the quality and professionalism of its academic faculty. Class sizes are kept small to ensure each student receives individualized attention from professors that truly nurture and encourage them to succeed.

Adventist University of Health Sciences is incorporating increasing levels of inter-professional coordination and training among the programs, helping students understand the commitment and dedication it takes to work as a team for positive patient outcomes.

ADU has a commitment to mission, and a culture on campus that is student-centric and geared toward student success. In order to provide the best possible academic support for its students, the University recently created centers of writing, tutoring, and simulation.

ADU continues to find ways in which it can enrich the spiritual lives of its students, and has put mission at the forefront of everything it does with the establishment of the Institute for Mission. The Institute is tasked with weaving the essence of ADU's mission into the fabric of everyday experience, and creating an environment where students can deepen their relationship with God, and begin to understand why God called them to work in healthcare. The goal is to prepare graduates to extend the healing ministry of Christ in the clinical environment.

As Jesus provided his ministry to the community, ADU continues to follow in His footsteps. The Hope Clinic was created to serve the uninsured and underinsured in the central Florida area. ADU students work with their professors to bring their skills to patients in need. Currently providing services in occupational therapy and physical therapy, the Hope Clinic will continue to grow and expand to include nearly all of the clinical programs at the University.

Additionally, ADU has teamed up with Florida Hospital in the creation of the Community Health Transitional Care (CHTC) program. In the CHTC program, ADU students are paired with Florida Hospital staff members who compose a team that follows up with recently discharged patients in their homes to reduce readmission rates and increase positive patient outcomes. This program allows ADU students to practice healthcare stewardship.

Graduates from Adventist University of Health Sciences go on to improve the health and vitality of the communities they serve. They extend the healing ministry of Christ to each and every patient they treat, and offer not just exceptional clinical care, but compassion through the work they do. ADU's commitment to educating the next generation of healthcare leaders is firmly grounded in Christian principles, and is committed to producing professionals that emulate the healing values of Christ. ●



Strategic Progress

Oakwood University

BY LESLIE N. POLLARD, PH.D., D.MIN., M.B.A.

President Leslie N. Pollard took to the stage on January 25, 2011, to give his inaugural address to the Oakwood University community. This speech known as “Vision 2020” ignited the air with its passion and ambition for the future of Oakwood. The next step following the vision casting was to intentionally move from Vision 2020 to setting strategic goals across the next 24 months. Believing that there is no progress without a plan, seven strategic goals were identified and set. What follows is a report on the goals, sample actions, and the results of the last quinquennium’s strategic movements which advanced the mission of Oakwood University.

University Mission and Culture

4HIM Missions

We launched 4HIM Mission programs in an effort to provide greater service opportunities for students seeking to broaden their education and life experiences through humanitarian service. The missions program provides real-life expression of the institution’s mission to promote service to God and humanity. Since implementation, 4HIM Mission has conducted international mission trips to Kenya, Malawi, and Madagascar, as well as national excursions to more than 10 cities, involving students, employees, and community volunteers.

Discipleship through Baptism and New Ministries

From 2011 to 2015, the Office of Spiritual life has baptized 115 individuals at Chapel and AYM Release programs, in addition to those students baptized at the Oakwood University Church through Oakwood University Week of Prayer services, PowerPacked Weekends, men’s and women’s conferences, and varied ministries. OSL also sponsors Student Chaplain’s Development, supports BAYDA Youth Congress, coordinates our annual Campus Ministry Fair, facilitates our Campus Ministry Council, and supports a number of other student-led ministries.



Leslie N. Pollard, Ph.D., D.Min., M.B.A., addresses the Oakwood University body as well as invited guests at his inauguration on January 25, 2011.

Educational Effectiveness

In maturing the university status adopted in 2008, we created a new organizational structure for Oakwood University. The academic organization of the “Division” made the transition to a “School” structure in 2013. Now the 16 academic departments are organized under the Schools of Arts & Sciences, Nursing & Health Professions, Business, Education & Social Sciences, and Religion, with deans of the schools serving as lead academic administrators.

Given the challenges in retention across our Adventist institutions, in 2016 we also created two new dean positions — a dean of student enrollment and career services, and a dean for student success. The dean for student enrollment and career services provides leadership to the processes that ensure that students can successfully be recruited, enrolled, graduate and be placed in gainful employment positions or graduate studies. The dean for student success coordinates the resources of the institution to support both high achievers and underperforming students. The services that support these endeavors are all located in Cunningham Hall, providing a

“one-stop shop” for registration, enrollment, and student success.

Learning Supportive Environments

In facilitating a nurturing environment that is sensitive to the needs of students and supportive of the academic mission of the institution we:

- Provided tutors for the Living Learning Centers in the residence halls in support of the academic mission of the institution.
- Launched wholistic programming that helps define the “Oakwood Woman/Man.”
- Made residence hall renovations totaling more than \$7 million.

Research and Employee Development

Facilitating development of our research infrastructure and assuring exceptional performance of faculty and staff through the utilization of best-in-class talent acquisition, management, and employee development is key to the mission fulfillment of Oakwood University.

We established the LifeCore© Re-

search Center to understand the spiritual life of students. To date the survey has been administered three times: 2011, 2013, and 2015. Findings allowed the campus to understand the spiritual commitments and needs of the student body. Findings led to creation of the Spiritual Life Master Plan for the campus by the Office of Spiritual Life.

During the 2015-2016 Student Orientation and Registration Week, Oakwood University launched its new program — Healthy Campus 2020, an initiative that seeks to make the University the healthiest collegiate campus in the United States. University faculty and staff will educate the students to be healthy through eight laws of health: sunlight, temperance, adequate rest, nutrition, drink water, outdoors, use physical activity, and trust in God (STAND OUT).

Advancement and Development of the University

The Office of Advancement & Development secures the University through increased philanthropy and fund development. The generous support of Oakwood’s alumni and friends is vital to the success of the only Adventist historically Black college and university (HBCU) in North America.

- We successfully won Home Depot “Retool Your School” Campus Improvement program and secured the grant: \$50,000 (2013), \$25,000 (2014), \$50,000 (2015), \$20,000 (2016). Oakwood is the only four-time winner of the competition in its history!
- We received both the largest corporate gift (\$2M) and largest individual gift (\$1.2M) in Oakwood’s history.
- As advancement has been charged with the development of “goodwill,” there has been a concerted effort to increase the marketing and public relations of the University by:
- Increasing production of Oakwood Magazine to four times per year.
- Establishing a Marketing Department to enhance the branding of the

Financial Health Ratios

| YEAR | 2013 | 2014 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | TARGET |
|---|------|------|------|------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Primary Reserve Ratio How long can OU operate without additional net asset? | 59% | 65% | 59% | 65% | 63% (7.5 months) | 40% (5 months) |
| Return on Net Assets Ratio Does assets performance support the strategic direction of OU? | 9% | 6% | 9% | 6% | 8% | 4-8% |
| Net Income Ratio Is OU living within its available resources? | 9% | 4% | 9% | 4% | 4% | 2-4% |
| Viability Ratio Is debt managed strategically to advance OU? | 3.77 | 2.66 | 3.77 | 2.66 | 2.82 | 1.25 to 2 |

University and assist departments with advertising.

Fiscal Growth, Responsible Management, and Long-term Stability

The Oakwood University Division of Financial Administration is dedicated to fulfilling its role in the University's overall mission of service to God and humanity with a view to Oakwood's "God First" motto. In spite of the global declining economic conditions, Oakwood University continues to maintain financial solvency due to a committed Board of Trustees, responsible administrative leadership, disciplined fiscal management, and a host of supportive constituents. As of the 2015 audit, observable successes include the following.

In maintaining a sustainable and viable organization, we implemented a series of financial efficiency and cost reduction measures designed to grow into our envisioned future. Such measures allowed the organization to see five consecutive years of revenues exceeding expenses.

As we seek to move away from tuition dependence, we launched our Revenue Diversification Strategy and purchased

two Edible Arrangements franchise stores. This provides student employment and future dollars for operations and scholarships. Operating two locations allows us to employ 15-plus students/graduates throughout the year.

Operational and Technological Leadership

This goal improves operational efficiency and creates a seamless infrastructure capable of expanding educational and service opportunities.

Title III Federal Program for Strengthening HBCUs

We received grant funding from the Department of Education in the amount of \$8,920,618 over the last four years. Title III grant funding supported initial phase of the virtualization projects began in April 2015, resulting in the development of the virtual infrastructure which consolidated 24 servers. The development of the virtual infrastructure has prepared the foundation to begin the utilization of Cloud computing. Cloud leverages all the capabilities of a virtual environment. More than \$207,730 has been expended in phases I and II of the

virtualization project.

Oakwood University Broadcasting Network

The University provided students with practical laboratory instruction and experience in various forms of media production.

Information Technology

Microsoft 365 Exchange was launched as the new campus-wide electronic service to create a more collaborative work and school environment.

Since our founding in 1896, Oakwood University has viewed education as an indispensable preparation for wider service to God and to the human family. Thousands have in their lives of service embodied the blessings of our motto: "Enter to learn, Depart to serve." In this, our 120th year, we extend our appreciation to the dedicated students, alumni, faculty, staff, and administrative team for their inspiring commitment to the mission of the University. Oakwood's robust future is lit by a bright providence, grounded in our living memories of His bountiful blessings. (The rest of a 52-page report can be found at www.Oakwood.edu.)

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Transforming Tomorrow

Southern Adventist University

BY GORDON BIETZ, D.MIN.

Southern recently graduated its largest ever class of students, and has been listed as a Top Tier school by U.S. News and World Report for 14 consecutive years. Despite these exciting figures, numbers are never our primary goal. The things we can measure — new degrees offered, financial aid awarded, square footage added — are pursued and celebrated only for their capacity to support a traditional Adventist education that nurtures the transformational academic and spiritual experiences of students.

Academics and Student Success

One of the primary characteristics all Southern's faculty and staff share is

prayerful dedication to student success. With programs designed to assist them academically, financially, socially, and spiritually, by the time students graduate they are ready to pursue their calling and live out the values of truth, wholeness, and service modeled for them at Southern.

21st-Century Student

Southern's students come from all 50 states and more than 30 countries. The ACT scores and GPAs of our incoming freshmen are at record highs, and the University had 16 National Merit Scholars in 2015. But, the Southern Experience moves beyond just good grades; it's a holistic education that keeps all areas of a student's

well-being in mind. More than 2,000 of our students participated in Christian Service programs in 2015, approximately 25 students each year take classes in another country through Southern's study abroad program, and students stay active with more than 50 percent of them participating in intramurals each year.

New Academic Programs

Since 2011, Southern has added several curriculum options for students. For example, undergraduate students may now earn degrees from the vegetarian culinary arts program or the global policy and service studies program. Graduate students now have the option of pursuing a mas-



ter's in global community development or social work, or even a doctor of nursing degree! Southern strives to offer relevant degrees that meet the demands of today's job market.

General Education Requirements Reduced

Southern's University Senate recently voted to reduce the number of required general education credit hours from 56 to 45, providing students with more flexibility to take electives, switch majors, or commit to mission work. The new criteria took effect beginning in the Fall 2016 semester.

School of Nursing

The School of Nursing has expanded in the last few years to meet the demands of both eager students and employers anxious to hire Southern graduates. The addition of a full summer cohort, beginning in 2015, means more students than ever before now have the opportunity to enter our nursing program. The new doctorate program, added in 2012, offers emphases in several areas.

Enactus

Enactus is an international nonprofit encouraging students to use their business skills to solve problems in communities, organizations, and the world. Southern's Enactus team won the Enactus Regional Competition, and later placed third in their league during the first round at the national competition. The 2015-16 projects included working with a local non-profit (Veteran Empowerment Training) and

partnering with Babcock University to reduce mosquito-borne illnesses within a Nigerian community.

Financial Aid

Southern strives to make Christian education affordable. Since 2011, more than \$55 million in institutional grants and scholarships has been awarded to students. Southern now offers five renewable scholarships at 100 percent for up to four years. Besides the scholarships awarded to students who maintain high grades and participate in extracurricular activities, there are also scholarships for students who work at Adventist camps over the summer, work as literature evangelists, or dedicate a year as student missionaries. For more information, visit southern.edu/scholarships.

Accreditation

In December 2015, Southern celebrated 65 years of accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. As part of the most recent accreditation process, the University embarked on a "Living In Balance" quality enhancement plan (for details, see the Health and Sustainability section in this article). We continue to provide quality education while reaching milestones such as this.

Campus Expansion and Renovations

Since the 2011 school year, Southern's campus has grown by 300 acres. With the continual support from the Southern Union constituents, not only have we add-

ed more spaces to give students the opportunity for an Adventist education, but we're also raising the bar for our facilities and resources.

Summerour Hall

Our newly renovated education and psychology building reopened in 2014; its primary upgrade was 7,000 square feet of new facility space. Faculty and students are the primary beneficiaries of this renovation, but the building serves community members as well. Summerour Hall contains Southern's Teaching Materials Center, which offers more than 15,000 curriculum materials and instructional aids to teachers (public or private), homeschooling parents, and Sabbath school leaders. The building is also home to office space where the community receives free counseling by master's-level students who are under the direct supervision of on-staff psychologists.

Origins Exhibit

The Origins Exhibit, housed on the second floor of Hickman Science Center, opened in 2012. It features a museum-quality exhibit which offers an understanding of origins from a creationist worldview. Hallways of the Biology Department are used as an exhibit space, and a self-guided walking tour is available to both students and the community. The exhibit is the culmination of more than four years of planning and \$300,000 dollars in donations. Faculty and staff continue to work on educational materials about creation and evolution that are scientifically



accurate and biblically sound. For more information, visit southern.edu/faithand-science.

McKee Library

McKee Library has worked closely with the academic community on campus to provide services that facilitate research, writing, and scholarly activities. A total of 3,500 square feet of space were recently added — the result of a new pitched roof that created a full third floor to the building — and will create additional opportunities for learning. The Writing Center conducts more than 2,700 peer tutoring appointments each year and the library's institutional repository (knowledge.e.southern.edu) features more than 1,000 papers, most of which are student research projects. By participating in Campus Research Day, the library's biannual event, students gain real-world experience conducting a professional presentation. It continues to grow each semester, with the 2016 spring event featuring 387 students.

\$50 Million Capital Campaign

Southern publicly announced the Campaign for Excellence in Faith and Learning in April. The campaign's goal is to raise \$50 million, nearly triple of any previous campus campaign, with more than \$30

million already raised in cash and pledges. The money will go to various components, including construction of a new student center and other facility improvements, increased endowments for scholarships and research, the continued greening of campus, and annual giving. For more information, visit southern.edu/webelieve.

Bietz Center for Student Life

Part of Southern's Campaign for Excellence in Faith and Learning, the Bietz Center for Student Life is projected to open in fall 2018. It will be located between McKee Library and Hickman Science Center where Herin Hall formerly stood. The center is estimated at more than 40,000 square feet, costing \$13 million. Large open areas for spiritual gatherings, study, and recreation will be the hallmark of this building. Initial campus groups scheduled to move into the new space include the Chaplain's Office, Student Missions, Student Association, the Christian Service program, and student organizations.

The Sabbath Trail

In 2013 donors gave 300 acres adjoining campus on Bauxite Ridge to the University, a gift worth several million dollars. In 2015, construction began for 12 new miles of hiking and biking paths, including a two-mile loop called The Sabbath Trail. This trail traces the history of Sabbath from Creation to the New Earth and was inspired by the Sabbath Trail in Washington, New Hampshire. Its estimated cost fell around \$330,000 for signs, parking lot, lighting, bathrooms, and an access road. With this new trail, students, faculty, and the community will have the opportunity to experience the Sabbath in an expanded and unique way.

Spirit-led Projects and Ministry

Through mission trips, local projects, archaeological digs, and ministry within the Southern Union, students are experiencing a call. They have the opportunity to see Christ in action both locally and abroad — and to be the hands and feet of Christ themselves! In the same way that our original leaders dedicated themselves to spreading His message to all corners

of the globe, Southern and its students are making a difference now.

Summer in Ministry

The new Summer in Ministry internship program offers theology students the opportunity to work full time under the mentorship of a church pastor while earning scholarship money toward tuition. This past summer 14 students spent eight to 12 weeks working for churches throughout the Southern Union. This internship allows students to not only gain excellent real-world experience, but also helps them return to Southern with a renewed passion and purpose in ministry.

Student Missions and Evangelism

In the 2015-16 school year, 65 students served as long-term missionaries, and 138 participated in short-term mission trips. Student Missions enhances campus spirituality by equipping students to serve others in the name of Christ. Additionally, the School of Religion's Evangelistic Resource Center has sent students of all majors to preach around the world since 2001. In the last five years, more than 11,000 people were baptized as a result of these summer evangelistic trips.

SALT

SALT (Soul-winning And Leadership Training) is a dynamic evangelism training program on Southern's campus that offers fully accredited college classes, a Bible worker certification, and hands-on training in partnership with It Is Written. Founded in 2011, SALT continues to grow with both a semester program in the fall and a week-long summer intensive each July. Many graduates of SALT take full-time positions as gospel workers, often times alongside the It Is Written team. For more information, visit southern.edu/salt.

Archaeological Digs

Excavations in Israel by Southern's Institute of Archaeology yielded two of Christianity Today's Top 10 biblical discoveries for 2015. Crews at the dig sites found a ceramic piece with writing that dates to 1130 B.C., and a jar inscribed with a name from the era of King Saul. Both in-



dicate writers were skilled enough to have penned scriptural texts at an earlier time than previously believed. Students join faculty and staff each summer for excavation work that strengthens their academic and spiritual understanding of the Bible.

Christian Service Program

In 2011, Southern formally established the Christian Service Program, making service-learning (volunteer work that uses academic training) and community service a part of the general education requirement. In a four-year college career, students will complete approximately 40 hours of service work, at a minimum. In 2014 the Christian Service Program applied for a grant from the Lily Foundation and was awarded more than \$42,000 to be used for faculty training on the integration of vocation and service. Part of the funds also went toward creating and teaching a class for freshmen on the same topic.

Health and Sustainability

Whether students are working around campus, playing Frisbee by the Duck Pond, or exercising on the track, Southern strives to create a healthy campus in every sense of the word — a campus that promotes balanced living, positive recreational activities, and a dynamic atmosphere.

Thatcher Farm

In 2012, the University established Thatcher Farm, a seasonal row-crop gar-

den producing vegetables for use both on campus and in the community. The farm was started as a part of the Global Policy and Service Studies program to teach students how to produce healthy food without harming the environment. Recently, Thatcher Farm was gifted five acres adjoining campus. This new space effectively quadruples the existing location’s gardening capacity. The farm’s goal is to ultimately allow students to take what they’ve learned and teach it to others, especially on mission trips to third-world countries and beyond.

Solar Panel System

Southern installed a 200-kilowatt solar panel system on the roof of the Services Department building in 2012. With 832 panels in total, it is the second largest solar panel system in Chattanooga. The considerable undertaking originated as a student-led project with the campus organization Enactus (formerly SIFE), and contributed to the institution’s strategic goal of taking on a greater role in environmental sustainability. The electricity produced by the system, enough to power 40 average-size houses, is purchased by the Tennessee Valley Authority. For more information, visit southern.edu/green.

Quality Enhancement Plan

Southern’s Quality Enhancement Plan — a term academic accrediting agencies use to describe a carefully designed course

of action that addresses a topic related to learning on campus — is called “Living in Balance.” The program centers on increasing student wholeness through physical activity. Since 2012, students are required to complete one physical activity course per year. These classes incorporate different assessments that help measure students’ growth and physical progress.

Healthy Workplace Award

Southern recently received the 2014 Governor’s Healthier Workplace award from the State of Tennessee for meeting all 32 of the program’s requirements and being an involved community advocate for wellness. Additional areas where the University excelled were the health-related lunch and learn programs, employee participation in group activities such as intramurals, and the availability of hiking and biking paths. ●



Southern Adventist University

has resources just for you!

JOIN US ON CAMPUS

Archaeology Exhibit Opening, September 12

Lynn H. Wood Archaeological Museum, Hackman Hall

The newest exhibit at Southern's archaeology museum, "A World in Miniature: Creation, Cosmos, and Ecology on Seals from Biblical Times," brings together approximately 65 ancient seals and artifacts from the Yale Babylonian Collection at Yale University, the Siegfried H. Horn Archaeological Museum at Andrews University, and the Badè Museum at Pacific School of Religion. Objects reflect how ancient cultures during biblical times understood the existential questions of origins, worldview, and their relationship with the natural environment.

For more information, visit southern.edu/archaeology.

Archaeology Symposium, November 15

9 a.m. to 12 p.m., 3-5 p.m., 7:30 p.m., Lynn Wood Hall

Specialists on seals and iconography from Europe, Israel, and the United States will participate in a full day of paper presentations and lectures on the topic "A World in Miniature: Creation, Cosmos, and Ecology on Seals from the Ancient Near East." The symposium concludes with an open house in the Lynn H. Wood Archaeological Museum.

For more information, visit southern.edu/archaeology.

JOIN US ONLINE

Southern's weekly vespers programs, held in the Collegedale Church sanctuary, are broadcast live each Friday evening at 8 p.m.

To view online, visit southern.edu/streaming.

WE'LL COME TO YOU

We have abundant resources representing numerous areas of expertise.

Let Southern help when planning for guest speakers, workshops, music, and drama programs at your church or school. southern.edu/resourceguide

Visit Us

Southern welcomes visitors all year long, and we invite you to come and experience our beautiful campus for yourself. If you know of someone looking to attend a Christian university, prospective students have several options for a scheduled visit to Southern. For more information, go online to southern.edu/visit.



SOUTHERN
ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

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SESSION DELEGATES

CAROLINA

Delegates (23)

Richard Anderson
Steve Bietz
Ernie Boughman
Brenna Boulanger
Peter Cousins
Jeff Donaldson
Bradley Durby
Samuel Garcia
Chad Grundy
Ralph Henderson
Ben Kochenower
Won Lee
Roosevelt Marsden
Gary Moyer
Les Rilea
Jose Rivera
Richard Russell
Laurentiu Serban
Linda Stamp
Randy Tryon
Donald Wetmore
Andrew Williams
Charles Williams

Delegates-at-Large (5)

Leslie Louis
Ivan Blake
Sam Bonham
Bonnie Connelly
Matt Stockdale

FLORIDA

Delegates (65)

Rodolfo Alvir
Wilny Audain
Dave Boggess
Martin Butler
George J. Carrazana
Brad Cassell
Walter Castro
George Charles
Diane Cooper
R. Laffit Cortes
Nanette Cruz
Sherril Davis
Katherine Deering
Rudy Deering
Rolando de Los Rios
Javier Diaz
Efrain Duany Jr.
Conrad Duncan
Melanie Gallagher
Tim Goff

Frank Gonzalez
Daniel Graham
Abraham Guerrero
Claudette Harding
Rhonda Harper
Stephen Herr
Candace Huber
Onix Vladimir López
Orlando Lopez Jr.
Orlando Lopez Sr.
Amado Luzbet
Allan Machado
Les McCoy
Mervin Morgan
Robert Murphy Jr.
Tim Nichols
Josephine Oates
Naomi Olson
Abel Paulin
Pedro Perez
Cicely Poleon
Elisa Rahming
Luis Reyes
Carmen Rodriguez
Juan Rodriguez
Odalys Rodriguez
Duane Rollins
Jorge Rumayor
Frank Runnels
Dan Schiffbauer
Alex Schlusler
Judy Smith
Harold Sookie
Robert Stevenson
Stephen Stewart Sr.
Deidre Taylor
Glenn Timmons
John Trimarchi
Kathy Trumper
Vicki Turner
Jesus Uriarte Sr.
Alexander Vaz
Morris Weir
George Williams
Philip R. Younts

Delegates-at-Large (6)

Mike Cauley
Keith Harding
Rose Beavers
Eric Cantillo
Jack Leach
Mark Schiefer

GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND

Delegates (40)

Kurt Allen
Luis Alonso
Debbie Baker
Mickey Bankhead
Brian Bergherm
Gordon Bietz
Samuel Bulgin
Walter Cross Sr.
Harold Cunningham
Martin Cunningham
E.W. Dempsey
MaryJo Dubs
Danny Garcia
Greg Gerard
Nancy Gerard
Rick Greve
Gerald M. Hazekamp
Michaela Lawrence Jeffery
Stephen Kelley
Dave Ketelsen
Kevin Kossick
Rob Lang
Tim Leffew
Victor Maddox
Marcos Monterde
Mateus Nanbu
Garry Nudd
Greg Payne
Neil Reid
Gary Rustad
Dennis Starkey
Robert Thompson
Kim Thompson
Miguel Tirado
Miguel Valdivia
Pete Weber
Joshua Woods
Steve Wrate
Gerald Yang
Charles Young

Delegates-at-Large (4)

Ed Wright
Fred Myers
Tiffany Swinney
Milagros Tomei

GULF STATES

Delegates (13)

Linda Carter
Brian Danese
Jerome Edmeade

Martin Fancher
Brittney Halversen
Richard Halversen
Robert Keeler
Jaime Pombo
Michelle Pombo
Elizabeth Rodriguez
Michel Rodriguez
Edric Spracklen
Teri Spracklen

Delegates-at-Large (3)

Dave Livermore
Tui Pitman
Kathy Aitken

KENTUCKY-TENNESSEE

Delegates (16)

Tony Alexander
Robbie Anderson
Michael Richard Cauley
Steven Caza
David Clark
Rocky Davis
David Hartman
Doug Hilliard
Daniel McFeeters
Julie Murphy
Harold Roddy
Steve Rose
Kathy Ross
Heidi Ruckle
Melvin Santos
Ken Wetmore

Delegates-at-Large (2)

Steve Haley
Nick Bradley

SOUTH ATLANTIC

Delegates (49)

Max Beltrán
Patrick Carter
Eric Carson
Elizabeth Chaparro
Sylvia Coleman
Everton Ennis
Mary Floyd
Alvin Freeman
Kim Gaiter
Mark Golson
Ortrene Gordon
Nathanael Gracia
Katherlyn Hailey

SESSION DELEGATES

Teresa Hairston
Eugene Hamilton
Lawrence Hamilton
Nathaniel Hollis
Dorothy Jackson
Larry E. Johnson
Beulah Kilpatrick
Don E. Kim
Gerald LaFargue
James Lamb
Joyce-Ann Madison
Eugene Mason
Beverly McKenzie
Carl McRoy
Carl Nesmith
Maria Newlove
Charm Nichol
Donna Phillips
Efrain Poloche
John Pooler III
Teresa Posey
Melvin Preston
Juan Reyes
Stephen Ruff Sr.
Oscar Sherrord
David Smith
Jean F. Smith
Helen Taylor
Alex Todd
Jean H. Toussaint
Ishmael Uribe
Melvyn Warfield
Donovan Washington
Calvin Watkins Jr.
Richard Watkins
Ronnie Williams

Delegates-at-Large (6)

William Winston
Calvin Preston
Walter Davis
Joyce Hairston
Cheryl Simmons
Robert L. Thorpe

SOUTH CENTRAL**Delegates (35)**

Jermaine Alexander
Raymond Bandy
Jennifer Bennett
Rupert Bushner Jr.
Alina Butler
Carlton P. Byrd
Sonja Crayton
Tiffney Gipson

Harold Goodloe
Joe Grider
Vandeon Griffin
Kymone Hinds
Deon Johnson
Douglas D. Johnson
Paul Jones
April Lee
Sharon Lewis
Java Mattison
Clifton McMillan Sr.
Dorian Melo
Lola Moore
Merkita Mosley
John Nixon Sr.
Valeria Norwood
Judy Ross
Benjamin Sellers
Jonathan Smith
Nelson Stokes
Carolyn Taylor
Willie Taylor
Antonio Tinsley
Dayami Valdespino
Levester Williams
Laurene Williams-Brown
Jeannie Wright

Delegates-at-Large (6)

Benjamin Jones
Kennedy Luckett
Sandra Hawkins
James McGriff
Aubrey Shoemaker
Temika Simmons

SOUTHEASTERN**Delegates (51)**

Roosevelt Alexis
Roger Alvarez
T. George Aristide
Arnold Beauvais
Canute S. Brown
Mark Brown
Tamara Bowden
Emmanuel Charles
Everis Clarke
Curtis Crider
Arnaldo Cruz
Ricardo Daphnis
Barbara Davis
Colma Duvra
Sandra Fletcher
Pierre Francois
Gerly Germain

Patricia Goffe
Olinto Groce
Renee Hodge
Marcellus Howard
Edson Jarvis
Israel Jean-Leon
Prince Lewis
Evans Loctar
Nicolas Louis
Nicola McClymont
Lawanna McCoy
Tiffany McNealy
Robert Moore
Abel Morrobel
Leonard Newton
Michael Owusu
Robert Patterson Jr.
C. Anslem Paul
Donald Paul
David Peay, Sr.
Joyceline Poole-Dudley
M. Curtis Powell
Murray Ramnarine
Bryant Taylor
Bienvenu Theodore
Jean Vilus
Patrick Vincent
Willie L. Walker
Gweneth Walters
Carl E. Ware Sr.
Earline Washington
Mithra Williams
Clarence Wright
Theus Young

Delegates-at-Large (6)

Gregory Mack
William Byrd
Ronald Brisè
McKinley Crockett Jr.
Carlotta McKenzie
Betty Stewart-Fullwood

SOUTHERN UNION**Delegates-at-Large (43)****Administration**

Ron C. Smith
Jim Davidson
Randy Robinson
Dennis Millburn
Carlos C. Salazar
Departmental Directors & Associates
Diana Ahler
Amireh Al-Haddad

Ken Ford
Debra Fryson
Roger Hernandez
Jim Ingersoll
Kevin James
Lynell LaMountain
Tamara Libonati
David Long
Kristina Mace
Jorge Mayer
Steven Norman
Keith Reid
Ralph Ringer
Ken Rogers
Diane Ruff
Milton Sand
Laura Smith
William Smith
Richard Stephenson
Nathan Zinner

ADVENTIST HEALTH SYSTEM

Lars Houmann
Roscoe Howard III
Don Jernigan
Terry Shaw

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

David Smith
Robert Young
Tom Verrill

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FALLEN SOLDIERS

A tribute to former Southern Union employees who passed between
September 2011 and September 2016



Maurice Abbott
Former Church Ministries Director
Passed March 7, 2013



Fernon Retzer
Former Sabbath School /
Religious Liberty Director
Passed April 5, 2012



Ouida Jeanne McWilliams Lowe
Former Receptionist
Passed January 26, 2015



Ward Sumpter
Former Executive Secretary
Passed November 8, 2013



Ron Halvorsen
Former Union Evangelist
Passed May 15, 2015

History of the Southern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

R. STEVEN NORMAN, III

“The church is God’s appointed agency for the salvation of men.” E. G. White

Since 1901, the people of the Southern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists have sought to allow God’s Spirit to flow through them by means of the evangelistic, healing, educational, and nurturing ministries they offer to communities throughout the Southeastern portion of the United States.

I. The Early Period

Shortly after the Seventh-day Adventist church was organized in 1863, the General Conference was presented with requests to begin work in the South. Ellen White asked church leaders gathered for the 1865 General Conference to join the denominations that were beginning to work in the South. Other requests came from Southerners who read literature that their Northern friends and relatives sent to them. These requests for preachers to work in the South began to appear in pages of the Review.

After an initial period of hesitancy, people began to respond to the calls to work in the South. The first was Elbert B. Lane, who responded to a call for preaching in Edgefield Junction near Madison, and just 13 miles north of Nashville, Tennessee, in March of 1871.

Lane baptized five. He returned in May 1873 and organized a church of 13 members. There were four white families and a black minister, Harry Lowe, in the church.

Later that year, Squier Osborn visited Kentucky and conducted evangelistic meetings at Springville, Kentucky, across the river from Portsmouth, Kentucky, (*SDABC 10*, Kentucky-Tennessee). The Springville Church was organized in 1874, (*ibid*).

C. O. Taylor went to North Carolina in 1876. He organized a church in Sands out of which the Valle Crucis and Banner Elk churches were formed, (*Hansen*, p. 31). The present Valle Crucis Church was organized May 15, 1881, (*SDABC 10*, Carolina Conference).

The first African-American church was organized at Edgefield Junction in 1883 by Samuel Fulton, Tennessee Conference president. It had approximately 12 members.

II. Formation General District #2 – 1890

At the General Conference of 1883, C. O. Corliss, pastor, gave the report for the General Southern Mission. He reported that there were 267 white Sabbath keepers and 20 colored, (*Hansen*, p. 33).

Ellen White wrote several *Testimonies*

in which she appealed for workers to go work among the African-Americans in the South. Her son, James Edson White, read these *Testimonies* during the fall of 1893, and decided to go work in Mississippi. He and Will O. Palmer built a boat, which he called the Morning Star, and traveled to Vicksburg, Mississippi. He arrived on January 10, 1895, and, within eight years, Edson raised up 20 schools and churches, organized the Southern Missionary Society, the Herald Publishing House, and the Nashville Colored Sanitarium.

To strengthen the work in the South, the General Conference District #2 was formed in 1890 to provide supervision of the work. Its headquarters was in Graysville, Tennessee, and Robert M. Kilgore was the superintendent, (*Yearbook 1891*, pp. 48, 49). At the close of its first year, Kilgore reported that there were five ministers in the field, serving 19 churches with a total of 383 members. The total District #2 tithe was \$2,921.15.

Some of the institutions within the territory were the Graysville School (1892), Oakwood Manual Training School (November 1896), the Southern Missionary Society (1898), the Review office in Atlanta, and several sanitariums.

When District #2 was formed there were



The first office was at 1025 Jefferson Street, Nashville, Tennessee (1901-1907)



Second office was 2123 24th Avenue, Nashville, Tennessee (1907-1932)



437 East Ponce de Leon, Decatur, Georgia (1936-1964)



3978 Memorial Drive, Decatur, Georgia (1964-2014)

only four conferences within its territory: the Cumberland Conference (1900), Kentucky Conference (1879), Tennessee River Conference (1889), and Florida Conference (1893).

III. Southern Union Organized

Ellen White visited Vicksburg, Memphis, and Nashville, Tennessee, in March 1901. While in Nashville, she met with some of the leaders in General Conference District #2. From Nashville she traveled to the General Conference Session with a recommendation that union conferences be formed. On April 9, 1901, the Southern Union Conference was organized with Robert M. Kilgore as president to oversee the Church's work in Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. The membership was approximately 2,000 members.

Later that year, new conferences were organized in the Carolinas (September), Georgia-Cumberland (August), Alabama, and Mississippi.

The first office was at the Herald Office at 1025 Jefferson Avenue, Nashville, Tennessee. When the Southern Publishing Association opened, the Southern Union Conference shared office space there at 2123 24th Avenue North, Nashville. The first official news organ for the Union was the *Report of Progress*, which first appeared in 1907.

IV. Southern Union Divided Into Two Unions

January 12, 1908, the Union was divided into the Southern Union and Southeastern

Union.

The new Southeastern Union covered the states of Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and East Tennessee. It also included the Bahamas Mission. It opened with temporary offices at various locations in Atlanta, but, in time, found permanent housing in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

The Southern Union Conference territory included Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. Its headquarters remained in Nashville until 1932.

V. Southern Union Reorganized —1932

In 1932, the Southern and Southeastern Unions were merged as a means of reducing expenses during the Great Depression, but without the inclusion of Louisiana and the Bahamas.

The headquarters was located 4502 Brainerd Road, Chattanooga, Tennessee, from 1932 through 1936 when the Union moved to 437 Ponce de Leon, Decatur, Georgia.

In December 1945, the South Atlantic and South Central conferences were organized. They began operations January 1, 1946. In December 1980, it was voted to divide the South Atlantic Conference and establish the Southeastern Conference. Southeastern began operations January 1, 1981.

Under the leadership of visionary men who were used by the Holy Spirit, strong evangelistic

ministries were increased and the membership grew. As a result, the Union outgrew the small office on Ponce de Leon. In 1964, a new office was built at 3978 Memorial Drive in Decatur. And then in 1973/4, a second office building was built to house the growing Home Health Education Service.

VII. Maximizing The Present, Poised For The Future

Today, the Southern Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church has more than 280,000 church members, and a multi-disciplinary organization of ministries and institutions, which includes eight conferences, 1,047 churches, around 100 early childhood centers, 186 elementary schools, 16 academies, three universities, 47 hospital campuses, nine summer camp programs, and nine radio stations.

This growth has necessitated a move to our new 59,000-square-foot office at 302 Research Drive, Norcross, Georgia. With a memory of God's hand in our past, and a prophetic vision of the future, we take and firmly trust God's hand to guide step by step.



302 Research Dr., Norcross, Georgia (2014-present)

SOUTHERN UNION PRESIDENTS 1932-PRESENT



S. A. Ruskjer
1932-1935



G. A. Roberts
1935-1936



J. K. Jones
1936-1943



Earl F. Hackman
1943-1947



V. G. Anderson
1948-1957



Don R. Rees
1957-1964



Leroy J. Leiske
1964-1965



H. H. Schmidt
1965-1980



Alfred C. McClure
1980-1990



Malcolm D. Gordon
1990-2003



Gordon L. Retzer
2003-2011



Ron C. Smith
2012-present

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|--|-----------------|
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| + ACLS RENEWAL | \$150 |
| PT/PTA, LPN, RN | |
| THURSDAY AND FRIDAY SEMINARS | \$60 |
| + ACLS RENEWAL | \$115 |
| ACLS RENEWAL ONLY* (FRIDAY 8AM-3PM) | \$85 |
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DAVID SMITH, PH.D.
President, Southern Adventist University



JOHN S. NIXON SR., D.MIN.
Executive Secretary of the South Central Conference

CONTINUING EDUCATION SPEAKERS

PHYSICIANS/PRACTITIONERS (6 hrs)

- 1 David DeRose, MD, MPH

DENTISTS/HYGIENISTS (6 hrs)

- 2 Alan S. Herford, DDS, MD, FACS

OPHTHALMOLOGY/OPTOMETRY (6 hrs)

- 3 David Dwight Markoff, MD, FACS
- 4 Grace Oh, MD

NURSES (6 hrs)

- 5 Holly Gadd, PhD, FNP-BC
- 6 Barbara James, PhD
- 7 Frances Johnson, DNP, APRN, NNP-BC
- 8 Michael Liedke, DNP, ACNP-BC
- 9 Lilly Tryon, MSN, APN, FNP-BC

PT/PTA (9 hrs)

- 10 Laura Podschun, PT, DPT, OCS, COMT, CSCS



**EARLY BIRD RATE
EXPIRES
SEPT. 15, 2016**

ACCREDITATION STATEMENTS

PHYSICIANS/DENTISTS/ALL ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

ACCREDITATION STATEMENT:

This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with Essential Areas and policies of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education through the joint providership of Loma Linda University School of Medicine and Southern Union Conference. The Loma Linda University School of Medicine is accredited by the ACCME to provide continuing medical education for physicians. Loma Linda University School of Medicine designates this Live Activity for a maximum of 7.0 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)™. Physicians should only claim the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

This program has been planned and implemented in accordance with ACCME essentials and standards. The Loma Linda University School of Medicine Office of Continuing Medical Education relies on its CME faculty to provide program content that is free of commercial bias. Therefore, in accordance with ACCME standards, any faculty and/or provider industry relationships will be disclosed and resolved.

(Maximum CME for attending Dr. DeRose Total Course is 6.0 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)™ and a maximum of 7.0 contact hours may be obtained by attending Current Concepts in an Evidence-based Approach to Examination & Treatment of the Hip.)

NURSES

ACCREDITATION STATEMENT:

This continuing nursing education activity was approved for 6.0 CEU's by the Tennessee Nurses Association, an accredited approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.

DENTISTS/HYGIENISTS

ACCREDITATION STATEMENT:

This course meets the Dental Board of California's requirements for 6 units of continuing education.

OPHTHALMOLOGY/OPTOMETRY

ACCREDITATION STATEMENT:

All courses for Optometry have been COPE qualified for 6 continuing education units.

PHYSICAL THERAPISTS

ProCert has awarded certification in the amount of 9.0 Continuing Competence Units (CCU's) to this activity.

NURSE PRACTITIONERS

This activity is approved for a maximum of 7.0 contact hour(s) of continuing education by the American Association of Nurse Practitioners. Program ID 16062213. This activity was planned in accordance with AANP CE Standards and Policies (A Maximum of 7.0 contact hours may be obtained by attending Current Concepts in an Evidence-based Approach to Examination & Treatment of the Hip.)

NURSE ANESTHETISTS

This program has been prior approved by the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists for 6.00 Class A CE credits; Code Number 1033174; Expiration Date 10/8/2016.

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Legal Notice

Florida Conference Constituency Meeting

October 9, 2016

Notice is hereby given that the 71st Regular Constituency Meeting of the Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will be held on October 9, 2016, Sunday, at 10:00 a.m. (registration begins at 9:00 a.m.) in the Forest Lake Academy main auditorium, Apopka, Florida. This Constituency Meeting is called for the purpose of electing officers and Executive Committee members for the ensuing term and the transaction of such business as may properly come before the meeting. Each church in the Conference is entitled to one delegate, plus one additional delegate for each 75 members or major fraction thereof.

Mike Cauley, President
 M. Carmen Rodriguez, Secretary

Legal Notice

Florida Conference Association Constituency Meeting

October 9, 2016

The quadrennial meeting of the members of the Florida Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists, a Florida corporation, will be held on October 9, 2016, Sunday, at 10:00 a.m. (registration begins at 9:00 a.m.) in the Forest Lake Academy main auditorium, Apopka, Florida, for the purpose of electing the Association officers and Board of Trustees for the ensuing quadrennium and for consideration of such other matters as may properly come before the meeting. The members of this corporation are the members in regular standing of any church of the Florida Conference of Seventhday Adventists, and all active members of the Florida Conference Board of Trustees and Southern Union Conference Executive Committee. Only those members present who are duly elected and accredited delegates of the Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists shall be entitled to vote at their Regional meeting and at the Constituency Meeting.

Mike Cauley, President
 Phil Bond, Secretary

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BCJA/GAAA ALUMNI WEEKEND 2016 - SEPT. 30-OCT. 2. The theme this year is “A Family Reunion.” BCJA/GAAA will be celebrating 110 years of Christian Education. The speaker for Divine Worship will be Dr. Carlton P. Byrd. We have a packed weekend full of fun, food, and fellowship! The ticketed events (Sabbath lunch, Basketball game, and 5K Run/Walk) can be purchased in advance on Eventbrite at bcja.eventbrite.com. For more information, contact Lauren Hastings at lauren.hastings@hotmail.com or Nicole Barron at nbarr28@gmail.com.

MADISON ACADEMY ALUMNI WEEKEND - OCT. 7, 8. Come reconnect, reminisce, and reinvest in your academy friendships and alma mater! Please RSVP and update your contact information by emailing Development@madisonacademy.com or call 615-865-4055, x116. We will celebrate all graduates, but especially honoring classes ending in 1 or 6. We look forward to reconnecting with you!

FLETCHER ACADEMY ALUMNI WEEKEND - OCT. 7-9. Fletcher Academy Campus. Please update your contact information at agibbs@fletcheracademy.com, 828-209-6704. We will celebrate landmarks for all classes ending in 1 or 6, most notably the special honor classes of: 1966, 1976, 1991, and 2006. Details: www.fletcheracademy.com.

SOCIETY OF ADVENTIST COMMUNICATORS 2016 ANNUAL CONVENTION - OCT. 13-15. SAVE THE DATE — Celebrating 27 Years of Communication Excellence! Theme: “Keep Climbing.” Hyatt Regency in Denver, Colorado. Join Seventh-day Adventist communication professionals and university students from all around the North American Division for training, networking, and spiritual renewal opportunities. Additional details: www.adventistcommunicator.org.

HOPE TRENDING: A CRASH COURSE ON HOW TO LIVE WITHOUT FEAR - OCT. 14-22. A fresh new worldwide evangelistic event with Dr. Dwight K. Nelson. Talk to your local pastor about Hope Trending today, and visit hopetrending.org to learn how you can join us for this nationwide event and spread hope to your community.


APOPKA CHURCH CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF SERVICE - OCT. 28, 29. Guest speaker is Mike Cauley, president of the Florida Conference, and a musical concert by Charles Hauga-brooks. All are welcome to attend the Celebration in Apopka! Details: www.apopkasdachurch.com/ or apopkas-da@gmail.com, or 407-889-2812.

AN ACF CHAPTER NEAR YOU! - Adventist Christian Fellowship (ACF) is our Church’s ministry that supports Adventist students who attend

public colleges and universities. The on-campus groups are called ACF chapters. When students talk about their ACF experience, they use words such as “home away from home,” “belonging,” and “spiritual growth” to describe the positive impact an ACF community has had on their lives. So students, if you’re not already connected to an ACF chapter on or near your campus, be sure to connect quickly this semester, long before life becomes really hectic. There are currently nine active ACF chapters: ETSU, Emory, Georgia Tech, Georgia State, KSU, UGA, UTC, UTK, and UWG. Two developing chapters are Georgia Southern University and Lincoln Memorial University. For more information such as ways to contact each chapter, visit our website: www.acfgcc.org and click on Chapters.

SUNSET

| | SEP. 2 | SEP. 9 | SEP. 16 | SEP. 23 | SEP. 30 |
|-----------------|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| ATLANTA, GA | 8:01 | 7:52 | 7:42 | 7:32 | 7:22 |
| CHARLESTON, SC | 7:43 | 7:33 | 7:24 | 7:14 | 7:05 |
| CHARLOTTE, NC | 7:48 | 7:38 | 7:28 | 7:18 | 7:08 |
| COLLEGEDALE, TN | 8:06 | 7:56 | 7:46 | 7:36 | 7:26 |
| HUNTSVILLE, AL | 7:11 | 7:01 | 6:51 | 6:41 | 6:31 |
| JACKSON, MS | 7:23 | 7:14 | 7:05 | 6:55 | 6:46 |
| LOUISVILLE, KY | 8:10 | 8:00 | 7:49 | 7:38 | 7:27 |
| MEMPHIS, TN | 7:25 | 7:15 | 7:05 | 6:55 | 6:45 |
| MIAMI, FL | 7:38 | 7:31 | 7:23 | 7:15 | 7:08 |
| MONTGOMERY, AL | 7:08 | 6:58 | 6:49 | 6:40 | 6:31 |
| NASHVILLE, TN | 7:13 | 7:02 | 6:52 | 6:42 | 6:31 |
| ORLANDO, FL | 7:45 | 7:37 | 7:29 | 7:20 | 7:12 |
| WILMINGTON, NC | 7:36 | 7:26 | 7:16 | 7:06 | 6:57 |



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ADVENTIST ISRAEL TOUR WITH PASTOR JIM GILLEY AND FRIENDS. Two trips this fall, September 26-October 4, \$3,099.00. November 28-December 6, \$2,499. Includes all tips, taxes, air, and breakfast and dinner buffets daily. From New York, other departure cities available. Call Jennifer at 602-788-8865 or Pastor Jim at 530-368-3301. Join us! [9]

NEW ENGLAND ADVENTIST HERITAGE TOUR October 7-17. Visit Noah's Ark, built to Bible size, Ohio's Bible Wax museum, Edson, Miller, Bates, & Ellen White sites, Sturbridge Village among other places. 16 states & 17 sites. Alice Voorheis & Betty Knickerbacker, Historians. Heritage tours, tarriegeiger@gmail.com, 423-802-9617. [9]

WANTED - PICTURE ROLLS: If your church has picture rolls that they are not using, they would be a blessing to mission work in Kenya. Send to P.O. Box 100, Campbellsburg, KY 40011. You can look online at www.biblesforafrica.com for more information. [9]

Following God's Calling




Foster Robinson was a selfless, gentle giant of a man. In his early adult life he worked as a lumberjack in northern California, and then joined the US Army Air Force where he rose to the rank of sergeant. After World War II, he joined the U.S. Merchant Marine where he sailed the world until his retirement.

He settled down in the north-central Kentucky area where he was "adopted" by his Gratz Church family, and served the church community in many roles, even into his 90s.

Always a faithful giver, Foster contacted his local Conference's Trust Services Department to make plans for his humble assets to be used for the Lord's Work at his death. When he passed away last year, his entire estate benefited his local church and the work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America and around the world.

▶ Your local conference and university Trust Services and Planned Giving staff are ready to help you make a difference for the causes that God has put on your heart to support. Contact your local representative today!

Carolina
Rick Hutchinson (704) 596-3200

Florida
Phil Bond (407) 644-5000

Georgia-Cumberland
Mitch Hazekamp (706) 629-7951

Gulf States
David Sigamani (334) 272-7493

Kentucky-Tennessee
Silke Hubbard (615) 859-1391

Oakwood University
Lewis Jones (256) 726-7000

South Atlantic
Lawrence Hamilton (404) 792-0535

South Central
Michael Harpe (615) 226-6500

Southeastern
Juan Gonzalez (352) 735-3142

Southern Adventist University
Carolyn Liers (423) 236-2818



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CAROLINA

MEN'S RETREAT - Sept. 2-4. NPR.
HISPANIC CAMP MEETING 2 - Sept. 9-11. NPR.
ADULT SABBATH SCHOOL WORKSHOP - Sept. 16-18. NPR.
HISPANIC WOMEN'S RETREAT - Sept. 30-Oct. 2. NPR.
WOMEN'S RETREAT - Oct. 7-19. NPR
LE FALL CAMPOUT - Oct. 14-16. Myrtle Beach, SC.
EASTERN CAROLINA CAMP MEETING - Oct. 22. Greenville North Church.
DEACONS' & DEACONESSES' RETREAT - Oct. 28-30. NPR.
CAROLINA PASTORAL SPOUSES' RETREAT - Nov. 4-6. NPR.

FLORIDA

COMPLETE CALENDAR ONLINE - www.floridaconference.com/events/
SINGLES' MINISTRIES EVENTS. Spiritual study groups, fellowship dinners, outings, and more. Details: djmiller4000@gmail.com or 407-703-3050.
ADVENTIST HEALTH MINISTRY LEGACY CELEBRATION - Sept. 17. Calvary [Assembly] Orlando Church, 1199 Clay St., Winter Park. 10 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. A celebration of our health ministry legacy and acknowledgement of employees who have served. Speaker: Dan Jackson.
PLANNED GIVING CLINIC Oct. 1. West Palm Beach Spanish Church.
71ST REGULAR FLORIDA CONFERENCE CONSTITUENCY SESSION - Oct. 9. Forest Lake Academy, 500 Education Loop, Apopka. Quadrennial business meeting for Florida Conference. Theme: "How God Has Led Us."
FLORIDA ADVENTIST BOOKMOBILE SCHEDULE Resumes in October.
RETIRED DENOMINATIONAL WORKERS' AND YOUNG AT HEART RETREAT - Oct. 23-26. Camp Kulaqua, 23400 NW 212nd Ave., High Springs. Featured speaker: Mike Cauley. Details and registration: www.campkulaqua.com/ or 386-454-1351.

GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND

MARRIAGE RETREAT - Sept. 2-4. "It's a Wonderful Life" theme, speakers Eric and Ann Marie Bates, musician Chad Mutcherl. www.gccsda.com/events/37856. Billy Graham Training Center at The Cove, Asheville, NC.
ADVENTURER MINISTRIES CONVENTION - Sept. 9-11. Cohutta Springs Conference Center, Crandall, GA.
HEALTH RALLIES - Be inspired by the latest scientific research in support of

God's natural laws. Sept. 10. 2-5 p.m. Coalfield Church, Oliver Springs, TN.
 Sept. 17. 2-5 p.m. Hixson Church, TN.
PATHFINDER DRILL INSTRUCTOR WEEKEND - Sept. 16-18.
LEADERSHIP REBOOT - Sept. 16-18. A training weekend for Adventist Christian Fellowship.
LET'S MOVE DAY - Sept. 18. North American Division initiative to get as many people in involved in physical activity as possible.
RETIRED WORKERS' RETREAT - Sept. 22-24. Guest speaker: Gordon Pifher, North American Division vice president for media ministries. The event features musical guests and a half-day outing to a local attraction. Register by Sept. 8. Cohutta Springs Conference Center, Crandall, GA.
SELF-SUPPORTING SCHOOL'S PRAYER CONFERENCE - Sept. 22-24. Heritage Academy, Monterey, TN.
HISPANIC YOUTH CONGRESS - Sept. 22-25. Age 15 and up are invited to attend. The speaker will be Roger Hernandez. Camp Kulaqua, High Springs, FL.
NORTHEAST TENNESSEE CAMP MEETING - Sept. 23, 24. Marching to Zion with speaker Roy Gane. The Oak Retreat. Greeneville, TN.
ENGAGE (Leadership Training for those working with youth and young adults) - Sept. 23, 24. Cohutta Springs, Crandall, GA.
MASTER GUIDE CAMPOREE - Sept. 30-Oct. 2. Cohutta Springs, Crandall, GA.
SINGLES' MINISTRIES FALL RETREAT - Sept. 30-Oct. 2. Hot Springs, NC.
DAY OF PRAYER AND FASTING - Oct. 7.
HEALTH RALLY - Oct. 8. 2-5 p.m. EW Dempsey will present on the latest scientific research in support of God's natural laws of health. Meister Memorial Church, Deer Lodge, TN.
SOUTHERN UNION PATHFINDER CAMPOREE - Oct. 12-16. Register by Sept. 19.
7 BRIDGES MARATHON - Oct. 16. Run this great Seventh-day Adventist sponsored race with choices of a marathon, half marathon, 5K, 1K, fun run, and relay options for half and full marathon, sevenbridgesmarathon.com. Chattanooga, TN.
APPALACHIA MISSION TRIP - Oct. 16-20.
ENDITNOW - Oct. 15. Stone Mountain, GA. Some events require pre-registration; details at registration.gccsda.com.

GULF STATES

HISPANIC CAMP MEETING - Sept. 2-4.
CANOEING TEEN INVITATIONAL - Sept. 9-11.
FACE TO FACE MOTORCYCLE FALL RIDE - Sept. 24, 25.
FINANCE BOARD BASS MEMORIAL ACADEMY MEETING - Sept. 26.
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING - Sept. 27.
TEACHERS' CONVENTION - Sept. 28-Oct. 1.

KENTUCKY-TENNESSEE

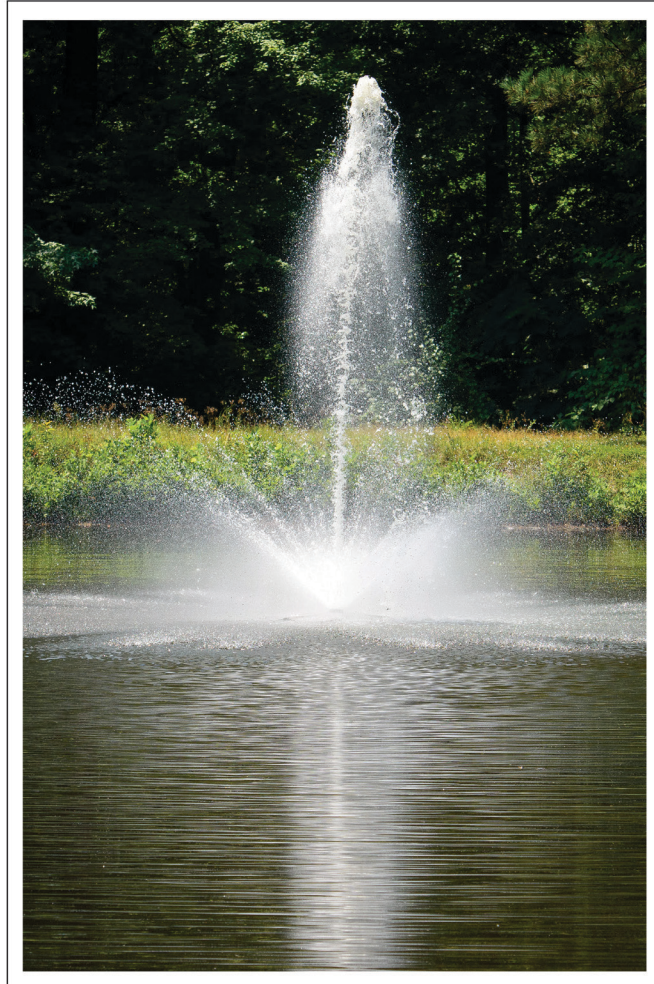
HIGHLAND ACADEMY BOARD - Sept. 8. & Nov. 10. Highland Academy.
YOUNG WOMEN'S RETREAT - Sept. 11. Paradise Ranch.
WOMEN'S RETREAT I - Sept. 16-18. Indian Creek Camp.
YOUTH POWER EVENT - Sept. 21-24. Manchester, KY.
WOMEN'S RETREAT II - Sept. 23-25. Indian Creek Camp.
CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE - Sept. 27. Conference Office.
HISPANIC WOMEN'S RETREAT I - Sept. 30-Oct. 2. Indian Creek Camp.
HISPANIC WOMEN'S RETREAT II - Oct. 7-9. Indian Creek Camp.
MEN'S CONFERENCE - Oct. 21-23. Indian Creek Camp.
BOARD OF EDUCATION - Nov. 3. Conference Office.
ADVENTURER CAMPOREE - Nov. 4-6. Indian Creek Camp.
ELDERS' CERTIFICATION TRAINING - Nov. 11-13. Indian Creek Camp.

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

MUSEUM EXHIBIT OPENING - Sept. 12. The newest exhibit at Southern's archaeology museum brings together approximately 65 ancient seals and artifacts that reflect how cultures during biblical times understood the existential questions of origins, worldview, and their relationship with the natural environment. For more information, visit southern.edu/archaeology.
HOMECOMING - Oct. 27-30. Save the date! Early highlights include the 60th anniversary celebration of Southern's nursing program, as well as a reunion for former Student Services staff, residence hall deans, and resident assistants. Honor Classes include: '936, '46, '56, '66, '71, '76, '86, '91, '96, and '06. For more information, visit www.southern.edu/alumni or call 423-236-2830.
SCHOOL OF NURSING REUNION - Oct. 29. The 60th anniversary program takes place during Homecoming Weekend from 7-9 p.m. in the Chattanooga Embassy Suites Ballroom, and includes hor d'oeuvres and dessert. To reserve your seat, call 423-236-2829 or visit southern.edu/nursing60.

SOUTHERN UNION

SOUTHERN UNION PATHFINDER CAMPOREE - Oct. 12-15. Camp Kulaqua, High Springs, FL.



SOUTHERN UNION CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
302 RESEARCH DRIVE., NORCROSS, GA 30092
770-408-1800 | WWW.SOUTHERNUNION.COM