

# T Southern TIDINGS

OCTOBER 2020



Thank You  
Pastor

EVERY PASTOR  
NEEDS A PASTOR

VIRTUAL PRAYER  
SUMMIT REACHES  
NEW AUDIENCE

CHILDREN'S  
PACKS OPEN  
DOORS

ADRA'S EARLY  
LEADER, RICHARD  
W. O'FFILL, PASSES

# Overwhelmed with COVID-19 Blues, Fear, and Depression?



**Ron C. Smith, D.Min., Ph.D.**  
*President of the Southern  
 Union Conference*

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope,” Jeremiah 29:11 NKJV.

The United States Census Bureau recently reported that a third of Americans show signs of clinical depression and anxiety. These and other mental conditions are becoming amplified during this current pandemic while COVID-19 patients and their families also are at high risk to develop depression and anxiety.

Maurizio Fava, psychiatrist-in-chief within the Department of Psychiatry at Massachusetts General Hospital, is not surprised by the correlation between mental health conditions and COVID-19.

“It’s quite understandable the COVID-19 crisis is likely to cause significant stress and psychological distress for a large proportion of the population,” he says, “and we know the rates are progressively increasing.”

According to Fava, there are various factors related to COVID-19 that contribute to the increase in depression rates, including the following:

- Trauma from widespread disease,
- Grief over losses of life,
- Fear of getting sick,
- Unprecedented physical distancing,
- Financial concerns including unemployment and housing insecurity,
- Loss of community, and
- Reduced access to caregivers.

When we explore the disease called depression from the Bible’s perspective, it drives home the reality that depression is a common, complicated condition, difficult to define, hard to describe with accuracy, and not easy to treat.

Since depression is a clinical term, it is not discussed in the Bible, even though the condition appears to have been common. Psalms 69, 88, and 102, for example, are songs of despair, but you will notice that these are set in the context of hope. In Psalm 43, King David expresses both depression and rejoicing when he writes these words:

“Why am I so discouraged?”, “Why so sad?”, “I will put my hope in God!”, “I will praise Him again”, “My Savior and my God.”

Elsewhere in the Bible it appears that Job, Moses, Jonah, Peter, and the whole nation of Israel experienced depression. Jeremiah the prophet wrote a whole book of lamentations. Elijah saw God’s mighty power at work on Mount Carmel, but when Jezebel threatened murder, Elijah fled into the wilderness, where he plunged into despondency.

He wanted to die and might have done so except for the “treatment” that came from an angel sent by God.

These examples, accompanied by numerous references to the pain of grieving, show the realism that characterizes the Bible. It is a realistic despair contrasted with a certain hope. Each of the believers who plunged into depression eventually came through and experienced a new and lasting joy, even when their circumstances did not change.

The biblical emphasis is less on human despair and more on belief in God and the assurance of abundant life in Heaven, if not on Earth.

Paul wrote, “We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed and broken. We are perplexed, but we don’t give up and quit. We are hunted down, but God never abandons us. We get knocked down, but we get up again and keep going ... for our present troubles are quite small and won’t last very long ... so we don’t look at the troubles we can see right now; rather, we look forward to what we have not yet seen. For the troubles we see will soon be over, but the joys to come will last forever.”

God’s peaceful thoughts of you will foster a bright future and an enduring hope. -RCS 



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# *Anxiety, Stress, Uncertainty...* APPRECIATING OUR PASTORS IN 2020

BY ROGER HERNANDEZ

A deadly pandemic. Racial unrest. Economic crisis. Natural disasters. With just a few months left before a new year, most people are probably ready for 2020 to end, and hopeful that 2021 will be better. Indeed, the current year has been stressful, to say the least, for all of us. But, did you ever think about the stress pastors are under right now? As a pastor, I have some insight. Here are some things we're dealing with: trying to pastor a church with wildly differing political views; ministering to parishioners who are sick with the coronavirus and others who believe it's a hoax, while others either resist or require mask wearing; and then there's a seemingly never-ending stream of grief, social distancing funerals, and the inability to give a needed hug to a person who's contracted COVID-19.

And, let's not forget the exclamations and scrutiny: "Open the church pastor!" "Don't dare open the church pastor!" "Why are you afraid?" "Why are you reckless?"

During October, we celebrate Pastor's Appreciation Month. This year, more than others, we must be extra intentional in letting our men and women in ministry know how valuable they are to our families and communities.

I want to address the congregation and the pastors.

## **For Congregations**

Pastors are challenged in three areas:

1. Anxiety — Many have incredible anxiety that keeps them up at night, and an unquenchable feeling that one day it can all come crashing down. People look to pastors as leaders, both in the church and the community, yet they can at times feel like nothing of the sort. Nobody tells pastors when they go to school that one of the most common myths people believe is that they should have all the answers, and should know what they are doing all the time. I have never met a "successful" pastor that has not, either now or in the past, dealt with insecurities mixed with anxiety.

"It was such a treat to get a phone call from someone who had no agenda, other than to intercede on my behalf."



Thank You  
**Pastor**

Photo: Cassion Information  
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2. Stress — It’s not only about the big four we mentioned at the beginning. It’s that AND being a teacher, or a spouse, or navigating potential dating interests. It can feel like too much at times.

3. Uncertainty — Pastors felt the call and decided at some point to make this not only their calling, but also a career. Suddenly, questions about the future get more attention. What will happen? Will I have a job this year? Will people come back?

**What You Can Do For Your Pastor**

1. Double the positivity. Resolve to be intentional in encouraging the pastor. For each question or concern, double it up with a positive comment. This will also work in non-pandemic times, by the way.

2. Give a gift of counseling. No, not you counseling them, but providing

funds for some counseling sessions — as in multiple sessions. This does not demonstrate a lack of faith or trust in God’s ability. Self-care is not selfish, and counseling and Christ are not in opposition.

3. Pray for your pastor. Pray with your pastor. They are always praying for us. It was such a treat to get a phone call from someone who had no agenda, other than to intercede on my behalf. Ask how you can specifically pray for them, and be very clear about how you will do this.

**For Pastors**

Here are some things pastors should know about anxiety:

Leaders need to be HOT (honest, open, and transparent). Following are some HOT takes.

1. Anxiety is never the root. Under-

stand that anxiety is the child of two parents. Their names are control and approval. In my own experience, I noticed that my anxiety about ministry was a product of either having something out of my control happen, or getting some friendly fire from the people I led. Criticism from a small minority stayed with me. Understanding this helped me. While it didn’t cure the anxiety, it was beneficial to my healing. I had to ask myself: Where is this coming from? Anxiety unidentified is anxiety augmented.

2. Be cognizant of destructive ways of dealing with anxiety. We usually use some of these as coping mechanisms:

a. Escape. Mind shutting vegetation. Binge on TV, social media. Get so busy you don’t have time to think about it.

b. Medicate with food. Most leaders I know have or have had a love/hate

 **Challenges**



Pastors are experiencing many of same challenges as most people this year, including anxiety, stress and uncertainty. There are many opportunities to appreciate pastors through methods that counter these challenges.

relationship with food. For a Church that values health so much, the secret snacking, overeating, unhealthy vegi-food (yes, it's possible to be vegetarian and an unhealthy eater) is seen as an escape. Anxiousness gets us off our sofa and into the pantry.

c. Control. The third way we deal with anxiety is to try to control areas of our lives to overcompensate for areas we clearly can't.

3. Give yourself an opportunity to receive grace. One thing that took me a long time to notice is the reality that there was a gulf between the advice I gave other people and the processes I used on myself. I am passionate about correcting some misconceptions about God, yet I found myself much better at explaining than experiencing. Give yourself time to study, pray, and fast — not to get something from God, but to

experience him for yourself.

4. Try something new. I must be honest. When the pandemic hit, and I saw George Floyd's life (among others) be devalued and dismissed right on my television screen, it was a very difficult time for us as a family, with an African American son-in-law that we listen to and care for. How I personally dealt with it was in two ways:

a. I listened more than I talked. I didn't dismiss, minimize, or use what-about-ism. I listened to the pain, the concern, the reality that was different than mine, but made it no less true.

b. I began something I've never done in my life. I started and developed a YouTube channel. It was a life saver. It provided a renewed sense of purpose, and has been a blessing both for me and others. If you are interested in topics on relationships, health, and faith, check it

out at [youtube.com/pastorrogerhernandez](https://youtube.com/pastorrogerhernandez). There are resources for everyone, and some just for pastors to navigate these truly unprecedented times.

I leave you with a passage that has always been close to me, 1 Peter 5:7 ESV: "Casting all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you."

That means you, pastor. 🕊

**Roger Hernandez** is the ministerial director at the Southern Union Conference.

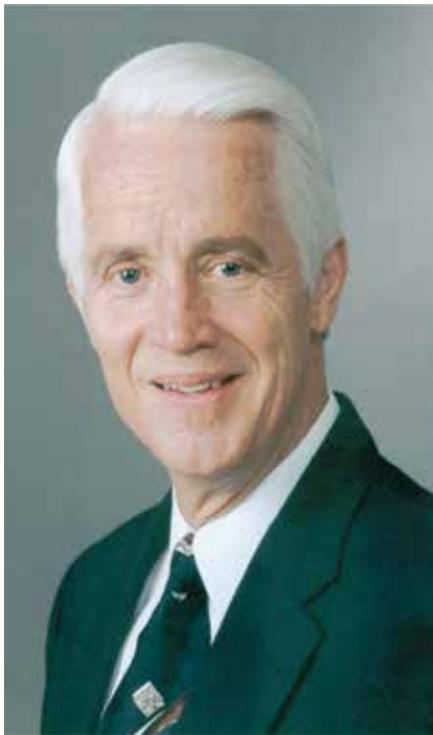
## Solutions



Prayer, receiving counseling, and professional support and trying new endeavors, are some examples of how pastors can receive encouragement and gain a renewed sense of purpose.

# ADRA's Early Leader, RICHARD W. O'FFILL, PASSES

BY ADRA MEDIA



renamed ADRA in 1984. He also spent many years working as a missionary for the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

“Our ADRA family around the world is saddened by the passing of Pastor Richard O’Ffill. He was a remarkable visionary leader and a driving force behind the creation of the Adventist Church’s humanitarian work. His passion for service led him to create many initiatives that helped mold ADRA into the global humanitarian agency it is today,” says Michael Kruger, ADRA’s president. “We are grateful for Pastor O’Ffill’s many contributions to our Church and ADRA, and honor his legacy by inspiring our teams around the world to continue to serve with justice, compassion, and love. We lift in prayer his wife, children, and family, and express our heartfelt condolences.”

“I was impressed by his compassion and love for the mission field. He inspired me as a young man...”

*Rudy Monsalves*

## Life Sketch

O’Ffill dedicated his life to service. He pastored six churches in Ohio and was ordained in 1966 before being called to be a Bible teacher and minister in Pakistan. He returned to the U.S. in 1970 to be the chaplain and Bible teacher of the Auburn Adventist Academy, and pastor of the Auburn Church near Seattle, Washington.

Richard W. O’Ffill, 79, who was instrumental in the founding of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), lost his long battle with Parkinson’s Disease on July 29, 2020, in Orlando, Florida. O’Ffill was the first director of the Seventh-day Adventist World Services (SAWS), which was



Richard O'Ffill (third from right) engages with field missionaries in Pakistan in the 1960s.

His unrelenting dedication to serving the less fortunate led him to Chile in 1972, where he became the first director of SAWS in the region. O'Ffill oversaw relief efforts with OFASA (Obra Filantrópica y de Asistencia Social Adventista), the Adventist Social Assistance Philanthropic Work agency in Latin America.

After returning to the U.S. from Chile, O'Ffill took a leading role in the development of the first U.S. grant provided to the Adventist Church for development projects. He created a plan against malnutrition with the assistance of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to help some 300,000 children in Chile.

"Richard had an amazing intellect for development and relief operations. He had the vision to expand the work of the Church into the field of development. He also understood the need to create a non-profit organization like ADRA, so our faith could be put into action for us to be the hands and feet of Jesus around the world," says Mario Ochoa, who worked with O'Ffill in Chile and the U.S.

O'Ffill concluded his tenure with ADRA in 1984. During his leadership

SAWS and ADRA's field operations grew from five to 50 countries in five years.

"I will always remember Pastor O'Ffill. He was a powerful speaker, who was also fluent in Spanish. He used to do the Mission Spotlight at my church, the Washington Spanish Church, in Maryland. Even before I met him and started working for ADRA in the early 80s, I was impressed by his compassion and love for the mission field. He inspired me as a young man to do in-gathering for SAWS," says Rudy Monsalve, associate director for planned giving at ADRA.

In 1984, O'Ffill was called to lead lay activities, Adventist Community Services, and prison ministries for the Florida Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist. He created the first men's ministries and authored 10 books about the power of prayer and the family and Christian life. O'Ffill's spiritual messages also reached television and radio audiences through the Three Angels Broadcasting Network (3ABN) in the mid-2000s. He was a frequent guest on "Crosstalk," a weekly interview program produced by Layman Ministries.

"My father valued spiritual revival in his church and its members. Even after

retirement he never stopped reaching people and drawing them closer to Jesus. He was a revivalist, always found a way to impact people through his sermons at camp meetings, devotionals, books, and weeks of prayer series," says Richard O'Ffill Jr., director for information technology at ADRA. "When he saw he could reach far more audiences, I helped him build his first website and social media ministry. It created a special bond between us as we became partners in ministry. It amazes me how many people were touched by his life."

O'Ffill is survived by his wife, Betty; two daughters, Cindy and Kathy; two sons, Richard Jr. and Dan; their spouses; eight grandchildren; and other family members.

The O'Ffill family will pay tribute to O'Ffill's life in a private service later this year. Condolences and remembrances are welcomed at: <https://www.facebook.com/richard.offill.1>. 🕯

# Every Pastor NEEDS A PASTOR

BY CAROLYN JOHNSON



SUBMITTED BY: ANNETTE BOYD

**Malissa McKennie, a newly baptized member of the Atlanta Belvedere Church in Decatur, Georgia, is not new to ministry. In fact, McKennie served as a Baptist pastor for many years, preaching and providing a variety of ministries.**

Malissa McKennie is not new to Sabbath worship. She was introduced to and explored the Sabbath while attending seminary, and taught Sabbath worship for many years.

“While Sabbath is the day of rest, every day is a day of thanksgiving.” She committed to preach any day of the week, when given the opportunity, because God is for all who are called to serve in His purpose.

For 19 years, McKennie loved serving in the music ministry at her church, yet her soul was conflicted because church leadership did not endorse women preaching. During an annual Fall Revival in Antioch, visiting keynote evangelist Caesar W. Clark gave a message that brought freedom. Clark boldly declared, “If God can use a woman to carry and to nurture ‘the Word’ in her belly for nine months, and if a woman can deliver ‘the

first Word’ to the world, surely, a woman could speak and preach on it!”

McKennie says that life-changing experience is where “I received my wings.”

Shortly thereafter, McKennie became the first woman preacher at Covenant Baptist Church, with Q. L. Carswell, pastor, appointing her assistant pastor. She served for seven years.

McKennie started an outreach mission church for city dwellers with drug addiction and mental challenges. She secured and renovated a building for church and to accommodate homeless individuals. Offices were converted to bedrooms, and showers and tubs were added to the bathrooms.

“It was a house of refuge! Church was open every day for ministry, and necessary life-altering skills were offered,” says McKennie. She also founded Gimme A Brake Outreach and We the Family Christian Community Church.

McKennie strongly believes every pastor needs a pastor. She found her pastor in her new landlord, Samuel Bulgin, D.Min., senior pastor at Atlanta Belvedere Church in Decatur, Georgia. Bulgin is a hands-on pastor who nurtured, befriended, listened, taught the Word of God, and consistently prayed for McKennie. “He was the ear that would hear my concerns and needs concerning ministry at any given moment. He always made time to listen, advise, and counsel as I pastored my own ministry,” says McKennie. “He was my pastor before he became my pastor, and I thank God for him.”

McKennie began to occasionally attend Bible studies at Atlanta Belvedere Church. One Sabbath, Bulgin introduced McKennie to the congregation saying, “We want you to be part of the Belvedere Seventh-day Adven-

tist Church!” Although she did not commit at that moment, she was shocked at his words. She had not shared what God had already revealed. As tears ran down her face, the Spirit of the Lord reminded her of the years she had held Sabbath services.

Following her Sabbath experience, McKennie spoke to her congregation one Sunday saying she was joining the Atlanta Belvedere Church because God impressed upon her heart.

Although she wanted her congregation to join her at Belvedere, they did not choose to follow. McKennie ensured that each one found a Bible-teaching church, and continues to give them Bible studies, feeling honored to have the opportunity.

McKennie officially joined the Belvedere family on September 15, 2018. “The members at Belvedere have welcomed me as part of the family of believers,” she said. “They accept me and share the love of Christ.” She jokes saying she has more sisters and brothers now, and she is her mother’s only child!

“My life is an open book, and I will continue to share my testimony whenever and wherever I am led to do so, so that others may see the salvation of the Lord and accept Him as Lord and Savior,” says McKennie. “For the Word teaches us to remember that we are the Word’s conduits for each member, as we are all in the presence of the Lord.”

McKennie continues to share her testimony with her children, mother, grandchildren, and everyone she meets. “Wherever I go, I have always been real with those whom I meet.”

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**Carolyn Johnson** is the Sabbath School superintendent at Atlanta Belvedere Church in Decatur, Georgia.

# Virtual Prayer Summit REACHES NEW AUDIENCE

BY SHANE HOCHSTETLER

A few months ago, I received a message that the prayer summit event we had been planning would become completely virtual, rather than an in-person event. COVID-19 has been doing that to a lot of events lately. The original plan was a socially-distanced, appropriately well-sanitized event that could take place in person, just like this event has always been done. We even had custom-imprinted hand sanitizers and masks ready to order. However, the persistence of the infections in our area led to the decision to cancel the in-person component.

Naturally, the next step was discussing whether a virtual version of the event was possible and whether or not it would be valuable. I work in the Conference communication department, so my original thought was, “yes, we can pull this off, but I think everyone is burnt out of everything virtual.” However, the decision was made to proceed with the virtual event, but the ideas on how to produce it leaned towards making it its own event, rather than some type of video/call version of what is usually done in person. Yes, there would still be sermons presented, but not as many, and not as long. The multi-day event became a one-day event.

Because it’s a prayer summit, prayer should be integral to the whole thing, so an idea of producing a prayer focus time came up. The prayer focus would feature a pastor in our Conference briefly speaking about and then praying for a particular subject, then inviting the watching audience to take a few minutes wherever they are to stop and pray as well. Also, a live host would be present to pray over each presenter before they joined the live

stream via video. Additionally, music from around the conference would help enrich the virtual experience by offering a greater variety in a shorter amount of time.

I went to work, creating motion graphics, and preparing promotional material and videos. I worked with several pastors to compose the prayer focus segments and even got to participate myself by filming my family praying for one of the features. Other organizers worked in their churches to arrange special music segments that I was able to acquire copyright information about and add the appropriate graphic overlays to during the stream.

The stream began in the morning on Sabbath, August 15, 2020, with several churches opting to show the event in their churches in place of the traditional sermon time. The Lord blessed, and the event went off without a hitch. Following those opening components, the program took a break for lunch, which allowed viewers to come home from church and rejoin the program. Resuming in the afternoon, more music, prayer, and presentations resulted in a big blessing for those who watched.

Throughout the program, viewers were given invitations to share their prayer requests through the YouTube and Facebook chat and comments. Many took advantage of this, and it provided a chance for the live host to pray for specific items during the program.

While comparing virtual engagement with physical attendance may be like comparing apples to oranges, it didn’t take long to realize the broader impact of holding the event online. Over the last four years, attendance for the prayer summit has been around 50-60 people. This year, the vir-



Mark Palmour hosts the virtual prayer summit from the Gulf States Conference office.

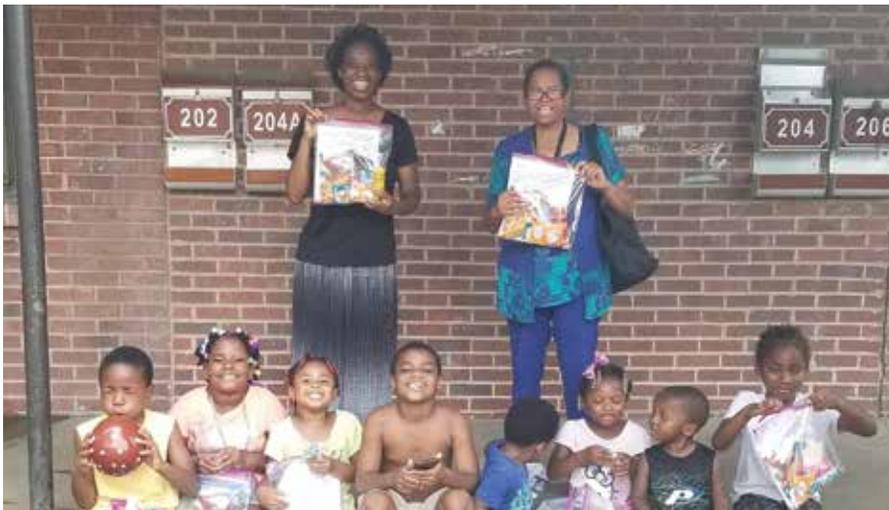
tual event’s online registration revealed that more than 150 people took part in the event. Whether in their homes or viewing the event in a local church in the morning, the increase in exposure was noticeable. I received phone calls and online messages, thanking the Conference for holding the event and offering something positive and hope-filled in a dark time.

In a follow-up survey that was sent to registrants, many asked for more prayer time to be part of the virtual programming, and for the event to be held more frequently than once a year. While so many things have been converted to be offered as virtual, and we are becoming burnt out on them, it is clear that we should never be burnt out on prayer. And, as long as issues in our world persist, prayer will consistently be high on our needs list. You can watch the event, or view individual components of the presentation at [www.gscsda.org/prayersummit](http://www.gscsda.org/prayersummit). 📍

**Shane Hochstetler** is the communication director at the Gulf States Conference.

# Children's Packs OPEN DOORS

BY CHRISTINE LUKWIYA



Some of the recipients who received the Children's Packs with Christine Lukwiya (left) and Brenda James.

The members of the Bordeaux Church in Nashville, Tennessee, wanted to engage in outreach by providing their community with the Word of God. They had to get creative in order to reach the people who are behind closed doors in their community. Collectively they began to pray about it. One of the church members received an answer to their prayers! The Lord revealed that the key to reaching the adults inside the homes was through the children. The Lord also inspired a blueprint for what was later known as "The Bordeaux Children's Pack."

The child's pack was easy to create, and consisted of a gallon-sized plastic storage bag containing items that are Christian based and child friendly. In each child's pack, you would find 10 to 15 items, with a label on the exterior giving the church contact information and a Scripture. Each month a



group of members from the Bordeaux Church would select a low-income housing neighborhood. They would pray and then begin knocking on doors and distributing the children's packs. Immediately, church members discovered that there was little resistance to learning what they had to offer once the residents found out there were free children's packs for their little ones. The

church members were amazed that the simple act of putting together children's packs opened more doors to them than ever before. The positive reactions were overwhelming, so much so that not only were the members able to reach the children, but their parents as well!

In addition to the children's packs, the adults were offered a tract and a Christian book with an Amazing Facts Bible Study offer inside. The once guarded individuals felt at ease sharing their problems. As a result, an opportunity presented itself for church members to offer a word of prayer. To make the experience even more exciting, the residents began recognizing the church member who knocked on their door because of all the children behind them.

Recent current events tell us that our time here on this earth is short, and the church members at the Bordeaux Church feel a sense of urgency to get God's Word into all the homes throughout Nashville. Ellen White says, "The work which the church has failed to do in a time of peace and prosperity, she will have to do in a terrible crisis, under the most discouraging, forbidding circumstances," *Christian Service*, 159. People today are suffering, and what better way to alleviate their pain than to share Christ with them. They need to know that there is a Father in Heaven that loves and cares for them. Like the leaves of autumn, it is the goal of the Bordeaux Church to use these children's packs to open doors throughout all the neighborhoods in Nashville! 📍

**Christine Lukwiya** serves in the Community Services Department at the Bordeaux Church in Nashville, Tennessee.

# *AdventHealth Launches Lifestyle Education for* CANCER PATIENTS, PUBLIC

BY CLAUDIA MAURY



AdventHealth Cancer Institute physicians have launched the Healthy Eating Active Lifestyle (HEAL) program, which is a comprehensive lifestyle medicine program designed to decrease the risk of cancer recurrence, improve comorbid conditions, and extend the health span of cancer patients and the community.

The program, which was co-founded by Nathalie McKenzie, M.D., gynecologic oncologist, and Amber Orman, M.D., radiation oncologist, is divided into three segments. HEAL: Breast is directed at breast cancer patients; HEAL: Gynecology Oncology is open to gynecology cancer patients; and HEAL at Home is a condensed, free, virtual program which is open to the community.

According to the American Cancer Society, this year there will be more than 1.8 million new cancer cases and 606,000 cancer deaths in the United States. That's about 5,000 new cases and 2,000 deaths per day.

"I'm passionate about this topic because I've used these lifestyle modifications in my own healing journey from breast cancer," said McKenzie. "I hope our program and educational tools will lead to an improvement in the life of our patients as well."

The program teaches plant-based nutrition, physical activity, stress management and mindfulness, relationships and connectedness, sleep, body image, and cancer-related sexual issues (for the cancer-specific programs). The team

includes a registered dietitian, mindfulness coach, clinical psychotherapist, certified life coach, personal trainer, oncology social worker, and nurse practitioner, as well as the physicians.

Data from the American Cancer Society supports a focus on nutrition and physical activity for cancer prevention, claiming that a healthy diet could lower future cancer reoccurrence by 25 percent. On the contrary, following a high-sugar, high-fat Western-style diet nearly doubles the risk of cancer reoccurrence.

In addition to the education component, McKenzie and Orman hope to gather data on how well-being and lifestyle changes impact recurrence rates in participants.

"Through my college and on to medical school education, I independently studied nutrition because there was no mention of it in our curriculum. After I began my practice, my passion for the topic only grew," said Orman. "A cancer diagnosis brings not only fear of the disease itself, but of where else in the body it may spread. The most impactful tool we have against this is to make the practical lifestyle changes we teach during our HEAL series." 🍎

**Claudia Maury** is the external communications specialist for AdventHealth's Central Florida Division - South Region.

# Mount Pisgah Academy Creative Puppet Team Assists with International VBS

Under the leadership of Louie and Nancy Parra, Mount Pisgah Academy (MPA) has operated a Creative Ministries puppetry team for 22 years. Their performances have earned them many honors and awards in the puppetry sector, which has increased their publicity through the southeastern United States. Hundreds of students have worked with the Parras over the years to perform jaw-dropping pieces that bring the Bible to life and allow viewers to recognize the incredible qualities of God.

As COVID-19 erased the possibility of in-person Vacation Bible School (VBS) programs this past summer, the North American Division (NAD) Children's Ministries Department rallied to create a virtual experience for children to enjoy over the summer. Originally, the weeklong VBS program would be offered to children throughout the Unit-

ed States. Eventually, word spread, and the program became an international affair, being streamed to multiple countries around the world. In order to offer such a unique program, the NAD enlisted the assistance of various individuals to provide content relating to the program theme. After learning of the longstanding program at Mount Pisgah Academy, the NAD requested that Louie and Nancy Parra assist with the VBS program by providing puppet segments for each day.

With the assistance of two local students, Emily Ottinger ('22) and Josh Bedwell ('22), and the talents of the school athletic director, Tyler Hedges, a talented photographer and videographer, the team got to work to produce five stories, each seven to nine minutes in length. The Parras were sent pre-recorded voice-overs that they used to perform the dialogue and stories using puppets. More



PHOTO BY: NANCY PARRA



PHOTO BY: LOUIE PARRA

Emily Ottinger (left), Nancy Parra, and Josh Bedwell



PHOTO BY: NANCY PARRA

Louie Parra (left) and Tyler Hedges



PHOTO BY: NANCY PARRA

students of MPA could offer their talents to aid in the creation of this virtual Vacation Bible School.

Although MPA has discontinued their traditional Creative Ministries class, they will continue to train students in the art of puppetry so that those talents can be used to present children’s stories in area churches. Students from MPA travel throughout the school year to churches in North and South Carolina to use their talents for God’s glory. If you are interested in having Mount Pisgah Academy students visit your church and assist with a Sabbath church service, please contact the school chaplain, Jo Ottinger, at [jo.ottinger@pisgah.us](mailto:jo.ottinger@pisgah.us). 📧

than 30 puppets were used during production, along with countless backdrops and props, many of which the Parras had created over the years for performances with MPA. Many hours were spent in the school auditorium, practicing and filming, in order to ensure quality content for the young viewers. Even once filming ended, Gavin Perez ('21), a current

student at MPA, worked tirelessly to edit the clips and audio together to create the final product.

When the first program aired July 6, 2020, more than 9,000 children had registered for the live broadcasts. Viewers were amazed at the content and quality of the program offerings.

What a blessing that the staff and stu-

BY ABBY KING

## Bob and Joyce DuBose Celebrate 71st Wedding Anniversary



Robert (Bob) DuBose Sr., and Joyce Pope-DuBose, celebrated their 71st wedding anniversary on April 23, 2020.

They met while students at Tampa Junior Academy, and were married April 23, 1949, at the Tampa, Fla., First Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Accepting a call to ministry in the Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, he served the first half of the years of his ministry pastoring and helping construct new church buildings in Altamonte Springs and Avon Park. For the rest of their ministry, he and Joyce served as Conference evangelists, conducting nearly

100 evangelistic campaigns throughout the entire state.

They retired January 1, 1996, moving to a home they constructed in the mountains of North Carolina, where they lived for the next 19 years. They now reside at Fletcher Park Inn, a retirement community in Hendersonville, N.C. 📧

BY BOB DUBOSE SR.

# Florida Adventist Book Center Gets Face Lift



PHOTO BY: LEE BENNETT

Kristin Rodriguez, Florida ABC - A Better Choice manager, welcomes customers to the newly renovated store.

Florida Adventist Book Center (ABC) — A Better Choice recently completed renovations that include a new entrance on Route 434 in Altamonte Springs. The renovations are one way Kristin Rodriguez, manager, and staff are adapting to changing times in retail while being a constant resource for constituents and church ministries. The staff has created an ambiance of wonder, joy, and anticipation for what is just around the next corner.

## Knowledgeable Staff

Friendliness and helpfulness is important for the staff and the 12 ABC employees have 165 years of combined service. With an average of 13.75 years of experience, employees are able to answer questions, supply needs, and help select perfect gifts for customers.

## Improved Service Update

Changes to the building are only one

area the ABC has undergone change. The way orders and deliveries are processed has also seen a change. Orders can now be sent electronically to the ABC for pick-up, shipment, or delivery. By switching to a delivery truck, cost-conscious stops are now being made five times a year at more churches as part of a delivery loop.

## New Attention to Detail

The ABC now sports a totally new attention to detail which can be seen in the following areas:

- Christian Books — A large number of titles are available for study or relaxation.
- Choice Food Section — A varied selection of healthful food choices and hard-to-find food items such as gluten free (GF), vegetarian, and vegan.
- Large Assortment of Bibles — Wall of Bibles carries many translations and types of Bibles with engraving available.
- Children’s Corner — Books for all ages. Check posting for Storytime hours.



PHOTO BY: LEE BENNETT

A delightful children’s corner carries books for all ages, and provides a space for storytime at the ABC.



PHOTO BY: LEE BENNETT

PHOTO BY: LEE BENNETT

A new entrance to the Florida ABC - A Better Choice is located at 351 S. State Road 434, Altamonte Springs.

A serene reading and respite area overlooks the spacious lawn at the ABC.

- Norma’s Delights — Sit a spell in the deli with a smoothie, or enjoy a made-to-order vegan lunch.
- Inspirational Gifts and Greeting Cards — One customer says, “My granddaughter actually thanked me for the card.”

**90+ Years of Service**

The ABC has been a vital part of Adventism in Florida for more than 90 years. Begun originally as Tract and Missionary

Societies, Book and Bible Houses followed in 1924 by offering the first Adventist literature storefronts. The first known Book and Bible House location in Florida is mentioned in 1928 at the Rosalind address in Orlando. The address of this location is stenciled on part of a shipping crate from that era, and is on display on the wall behind the cashier in the present ABC.

Following the Rosalind address, two years were temporarily spent at Hillcrest Road while waiting for new facilities in

1958 on Rollins Avenue. In 1972, during the Rollins Avenue period, the Book and Bible House took on a new nomenclature — Adventist Book Center. It readily became known as ABC. In 1992, the facility moved to Wymore Road in Winter Park, and the present structure was opened at 351 S. State Road 434 in Altamonte Springs in 2014. 📍

BY CHARLOTTE HUENERGARDT

# Martin Toeper Celebrates 100th Birthday



Martin Toeper enjoyed the parade of cars and golf carts that brought friends to sing Happy Birthday to the centennarian.

**M**artin Toeper, who turned 100 on July 8, 2020, was born in Groschogen, Romania, on July 8,

1920. Toeper served in the Hungarian Army during World War II, while family was forced to flee into Austria. Through

much difficulty, the family was able to be reunited after the war.

Toeper met and married Minnie, and together they had a daughter, Ingrid. In 1956 the three of them sailed to America and settled in New Hampshire. In 1992 Martin and Minnie moved to Florida, and in 2005 bought a home in Zellwood Station. Unfortunately, two years later Minnie passed away. Ingrid and her husband, Gustav, left New Hampshire, headed to Florida, and moved in with Martin. The three of them are members of Apopka Church.

There are very few 100-year-olds who don’t take any medicines or need hearing aids or glasses, and who walk daily in the neighborhood, but Martin Toeper is one of them! Happy 100 years, Martin! 📍

# Three Baptisms Celebrated at Park Avenue Church

July 4th was Independence Day, and it was also independence day for three individuals who joined the Park Avenue Church in Valdosta, Ga., both by baptism and profession of faith.

Leah Ulmer met Jack and Lori, members of the Tifton, Ga., Church. As their friendship developed, Ulmer asked for Bible studies. Praising God for their friendship, she decided to join the Park Avenue Church because it is closer to her home. She joined the church by profession of faith.

*Emanuel (Manny) Selever, baptismal candidate, shares his testimony:*

My name is Emanuel; it means God with us. Through my experience this saying is true. I am 18, and just graduated high school. I'm looking for guidance in this world for what we call life. Life is funny sometimes and other times it's serious, and baptism is a very serious commitment.

*Leah Selever's shares her testimony:*

As a child I was always close to God, I followed all the rules and commandments and loved my Father in Heaven. One day I fell into the influence of some people and took the wrong path. Confused and afraid, I turned to substances, which at the time made sense to me. It numbed the pain of my traumatic childhood. The devil had me in his grip, but the Lord never gave up! Even through my troubled childhood, He gave me wisdom and kept me out of trouble.

Fast forward a couple years, I became an atheist. I turned away from God. I was mad at Him for putting me through a rough childhood. I kept abusing substances and thought I could live my life this way forever. Eventually, like the story of the prodigal son, I became poor. I was poor in mental health. The substances took a toll on my brain.



SUBMITTED BY: BRENDA LIPSCOMB

Three individuals joined the Park Avenue Church in Valdosta, Ga., on Sabbath, July 4, 2020. They include Emanuel Selever (left), Shannon Campbell, and Leah Ulmer. Read how God changed their lives and brought about this July 4th Sabbath celebration.

Seven years of bottling up emotions, and they came out when I told my mom I didn't want to live. [There were] sleepless nights and telling myself I wasn't good enough. There was also pressure in school. I couldn't take it anymore.

A couple months ago I started praying, asking God for forgiveness. It was like it says in the Bible, He is a loving and merciful God. He loves His children. It is written, there is more joy in Heaven for one sinner saved than 99 righteous.

God saved me and freed me from addiction. He can save you too. Today I choose to follow God with all my heart, mind, and strength. God, my Father, created me in the womb and knows all the hairs on my head. He is faithful and forgives all sins through repentance. Thank you Jesus for saving a wretch like me.

*A third candidate, Shannon Campbell,*

*joined by profession of faith, and shares her testimony:* My grandmother joined the Seventh-day Adventist faith when my mom and her siblings were young. When my generation came along, the family was already Adventists, and that is how we were raised. I was 13 years old when I was baptized. I always had faith in God. I knew He was with me. I have health problems, yet I am still here. He has brought me through a lot. I know He is with me always.

My mom moved to Valdosta, Ga., in August of 2017. She was there for two weeks by herself before I arrived from Florida. Within a couple of weeks, mom had a stroke and aneurysm. She was taken to the hospital and then transferred to Tallahassee, Fla. I was told that mom would not leave the hospital.

I praise the Lord for getting me

through that day — talking with family, getting my mom’s car, going home alone, and my brother getting a flight from Wisconsin. I knew it was the Lord watching over me. During the past six months I have had health problems, and He has seen me through. I was raised

Adventist and will always be Adventist. God has given me the Park Avenue Church with kind and loving members who welcome me into their family. Now I have a family in Valdosta. Thank you!

Even though the world feels like it is in lock-down from church and other activi-

ties, it is amazing how God continues to work and lead people to His church. 🕊

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BY BRENDA LIPSCOMB

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# Thomas Turk Recognized for Community Service



SUBMITTED BY: JENNIFER TURK

**Thomas Turk mows one of 50 lawns this summer during the 50 Yard Challenge.**

This summer amid the coronavirus pandemic, Thomas Turk, a teen from McDonald Road Church in McDonald, Tenn., completed the 50 Yard Challenge. The challenge is to mow 50 yards free-of-charge to help the elderly, disabled, single parents, and veterans.

“It was really good just to be able to help people, to see their appreciation, and to know that I was helping and making things easier for them,” he said.

Mike and Theodora Sayne are one couple whose lawn Turk mowed. Theodora Sayne was grateful for Turk’s help because her husband has heart trouble and isn’t able to be out in the heat much.

“Thomas was diligent to get his work done, and we much appreciated his work,” she shared.

The 50 Yard Challenge, started by

Rodney Smith Jr. of Raising Men Lawn Care Service, is open to young people who want to make a difference in their community. After each 10 yard milestone, participants receive a different color T-shirt to highlight their experience in helping others. After mowing 50 yards, they are rewarded with a brand new lawn mower, weed eater, and leaf blower.

Turk has been mowing lawns for years, and he’s been involved in the 50 Yard Challenge for two years. He received his new lawn care equipment on July 31, 2020.

Smith shared on Twitter: “Family, please help me in congratulating Thomas from Collegedale, Tenn., on completing our 50 Yard Challenge by mowing 50 FREE lawns for the elderly, disabled, single parents, and veterans in his city.”



SUBMITTED BY: JENNIFER TURK

**Thomas Turk, a teen who attends the McDonald Road, Tenn., Church, completed the 50 Yard Challenge, and is pictured here with Rodney Smith Jr. of Raising Men Lawn Care Service, who created the 50 Yard Challenge. Turk mowed 50 yards for free to help the elderly, disabled, single parents, and veterans.**

Raising Men Lawn Care Service (RM-LCS) is the union of an ordinary yard maintenance service, and the commitment to establish an inspiring program to keep youth (girls and boys), ages 7-17, on a positive path while learning and understanding their value in society. 🕊

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BY BECKY BROOKS

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# Danese Named President of Gulf States, Fry Joins Administration

The Gulf States Conference held an executive committee meeting on September 1, 2020, to appoint a new Conference president following the retirement of David Livermore. Leading up to the meeting, Gulf States posted information about filling empty administrative positions to its website and social media. The post contained links to the Gulf States Constitution documents' relevant pages, which outlined the executive committee's authority in these matters.

The meeting took place virtually via Zoom, the now commonplace meeting platform for organizations of all sizes worldwide. The required meeting quorum was met, and the meeting proceeded as usual. As outlined in the Conference's Constitution, the Southern Union president chairs the executive committee when the local Conference president resigns their position, which Livermore did partway through the meeting. The Southern Union also obtained the virtual meeting's host privileges, granting them control to launch the voting mechanism when needed, among other features.

Ron C. Smith, D.Min., Ph.D., president of the Southern Union, chaired the meeting until the new president was voted and approved. After prayer and discussion, Brian Danese, former vice president of church development at Gulf States, was voted and approved by the executive committee to serve as president of Gulf States. Danese will fill this position for the remainder of the current quinquennium, which concludes in the fall of 2021.

Danese has worked in Gulf States for 14 years, first as a pastor, and then in the Conference office as director of stewardship, treasurer, and most recently as vice president of church development. Danese humbly accepted the position



PHOTO BY: SHANE HOCHSTETTLER

**Brian Danese, former vice president of church development, accepts his new position as president.**

and looks forward to serving the Conference moving forward.

Before closing the meeting, as his first act as president, Danese recommended that Tracy Fry, human resources director at Gulf States, be added to the administrative team as vice president of administration. This recommendation was made into a motion, voted, and approved by the committee. Fry has served in Gulf States for just over a year as director of human resources, and has formerly served the Adventist Church as a principal and teacher for numerous schools throughout the North American Division. Fry will join the other four members of the administrative team, Brian Danese, president; Martin Fancher, executive secretary; Gwen Speak, treasurer; and Cary Fry, vice president of pastoral development. Learn more about the meeting and the previous informational post at [www.gscsda.org/news](http://www.gscsda.org/news). 📍



**Tracy Fry, vice president of administration, accepts her new role following Brian Danese's recommendation.**

BY SHANE HOCHSTETTLER

# Panama City Welcomes New Member



Jay Rosario (left), pastor of the Panama City, Fla., Church, poses with newly baptized member John Ohman.

“I want to attend your church and start Bible studies!” was the message found by Jay Rosario, pastor of the Panama City Beach Church in Panama City, Fla., in his email inbox from John Ohman. Pastors receive all kinds of calls, texts, and emails ranging from a broad spectrum of subject matter. This one, however, was one that a pastor prays they receive every day. This one is the one that keeps them motivated to keep going and going.

Rosario had never met Ohman before. Ohman was in the process of moving from Illinois to the panhandle of Florida, and knew that the first thing he needed to do was to find a church and begin Bible studies. He had first become acquainted with the Bible and the

Seventh-day Adventist Church through a friend who had connected him to the ministry of 3ABN and Amazing Facts. In his own words, he said, “I was shocked to find so many things in the Bible that I had no idea [were] in there!” Ohman had attended a Christian church and had been a part of several different denominations, but never before heard the things he was learning.

Rosario had the privilege of being the first Adventist pastor that Ohman had ever met in person, one on one. They met in Rosario’s office and began Bible studies. Ohman looked like he was in a candy store. He fell in love with the pictures of God he was discovering, and realized how much Jesus had done for

him. Ohman did not hesitate or wait to inquire about the local church and its services. He immediately decided to attend that Sabbath.

Once there, he quickly fell in love with the church family, as he “fit like a glove instantly, and everyone accepted me for who I was.” He felt like he already belonged there before he even arrived.

On a later Sabbath, Rosario remembers greeting everyone as they were exiting the services. He went to the fellowship hall looking for Ohman and could not find him. After surveying the area and everyone sitting, Rosario quickly noticed the kitchen. Ohman was washing dishes and helping the potluck team clean everything up. Rosario was amazed at how soon he was involved in serving others in the church. Not only was he involved in cleaning up that Sabbath, but it became a habit every Sabbath.

He also started getting involved in the local community, volunteering several days a week at a retirement center. “I don’t know what drove me. I just know I wanted to do good for someone,” says Ohman. Rosario was amazed at how Ohman had both a deep interest in learning about God as well as getting involved to be a blessing to others.

Eventually, Ohman expressed a desire to seal his commitment to Jesus through the waters of baptism. Ohman says, “You guys got me. You ain’t throwing me away ‘cause I’m staying.” The thought of throwing him away never crossed the minds of Rosario or the church members. 🙏

BY JAY ROSARIO

# Social Work Student Blesses Chattanooga Community



Officers of Southern Adventist University Social Work Club are Callie Dickson (left, front row), Rachel Turner, and Jenny Pontarelli; Mia Chedalavada (left, standing), Caleb Olmedo, Andrea McCraw, and Claire Ashcraft.

In her junior year at Southern Adventist University (SAU), Claire Ashcraft decided she wanted to make a positive impact in the community. A member of the Highland Church in Portland, Tenn., Ashcraft ran for and was elected president of SAU's Social Work Club. Even though her on-campus school year was cut short by COVID-19, Ashcraft and her fellow club officers were able to achieve a remarkable amount in the time they had.

They started the year off with a goal to help a family who had a terminally ill young child in hospice care. The club fundraised on campus with events such as bake sales, and in the end they collected more than \$1,000 in cash and



Social Work Club delivers duffel bags: Callie Dickson (left), Mia Chedalavada, Claire Ashcraft, Rachel Turner, Caleb Olmedo, and Cheryl Craven, Southern's Social Work Department manager.

items, including clothes, toys, lamps, decorations, and a sock monitor to track the infant's heart rate. After obtaining that special monitor, the family was able to monitor their child's health at home, where they could comfortably be together as a family.

The Social Work Club also partnered with the Salvation Army, collecting clothing donations from students. Then they helped set up the organization's annual "Street Store," a temporary store on the roads of downtown Chattanooga

for those in need, especially the homeless. The students sorted the clothes and helped display them on fences and racks for a special one-day event.

Another project was born when Ashcraft made a sad discovery through a classmate. She learned that children in local foster care were only given a trash bag for their belongings when they had to move to a new residence; there was no funding for anything more. The club quickly launched a duffle bag drive, which collected funding to purchase

about 430 duffle bags. They dropped them off shortly before learning that the University would be transitioning to distance learning for the remainder of the semester.

"I chose social work because all I want to do with my life is help people," Ashcraft says. "Jesus was the original social worker. He did all He could to help others. I want to be like Him." 📍

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BY ANGELA BAERG

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## Joel Sutherland Ordained



Kieth Noll (left), Steve Haley, Joel Sutherland, and Chelsea Sutherland

Joel Sutherland was ordained to the Gospel ministry on July 28, 2020, at the Lawrenceburg, Tenn., Church. Members from the Pulaski, Tenn., Church were also in attendance. Many of the ministers in the Conference, along with family and friends, joined via Zoom during COVID-19.

Sutherland's mother, Brenda Sutherland, played the prelude to the service, and Sutherland's father, Curtis Sutherland, chaplain, gave the welcome and prayer

via Zoom. Rick Copeland, Lawrenceburg first elder, gave the presentation, and the musical selection was done by the Sutherland family. The guest speaker was Gary Gibbs, president of the Pennsylvania Conference. Steve Haley, president of the Kentucky-Tennessee Conference, gave the call to ministry and said the ordination prayer. The benediction was given by Kieth Noll, Kentucky-Tennessee ministerial director. Elaine Will played the postlude to

the service. Sutherland's wife, Chelsea Sutherland, stood by his side as he was ordained to the Gospel ministry.

Joel and Chelsea Sutherland serve the Lawrenceburg/Pulaski district in Tennessee, where they are much loved by everyone. Kentucky-Tennessee Conference is blessed to have them as part of their team. 📍

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BY KIETH NOLL

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# Philadelphie Haitian Church Burns Mortgage



Attendees who attended the Philadelphie Haitian Church mortgage-burning ceremony.

It was with overflowing joy that the members of Philadelphie Haitian Church in Douglasville, Ga., entered their sanctuary on August 8, 2020, to celebrate the goodness of God. There were 15 people in the building and others joined virtually to be in compliance with social distancing regulations. Merkita Mosley, CFO of South Atlantic Conference, honored Philadelphie’s achievement and reminded them that even though they are free of debt, they remain indebted with the responsibility of sharing the Gospel. Mosley also

presented the treasurer of Philadelphie, Fritonne Ducasse, a check for \$1,000 as a contribution to the Gospel ministry.

The spoken word was delivered virtually by William Winston, president of South Atlantic Conference. The promissory note was burnt by Ducasse; the prayer of dedication was given by Jean Hercule Toussaint, pastor of Philadelphie Church. Marc Rico Borieux, pastor, shared an emotional testimony of the building’s acquisition, and Jean Robert Jeanniton explained what the members



Fritonne Ducasse, Philadelphie Haitian Church treasurer, burns the mortgage documents.



Merkita Mosley, CFO of South Atlantic Conference, makes a presentation during Philadelphie Haitian Church mortgage-burning ceremony.

did to pay off the mortgage debt.

In the midst of COVID-19, God has taught the members there is no confinement of His blessings. Toussaint added, “From the bottom of my heart, I want to thank you all, members of Philly, and thank you for helping me to be your leader. We made it! All the praise and glory to our God.” 📌

BY JEAN HERCULE TOUSSAINT,  
PASTOR AT PHILADELPHIE CHURCH

# The Academy Podcast Discusses COVID-19, Divorce, and More



Pastors Austin Humphreys (right) and Kaggia Scott discussed the role of faith in surviving COVID-19, and other challenges with L'Tonya Jackson, a COVID-19 survivor, on The Academy Podcast.

The novel coronavirus has shut down many ministries and given birth to others. One new ministry is The Academy Podcast with Austin & G.

The Academy Podcast was created by Austin Humphreys and Kaggia Scott, who pastor churches in North Carolina.

They have used The Academy Podcast to allow many people to share their success stories. The list includes gospel singers Virtue; James Doggette, D.Min.; Carlton Byrd, D.Min.; Freddie Russell; Brenda Bellingy; Gianna Snell, and others. Each of these guests has shared insights, tools, and perspectives on Christian success that have been a blessing to viewers.

On episode four, Austin & G discussed COVID-19, divorce, and single-parenting with L'Tonya Jackson, who has survived a 17-day solitary bout with COVID-19, thrives after divorce, and is successfully single-parenting college-aged children Niya and Noah. Jackson works at UPS. During her 33-year career with UPS she has worked her way up from loading and

driving trucks to management positions in human resources and sales. She is also a chaplain at UNC-Rex Hospital. During the interview, Jackson shared several takeaways with listeners to Austin & G.



L'Tonya Jackson, a COVID-19 survivor, was interviewed by the leaders of The Academy Podcast.

## One: "Do I Crumble?"

This is the question Jackson asked after her divorce. She decided that the loss of a spouse, income, and career adjustments do not define her. "When you are now solely responsible for the lives of your children, then ages 7 and 3, crumbling is not an option. You kick into survival mode and a strong prayer life." She would trust God.

## Two: Deciding How to Process Life Challenges

After Jackson was tested for COVID-19, she says, "I immediately self-quarantined in one room so my children would have the rest of the house." She prayed, hoped, and waited 10 days for her test results. Once test results confirmed she had COVID-19, she thought, "I know that all things work

together for good, but where is the good in this?" She also wondered, "How do I process this and move forward?" After prayer and reflection, her mental process led her to two choices: "I am going to either get delivered and have a testimony, or I have a short window to get right so I can be saved." When God healed her, she immediately posted a praise report on her Facebook page.

## Three: Hope for Those Affected by COVID-19

Families of COVID-19 patients can remember, "God is in control. God is with them. The hospital staff is there. You may feel they are alone, but God is with them. Families want to be with them, but sometimes the noise of family prevents their loved one from talking with God. This period is a window of time they can talk with God and prepare. Many who died of COVID-19 probably used that window of time to make things right and are saved."

To COVID-19 survivors, Jackson says, "God has spared you for another chance. Use it for His glory."

Seeing how Jackson has survived many things the enemy has thrown at her, Humphreys exclaimed, "You are a survivor!"

The Academy Podcast with Austin & G is available on iTunes, YouTube, and Facebook. In just a short time, they have more than 500 subscribers, and hundreds of people have been encouraged through their weekly podcast.

Through The Academy Podcast, Humphreys and Scott have shown that even though you can't physically be inside of a church building, you can still bring a message of hope and inspiration to others through the power of social media. 📌

BY ZACHARY BOYD

# Oakwood Adventist Academy Opens New Building



under the leadership of the late Eric C. Ward, OUC senior pastor and OAA building chairperson. In January 2012, Byrd assumed this responsibility, and in December 2013, the OAA multi-education complex, Phase Two, inclusive of the middle school, gymnasium, and cafeteria, was completed, along with the elementary building being completely renovated. In August 2020, the OAA High School building, Phase Three, was completed. The full OAA campus can now accommodate 500 students.

The new building is a state-of-the-art, 20,000-square-foot facility, equipped with an administrative office suite; faculty lounge; conference room; and 12 classrooms, including a contemporary collaboration room for media and technology learning opportunities, along with two science labs to promote “STEAM” education.

Lakeisha Williams, Ph.D., OAA vice principal, remarked about the unique learning opportunities that the new school building provides, and said, “We really have the ability to provide stellar education in a Christ-centered environment, not just for our Adventist community, but also for students in the entire Huntsville community.”

Mary Greene, OAA business manager, added, “I walk into this building, and I feel a sense of relief, because it’s done. Just knowing that God was able to walk us through this and bring us to this point has been so refreshing. And, I’m just waiting to see what else God has in store as we walk in this uncharted territory.”

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BY CHRISTOPHER THOMPSON, D.MIN.

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After nearly 30 years of planning and discussing strategies for a full campus for Oakwood Adventist Academy (OAA), I’m pleased to announce that the third and final phase of the OAA building project is now completed! It’s been a long time coming, but look what God has done!” These were the opening words from Carlton P. Byrd, D.Min., Oakwood University Church (OUC) senior pastor and OAA building chairperson, to the excited crowd of community residents, church members, OAA employees, parents, and students gathered to witness the official opening of the newly constructed OAA High School building in Huntsville, Ala., on August 9, 2020.

Special guests who were present for this celebratory occasion included Tommy Battle, Huntsville mayor; Laura Hall, Alabama State representative; and Will Culver, Huntsville City councilman, who all shared greetings, well wishes, and words of commendation to OAA for the longstanding commitment to education and investment in the lives

of young people. Additionally, Benjamin Jones, South Central Conference president, and Leslie Pollard, Ph.D., D.Min., Oakwood University president, also shared words of support for the realization of the historic event.

Also present were Albert Dudley Sr. and Bonita Dudley Parker, children of the late Charles E. Sr. and Etta Dudley. The Dudleys were strong supporters of Adventist Christian education throughout Charles Dudley’s 31-year tenure as president of South Central Conference. Given the Dudleys’ advocacy, the new high school building was named in their honor.

Judy B. Chiles-Dent, OAA’s principal, remarked about the significance of the timing of the completion of the project, saying, “One thing that I’m grateful for is that while we’re in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, it gives the opportunity for our children to have the necessary space for practicing social distancing while receiving a quality Christian education.”

In 1992, the OAA Elementary School building, Phase One, was completed

# Mount Sinai Members Hold Virtual Tea Party



Sherry Grace taught how to bake a simple thumbprint cookie.



Sharon McKay is Mount Sinai Church women's ministries leader.



Eulanie Lashley was one of the presenters.



Mercile Lewis created a hat with a frying pan and beautiful flowers.

COVID-19 changed the way Mount Sinai Church in Orlando, Fla., celebrated motherhood and women during the 2020 Mother's Day Weekend — a time of fellowship and celebrating women in their various roles. Usually they have had presentations and gifts of love for the matriarchs of the church, and for women in general. There was now a new challenge on how to replicate the love for the mothers, and still follow the federal, city, and Southeastern Conference's rules of social distancing.

The women's ministries team, under the leadership of Sharon McKay, made the decision to have a "Virtual Tea Party." The goal of the tea party was to create an outlet to celebrate the beauty of motherhood, and create open dialogue to discuss its vulnerabilities.

On Mother's Day, they embarked on the Virtual Tea Party. Sixty women attended virtually from many local churches, and as far away as Antigua. The span of generations who participated was amazing!

The tea party had four presenters and several activities for women to enjoy. The event opened by honoring and applauding those women who are serving on the frontline during the pandemic,

such as teachers and healthcare workers. A devotional thought, "The Blessing of Being a Mother," was given by the pastor's wife, Crystal Moffett, who then randomly selected a name and presented that woman with a copy of Michelle Obama's "Becoming" journal.

Eulanie Lashley gave an excellent presentation on dealing with perfectionism and the pressures of being a woman. As the presentation closed, many of the women shared how leaning on God helped them realize that they are enough.

Jacqueline Mack, principal of Mount Sinai Junior Academy, gave helpful tips for managing homeschooling activities and assignments, and properly preparing students in adjusting to the new normal of distance learning. The first item she discussed was the need to create a space for learning. Next, she discussed how you should provide a structured schedule and make time for breaks and exercise. And thirdly, she reminded to be patient with students as they adjust to the new process of learning, and gave the signs to look for when a student may be overwhelmed. Tips were also given to help the students to de-stress while completing assignments.

A cooking segment was conducted by

Sherry Grace. Grace taught how to bake a simple thumbprint cookie, and shared how a simple cookie recipe, such as the thumbprint cookie, may be used to bond with children.

There was a Virtual Scavenger Hunt. Various household items were projected on the screen. Participants were given some time to find those items somewhere in their homes. The one who found the most items, Carlotta McKenzie, was the winner.

Another activity was the Virtual Hat Show. Various creative hats were shared, along with the stories behind them between mother and daughter. They especially loved the hat created by Mercile Lewis, with a frying pan and beautiful flowers.

Four women received gift cards from Publix, Amazon, and Olive Garden. The Virtual Tea Party lasted for two- and-a-half joyous hours. It was a great way for the Mount Sinai women and their friends to connect in sisterhood and love. 🍵

BY CAROL SMITH, MOUNT SINAI COMMUNICATIONS LEADER

# AHU Research Center Aims to Improve Community Health

AdventHealth University's (AHU) Center for Population Health Research (CPHR) was founded in 2016, to utilize geographic information systems (GIS) technologies to expand medical geography research in central Florida communities and beyond. The Center is directed by Russ Butler, Ph.D., a biology professor at AHU, who is an accomplished researcher in this field. He coordinates both faculty and student research in projects that are focused on population health.

Population health is an approach to healthcare that aims to improve the health of an entire population. Rather than focusing on individualistic, case-by-case healing, the CPHR develops long-term prevention methods and contribute to improving the health of central Florida's communities.

"It is my hope that this research will impact struggling areas throughout central Florida and beyond, closing gaps in health disparities across the population," said Lars Houmann, president emeritus for the Florida Division of AdventHealth, when the center opened in 2016.

CPHR engages students and faculty in applying geographic information systems (GIS) technologies to medical geography research. Medical geography is the science of understanding the spatial patterns of phenomena related to human health and well-being in order to identify various factors which may affect the health of a population. In an earlier project, Butler and his students conducted research on water quality in nearby Bithlo, Fla.

GIS technologies can be used to match research data with map coordinates that can reveal patterns of disease and illness as well as pinpoint high-risk areas. It uses spatial statistics, geo-spatial analyses, cartographic techniques, and remotely sensed data to assess and analyze spatial, and temporal trends. In "using that data, we can more accurately prescribe action," explained Butler about the



**Russ Butler, Ph.D., in front of the Center for Population Health Research after its official opening.**

benefits of spatial mapping technology.

The center's use of GIS technologies develops skills in spatial thinking, quantitative analysis, and problem solving while providing hands-on research experience to students. In providing students and faculty with this opportunity, the Center will contribute to the University's wholistic approach to education and treatment.

One graduate who has benefitted from the Center's research opportunities is Craig Gillen, who graduated with a bachelor's degree in biomedical science from AHU in 2016. He began his work with Butler in the CPHR after developing a mentorship with him while taking one of his courses. Butler invited Gillen to the Center to learn some of the programs they had installed on the computers for research. Studying textbooks in the lab, he learned how to use ARCGis and started helping Butler out with projects in the lab.

The skills he developed helped land him a position with the Florida Department of Health (FDH) in epidemiology at the Orange County Office after graduation. His first big project was working as the Zika coordinator for Orange, Osceola, and Lake counties, where he monitored the development progress of infants born from Zika-positive patients.

Recently, Gillen worked alongside Butler on a project that aims to help decision makers predict the impact of COVID-19 in different populations. For the project, they

utilized ArcGIS Pro, a leading mapping and location analytics platform owned by Esri, a global market leader in GIS.

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Butler and Gillen began working on a map that could help predict how susceptible different populations would be for COVID-19 so that decision makers could plan for its impact. Users can view demographics from the state level all the way down to zip codes and census blocks.

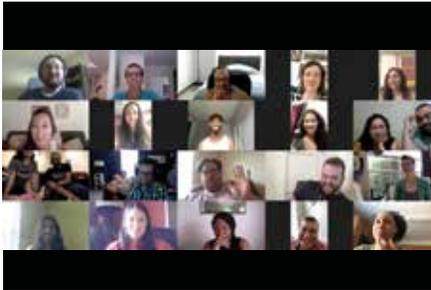
The data for ARCGis is curated by Esri from a variety of sources, including census and other government data. It's then made available for users like Butler to create map modelings. There are hundreds of applications in health and medicine for GIS technologies. When Gillen worked at the FDH, he worked on GIS maps for a hepatitis-A outbreak in Orange County. The maps could track the number of cases, and try to predict the spread so outreach efforts could be better targeted.

The CPHR has several other projects in the works, including one where they've partnered with another university. Butler is adamant about the multi-disciplinary aspects of population health research, and talked about the need to have diverse groups, outside of medical professionals, weigh in and offer insights that could lead to new discoveries.

AHU aims to innovate and advance the practice of whole-person care by empowering its faculty and students to pursue these valuable interdisciplinary research opportunities. Equipping students' hands to do God's healing work does not always involve patients, exams, or therapy. Many of AHU's graduates make their impacts on the community at the bedside. However, sometimes they're like Gillen, carrying out His work with technology and research, and using their skills to benefit entire communities. 📍

BY LISA MARIE ESSER

# Virtual Choir Records Music, Finds Community



This summer nearly 50 Southern alumni participated in a virtual choir led by Genevieve Brown-Kibble, D.M.A. (top row, second from left), professor in the School of Music.

This summer, a group of Southern Adventist University alumni, students, and faculty came together virtually for a special musical project. Genevieve Brown-Kibble, D.M.A., professor and conductor in Southern's School of Music, had the idea to form a virtual choir following an online family meeting.

"It occurred to me that there was a singing family separated by years and miles that could also be assembled," she said. "I had been in touch with a few of my alumni who were experiencing per-

sonal setbacks, and I felt singing could provide a kind of therapy like no other."

Brown-Kibble recruited alumni Curtis Prevo, '13, as audio technician, and Jeffrey Dean, '18, as assistant conductor, and together they assembled nearly 50 alumni of I Cantori, Southern's select chamber choir. The group prepared multiple recordings on the theme "How Can I Keep From Singing?" These will be released throughout the fall 2020 semester for various events in lieu of live choirs.

Dean and Brown-Kibble were scheduled to serve as guest clinicians for the 2020 Indiana Conference Music Festival in the spring. In preparation, they had commissioned an original work by local Chattanooga composer and music teacher Sarah Tullock. When the conference was cancelled due to COVID-19, Dean and Brown-Kibble worked with the virtual I Cantori choir to bring the song to life.

Over the summer, the group gathered several times via video conference for fellowship and preparation. Between meetings, choir members practiced and recorded their individual tracks, uploading them for Prevo to bring together into a cohesive

blend. Through careful planning, he was able to produce a sound similar to what an audience would hear from a choir spread across a stage. Prevo gained much of his skill with recording equipment and software during the two years he worked for Southern's public radio station, Classical 90.5 WSMC, and he was glad to use his expertise on this project.

"While there is no real substitute for the musical energy and unity of singing shoulder-to-shoulder, I saw the value of the virtual community," Prevo said. Other participants agreed that they were blessed by the experience.

"Singing with members of my musical family from over the years, although virtually, was such an uplifting blessing during this difficult time," said Joel Westberg, a tenor who graduated from Southern in 2016 with a degree in music education. "It brought a smile to my face to see people I hadn't seen in years, and to do what we do best again — sing the Lord's praises." ●

BY TRISNEY BOCALA

# Freshmen Start the Year With Service

During New Student Orientation at Southern Adventist University in Collegedale, Tenn., one day was set aside for incoming students to serve the local community. The volunteers partnered with 15 organizations in a variety of ways. All activities took place on campus, with half of the 675 students volunteering in the morning and the other half in the afternoon, which reduced group sizes and encouraged physical distancing.

Activities included creating flashcards for local elementary schools; decorating and



As part of Freshmen Service Day, students constructed bunkbeds for local children.

filling paper bags with snacks for community members experiencing homelessness;

assembling "Treats for Heroes," which were later delivered to local police officers, firefighters, and medical personnel; building children's bunk beds, and more.

"The foundation of service here at Southern is preparing me to keep it going later in life," said Nikki Nadler, freshman music major. "I think it's good to foster service when you're younger so that it'll be routine when you're older." ●

BY TRISNEY BOCALA



**DIETRICH, TERRILL ROBIN**, 69, born in New Rockford, N.D., to Merle and June (Bauman) Dietrich, died March 19, 2020 at his home in McDonald, TN, following his courageous struggle with cancer. He was the oldest of five children.

Dietrich graduated high school in 1969 from Rio Lindo Adventist Academy in Healdsburg, CA. He went on to earn his B.A. in Art Education in 1973 from Pacific Union College in Angwin, C. Later, he completed his formal education by obtaining a Master of Education from Andrews University in Berrien Springs, MI, in 1978.

With a teaching career that spanned more than 43 years, Dietrich taught art to students on the elementary, secondary, and university levels. His first two positions were in Berrien Springs at the Ruth Murdock Elementary School and Andrews Academy.

Dietrich's myriad talents came to fruition in 1982 when he transferred to Forest Lake Academy in Orlando, FL., where he taught art, photography, and yearbook, and served as the Assistant Dean of Boys. For 18 years, along with teaching, Dietrich sponsored the Student Association, and many mission trips, senior class trips, biology trips, and ski trips. Ultimately, he left his artistic legacy by building several school projects, including the Forest Lake Academy school sign, various school play backdrops, and the Student Association banquet backdrops. In his final years, Dietrich taught art at Southern Adventist University in Collegedale, TN, and at Brainerd High School in Chattanooga, TN. Throughout his career, Dietrich remained committed to helping his students to see their potential. His twin passions of teaching and his family gave him great joy. In his spare time, Dietrich enjoyed fishing and driving his Can-Am Ryker. His creative outlets included woodworking and photography. Dietrich and his wife, Pam, were active members of the Collegedale Church.

The Collegedale Seventh-day Adventist community, former students, and Dietrich's family mourn his passing. He leaves behind his wife of 47 years, Pamela (Smith) Dietrich; his daughter, Nikki (Brandon) Sutton; his son, Mark Dietrich; his four grandchildren: Hayden, Dylan, and Landon Dietrich, and Cassie Sutton; his sisters: Coleen Jenkins of Collegedale, and Montecal Dietrich of Grass Valley, CA; his brothers: Jon (Beth) Dietrich of Virginia City, NV, and Charles Dietrich of Grass Valley, CA; many bereaved nieces; nephews; and friends.

A celebration of life service will be held at a later date. Online condolences may be made at [www.WestGeorgiaCrematory.com](http://www.WestGeorgiaCrematory.com)

**ELLIOTT, CANDIS "CANDY" DIANE (SCOTT)**, 77, born May 24, 1942 in Jamestown, New York, to the late Pastor Lawrence and Vera Scott, died Jan. 24, 2020, after a long battle with serious health conditions stemming from a tragic fall in 2006.

She was a third and fourth generation Adventist on both sides. She grew up in Hindsdale, IL, where her father served as pastor of the Hindsdale Adventist Church. When she was a teenager, her father accepted a call to Florida Sanitarium Church, and she attended Forest Lake Academy where she met Marvin Elliott, but they didn't date until they were both attending Southern Missionary College (now Southern Adventist University) in Collegedale, TN.

After Southern, when Marvin entered Loma Linda School of Dentistry, Candy soon followed to attend La Sierra University where she majored in Elementary School Education. After graduating, she took a position as a first-grade teacher at Loma Linda Elementary School, and she and Marvin married Aug. 2, 1964, in Yucaipa, CA. In 1966, they moved to Asheville, N.C., where Marvin took over a friend's dental practice.

For more than 30 years, Candy played the organ and piano for the Mount Pisgah Academy Church and Asheville North Church, which included many weddings and events. She was a beloved teacher at Asheville Pisgah Church School, teaching music and grades 5th and 6th.

A Memorial Service was given at the Mount Pisgah Academy Church on Feb. 1, 2020, with hundreds in attendance. Candy is survived by her husband, Marvin; one daughter, Michelle (Nelson) Fontaine; one son, Lee Elliott (Kirstin Chalker Elliott); two granddaughters: Lauren and Kaeleigh; one brother, David Scott (Kathy Wikoff Scott); one nephew, Jason Scott; one niece, Kimberly Scott; and her cousin, John McCoy (Jan Olmstead McCoy).





**MARTIN, (CONNIE) CAMILLA E.**, 97, born in Naples, SD, died in Port Charlotte, FL, on Aug 16, 2020. She was the youngest child of James and Anna Bocek.

She attended college at Madison College in Madison, TN; Drake University in Des Moines, IA; and Montgomery College in Takoma Park, MD.

She retired in 1964 after 33 years of working at Story County Hospital in Nevada, IA, as a medical librarian, and at Washington Adventist Hospital in Takoma Park, MD, retiring as an administrative assistant to the director of the Laboratories.

She moved to Port Charlotte shortly after retiring, and enjoyed gardening and crafting. She was an active member of the Port Charlotte Church.

She is survived by her daughter, Sharon F. Dickson-Kadel of Sarasota, FL; three grandsons: William H. (Patty) Dickson II of Moore, SC, Andrew D. Dickson of London, England, and Alexander M. (Melissa) of Dover, NH; six great-grandchildren; and 12 nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband of 72 years, Chester L. Martin; two older brothers: Otto Bocek and Arthur Bocheck both of Vienna, SD; and her daughter, Dr. Frances Kaye Martin of Punta Gorda, FL.

A Celebration of Life Service will be held by the family at a later date.

**QUEVEDO, CARLOS, 90**, born Nov. 22, 1929 in Santurce, Puerto Rico; died Dec. 5, 2019 in Orlando, FL. He was a long-time member of the Markham Woods Church in Longwood, FL.

He earned an associate degree from Southwestern Adventist University in Keene, TX, and in 1958, graduated from Madison College in Madison, TN, with a bachelor's degree in medical technology. He served in the United States Army as a medic in Korea, earning the rank of sergeant.

He retired from AdventHealth Orlando in 1995, after 29 years as assistant director of the laboratory. In retirement, he participated in several mission trips in Central and South America.

He is survived by his wife of 24 years, Jane Allen Quevedo of Apopka; two sons: Mike of Summerfield, and Dan (Melissa) of Longwood; three grandchildren; and one great granddaughter.

His first wife, Rachel Campbell Quevedo, preceded him in death in 1977.



**WHEELER BETTY JANE**, 91, born Feb. 9, 1929 to the late Mary Elizabeth and James Moore in Grafton, WV, died Aug. 3, 2020 in Hendersonville, NC. She was member of Fletcher SDA Church in Hendersonville.

Betty's was a life of service to her local church ministries, to her K-12 teaching career, and students (in public and parochial schools) over a 30-year period in Michigan, New York, and South Carolina. Betty enjoyed starting a K-8th multi-grade Seventh-Day Adventist school in Aiken, S.C., in 1986, where she was principal. She also worked for several years as an administrative secretary. After Maynard and Betty retired, they joined the Collegedale, TN, Church in 1998. The couple then moved in 2013, to the Fletcher, N.C. area.

Betty is survived by four children: Robin (Perry) Pratt of North Carolina; Marilee (Bryan) Jaffeaux of South Carolina; Wendy (Mark) Taylor of Georgia; and Maynard (Kristi) Wheeler II of Tennessee; seven grandchildren: Jamie (Joe) Derrick, Shawn (Cristy) Pratt, Karly Pratt, Crystal Jaffeaux, Christian Taylor, Victoria Taylor, and Maynard Wheeler III; four great-grandchildren: Kimiko (Brian) Lunsford, Heaven-Leigh Derrick, Xander Pratt, Judah Pratt; and two great-great-grandchildren: Raloe Evans and Jackson Lunsfordame. She was preceded in death by her husband, Pastor Maynard Wheeler, in 2015.

**BUSH, WILMOTHE “ELIZABETH,”** 90, born July 17, 1930 in Eden, NC, died July 19, 2020 in Pensacola, FL. She was a long-time member of the University Parkway Church, and served in many church offices including Sabbath School Secretary and Personal Ministries Secretary, Deaconess, Vespers Leader, and Home and School Leader. As a personal mission project, she enjoyed sending out birthday and anniversary cards to church members. She is survived by her daughter, Gwen (Dave) Stinson; and her son, Steve (Debbie) Crowder. She is preceded in death by her parents, Dennis and Annie Shaffer; five siblings: Nellie, Dorothy, Drothea, Lewis, and Thomas; and her husband of 36 years, Counce M. Bush. A graveside service was held on July 24, 2020 at Bayview Memorial Park in Pensacola with Chaplain Jason Adams officiating.

**MODESTE, VELINA “ANEST,”** 74, born March 26, 1946 in Vieux Fort, St Lucia. She was the fourth of 11 children born to the late Ann Marie Palm. On August 4, 2020, she was diagnosed with COVID-19 and succumbed to the disease on August 13, 2020. Her healing will come on resurrection day when those of us who are believers in Jesus will be caught up together to meet Him in the air. This was her belief and she sleeps peacefully in that promise. While in St Lucia, Velina gave birth to seven children, and they all eventually emigrated to the U.S. Virgin Islands where in 1983 she decided to join the Seventh-day Adventist Church through baptism at Shiloh SDA Church in St Thomas, USVI. She committed to her faith with the same passion and determination she applied to other areas of her life, and zealously shared the happiness she found in her faith with anyone who would listen and win-

ning many souls for God’s Kingdom. She became a strong supporter of Christian education and worked diligently to send her three youngest children to Adventist schools from elementary through college. She believed in the Bible and tried to live her life according to those principles. One of her favorite passages to quote was 2 Chronicles 7:14, “If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways then will I hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sins and will heal their land.” Her favorite song became “Just When I Need Him Most,” and she could be heard singing or whistling the tune as she went about her day. In 1989, she moved part of her family to Orlando, FL, where she joined Mt. Sinai SDA Church, and remained a faithful member serving in many departments until 2013, when she was admitted to a skilled nursing facility due to rapid progression of Alzheimer’s disease. She is survived by six children; 13 grandchildren; 7 great-grandchildren; 9 siblings; a large tribe of cousins; nieces; nephews; a community of friends; and acquaintances.

**NOEL, GAENSLEY ALLYNS LUCKENSTONG JEFFERVEEL-PIERRE,** 23, born Jan. 1, 1997 in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, died Aug. 18, 2020 in Sanford, FL. He was a member of the Forest Lake Church in Apoka, FL, for 11 years. He is survived by his father, Remisset Remy Noel of Apopka, and his mother, Carmelle Pierre of Apopka; and one brother, Redwimy Hansley Noel of Apopka. The service was conducted at the Forest Lake Church in Apopka by Mark Reams and Barbara McCoy.

**OLSEN, DOROTHY I.,** 88, born April 11, 1932 in Memphis, TN; died June 22, 2020 in Rutherfordton, NC. She

was a registered nurse and a graduate of Southern Missionary College (now Southern Adventist University) in Collegedale, TN. She lived in Forest City, FL, for 53 years and was a faithful member of the Forest Lake Church in Apopka, FL, before moving to North Carolina. She was very active in the singles’ ministries for many years. She was employed in home health nursing. She loved to travel, spend time at the beach, and watch birds. She is survived by two sons: Karl (Julia) Olsen of Columbus, NC, and Kenneth (Kathy) Olsen of Jupiter, NC; one daughter, Donna (Brent) Manley of Memphis, TN; six grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren. A private family committal service will be held at Memphis Memorial Park in Memphis.

**PEARSON, MARIAN “ESTELLE,”** 62, born May 16, 1958 in Pensacola, FL, died July 20, 2020 in Milton, FL. She was a member of the University Parkway Church, and previously of the Milton Church. She served as a Certified Nursing Assistant for more than 35 years. In her spare time, she loved to shop online, watch sports, go to church, study her Bible, and spend time with her family. She is survived by her son, Thaddeus Pearson; her granddaughter, Bailey Pearson; her sister, Patricia (Bob) Morrow; her brother, Larry (Brenda) Pearson; three sisters: Edith Pearson, Alma Pearson Kotula (Don), and Mary Alice Pearson; 11 nieces and nephews; and 20 great-nieces and great-nephews. Estelle was preceded in death by her parents: Albert Lee Pearson Sr. and Minnie Pearson; and two brothers: Robert Leslie Pearson and Albert Lee Pearson Jr. A funeral service was held at Trahan Family Funeral Home in Milton, FL, on July 24, 2020 with her nephew, Pastor Larry E. Pearson II officiating. Burial followed at Serenity Gardens Cemetery in Milton.

**ROSIN, ERICK A.**, 92, born Nov. 25, 1927 in Elgin, ND, died May 5, 2020 in Milton, FL. He was a long-time member of the University Parkway Church in Pensacola, FL. He was a veteran of the U.S. Air Force, and worked for more than 30 years for the U.S. Postal Service. He is survived by his wife of 20 years, Phyllis Rosin; five children: Eric (Helen) Rosin, Denice Swanson (Chris-deceased), Barbara (Rick) Nickels, Jeffrey (Maria) Rosin, and Kimberly Rosin; one daughter-in-law, Sue Opp (Ric-deceased); 13 grandchildren; many great-grandchildren; great-great-grandchildren; nieces; and nephews. He was preceded in death by his first wife of 47 years Frances Opp; and brothers: Harold Rosin and Roland Rosen; his sister, Alma Martel; son, Ric Opp; and grandson, Ricky Nickels.

**SCHULEMAN, RICHARD JOHN**, 93, born Aug. 23, 1927 in Wilmette, IL, died April 13, 2020 in Hendersonville, NC. He attended Emmanuel Missionary College (now Andrews University) in Berrien Springs, MI, to study business. There he met and married Juanita Berg. He worked briefly in construction in Evanston, IL. When Juanita's father passed away, they moved to her parents' farm at Shabbona, IL, in 1951. They worked on the farm for 20 years. During that time, they gave birth to two daughters. The family moved to another farm in Mendota, IL, which they acquired and owned and operated for 40 years. Richard was a member of the Aurora, IL, Church, where he served as a deacon, Sabbath School teacher, and an elder. Richard and Juanita retired to Fletcher Park Inn in Hendersonville, NC, in 2011, and attended Fletcher Church in Hendersonville. He is survived by his loving wife of 70 years, Juanita (Berg) Schuleman of Hendersonville; two daughters: Jeane

nette (Scott) Gividen of Dorchester, SC; and Carol (Kenneth) Scranton of Bolingbrook, IL; four grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

**WHITE, ARTIE ROSE SMITH**, born Aug. 21, 1931 in Natchez, MS, to the late Rev. Ben James and Annie Davis Smith, died July 4, 2020 at Natchez Merit Health Hospital. She was the youngest of six surviving adult children. As a young child, she was baptized at Claremont Baptist Church and later joined Rose Hill Baptist Church under the leadership of Dr. John N. Rucker, where she actively sang in the Youth Choir. She was educated in the public schools of Natchez, and graduated from Brumfield High School in 1950. She attended Southern University in Baton Rouge, LA, for two years. On June 7, 1954, she married Joseph Robert White and to this union, three children were born. After marriage, she and her husband moved to Port Gibson, MS, where she became a member of Rising Sun Baptist Church under the leadership of Pastor L.E. Claiborne, where she served in the capacity as church clerk. On Aug. 30, 1969, she was baptized into the First Seventh-day Adventist Church of Port Gibson, MS, under the leadership of Elder Henry Monroe Wright. She was elected to the executive committee of the South Central Conference in 1971. This appointment made history at South Central, for she was the first female to serve in this capacity which lasted for a span of two terms (8 years). In Nov. 1975, she moved back to Natchez to care for her parents whose health was failing, and united with Triumphant Church in Natchez. She served her church in the capacity as Secretary, Treasurer, and finally a Deaconess until her health failed. Her employment history included Secretary for Thompson Insurance and Burial Association Port Gibson, MS (1958-1970);

Laboratory Assistant at Medgar Evers Comprehensive Health Clinic in Fayette, MS (1970-1980); Nurse's Aide for Jefferson Davis Hospital Natchez Regional Medical Center (1980-1996) until her health caused her to retire. Her ministry was that of cooking for church activities, singing, and caring for the sick to include her parents and other relatives and friends. Although she will be greatly missed, we are confident that her life with us was a gift from God, for she was a loving, caring, and compassionate mother, grandmother, aunt, cousin, and friend. She leaves to celebrate her legacy three children: Esther (Nigel) Cuffie of Huntsville, AL, Joanne White of Natchez, MS, and Renee West of Biloxi, MS; one step-daughter, Vickie Watters Martin (Cornelius) of Ridgeland, MS; two adopted daughters: Elvie Guthrie-Lewis (Felton) of Long Beach, MS, and Gwendolyn Turner Parker (Carl) of Miami, FL; one sister-in-law, Luvenia Smith of Louisville, MS; one brother-in-law, Lehman David Williams of Chicago, IL; grandchildren and great-grandchildren; four nephews; two nieces; and an extended family of cousins and friends. She was preceded in death by her husband (2000); her parents (1980 and 1981); four brothers: Leroy Davis (Roy-1969), Benjamin Smith Jr. (Buster-1982), Johnnie Albert Smith (1952), and Fred Benoist Smith (Freddie B 1980); one sister, Mary Davis (1986); and one son-in-law, Theodore Bubber West (2011).

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**ADVENTIST REALTOR** - Are you looking to buy or sell? Give me a call to see how I can help you accomplish your goal. Pierre Potgieter @ REMAX Real Estate Center: 423-987-0831 or 423-664-6644. Serving TN & GA. [10-3]

**SDA REALTOR** - Searching to buy or sell in the Orlando, Florida area or anywhere in the U.S? I look forward to helping you! Sandra Da Silva, Realtor: 407-840-8500 (call/text). Service

provided in English & Spanish (no rental services provided). [10-1]

**6.9 UNIMPROVED WOODED ACRES** in Randolph County, AL. 2 storage sheds included. \$20,000 cash. Near Living Springs Health Retreat; Roanoke, AL and Franklin, GA. Contact Margaret White: 601-319-2141 or e-mail: [stearnsmr@gmail.com](mailto:stearnsmr@gmail.com) [10, 11]

**PRIVATE COUNTRY LIVING!** Rutherford County, NC, 6201 square foot brick home built in 2004. 4 bed, 4.5 bath on 23 acres with creeks. Full finished basement with fireplace, 2nd kitchen, full bath, office, 3+ multi-purpose/bedrooms. Home includes elevator, generator, wood burning furnace capable of heating entire home and 2400 square foot barn. Contact Karl Small: 828-817-5153. [10]

### POSITIONS AVAILABLE

**SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY** seeks full-time **faculty member for the School of Computing**. The ideal candidate will have an earned doctorate in computer science, information technology, information systems, or a related area. Qualified candidate would teach graduate and undergraduate courses, develop course materials, advise students academically, serve on university committees, and perform other duties expected of full-time faculty. For a full job description and desired qualifications please visit: [southern.edu/jobs](http://southern.edu/jobs) [10]

**SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY** seeks full-time **faculty member for the School of Visual Art and Design**. Looking for a professor of film production to teach cinematography, lighting, sound design, documentary directing, and producing. M.F.A. in film production and current teaching experience preferred. For a full job description and desired qualifications please visit: [southern.edu/jobs](http://southern.edu/jobs) [10]

**SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY** seeks **Pathways Coordinator** for the School of Business. The Pathways Coordinator facilitates full-circle engagement by serving as a touchpoint for prospective and current students as they navigate to and through higher education to the workforce. *For a full job description and desired qualifications please visit: [southern.edu/jobs](http://southern.edu/jobs)* [10]

**LICENSED MASSAGE THERAPIST** needed for the ProHealth Wellness Center at the Hulsey Wellness Center. Flexible schedule, good salary, friendly environment. New graduates welcomed, no experience required, willing to train. Part time and full time positions available. *Email resume to [dkch7@yahoo.com](mailto:dkch7@yahoo.com) or call us at 706-625-3585.* [10-12]

**DENTAL PRACTICE FOR SALE** - Thinking twice about living in the big city? Thriving dental practice in beautiful NC mountains for sale. 40-year-old established practice in small town with lovely Adventist church. Move in ready, superior staff, all digital, updated equipment. Perfect for ambitious dentist or husband/wife team. Owner willing to stay during transition. *Email [amblerdon494@yahoo.com](mailto:amblerdon494@yahoo.com)* [10]

**EXCEPTIONAL PEDIATRIC, FAMILY AND INTERNAL MEDICINE** opportunities in Idaho and Washington. Total Health Physician Group is located in the culturally diverse and artistic communities of Pullman, WA and Moscow, ID. A balanced life and meaningful service are experienced with local Adventist schools, three Adventist churches, University of Idaho, Washington State University, and locally thriving industries. Walla Walla is only a short 2.5 hour drive away. Excellent full benefits including loan repayment and Adventist tuition benefits. Join us in working with mission and passion. *Contact: Jayne Peterson [jayne@healthmotivate.org](mailto:jayne@healthmotivate.org). <https://www.totalhealthphysician.com/jobs>* [10]

*[totalhealthphysician.com/jobs](https://www.totalhealthphysician.com/jobs)* [10]

**MARKETING ASSISTANT/COORDINATOR** - Child Impact International is an NGO and a supportive ministry of the SDA Church in TN. Child Impact is a sponsorship organization that works in 6 countries. The organization is looking for an experienced **Marketing Assistant** to manage all aspects of media and events. *Please refer to the job description, requirements, and application process at [www.childimpact.org/marketing-role/](http://www.childimpact.org/marketing-role/). Contact Cheri Gardner: 423-910-0667, [support@childimpact.org](mailto:support@childimpact.org). Child Impact International, PO Box 763, Ooltewah, TN 37363.* [10, 11]

**FARM WORKER AND HANDYMAN** needed in Seale, AL. Depending on experience will pay \$1,000 to \$1,500/month. Includes rent free housing in a mobile home. Verifiable church affiliation required with background check. Close to Uchee Pines Institute. *Send resume to [secureemail9@gmail.com](mailto:secureemail9@gmail.com)* [10, 11]

**STALLANT HEALTH**, a rural health clinic in Weimar, CA is accepting applications for an **Optometrist** to join the team. *Interested individuals should contact Marva by email: [marva@stallanthhealth.com](mailto:marva@stallanthhealth.com)* [10]

**MERCHANDISE FOR SALE**

**CASKETS FOR SDA** - High quality 20-gauge steel. Includes 2nd coming picture, Ten Commandments, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and 3 Angles message. Priced under \$800. *Call or text us at 865-382-1834 or 865-809-1428, email [casketssda@gmail.com](mailto:casketssda@gmail.com)* [10]

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**RELOCATING?** Apex Moving & Storage has a national account contract with the General Conference for your moving needs. Take advantage of a volume rated discount. Be assured you are moving

with the best! *Call Marcy Dante' at 800-766-1902; or visit us at: [www.apexmoving.com/adventist](http://www.apexmoving.com/adventist)* [10-12]

**NEW/USED ADVENTIST BOOKS:** TEACH Services helping authors publish their book, including editing, design, marketing, and worldwide distribution. Call 800-367-1844 for a free evaluation. *Visit [www.infbooks.com](http://www.infbooks.com) for used books and your local ABC or [www.TEACHServices.com](http://www.TEACHServices.com) for new book releases.* [10-4]

**SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY** offers master's degrees in business, computer science, counseling, education, nursing, religion and social work. Flexibility is provided through some online and many on-campus programs. Financial aid may be available. *For more information, call 423-236-2585 or visit [www.southern.edu/graduatestudies](http://www.southern.edu/graduatestudies)* [10-5]

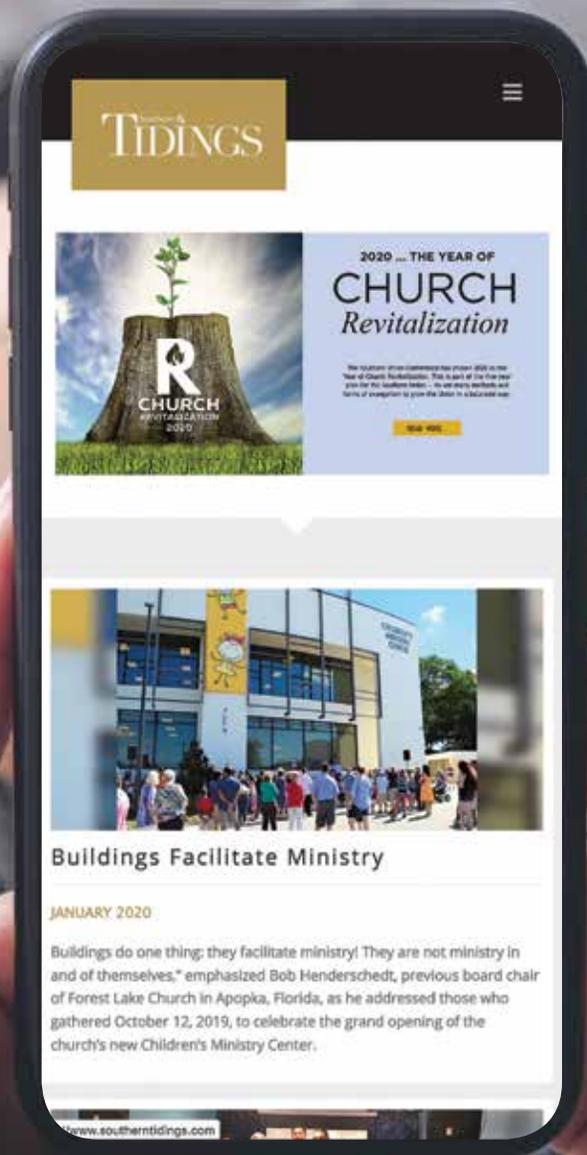
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**SEEKING A COUNTRY ADVENTIST SCHOOL** with an emphasis in Forest School? Algood Christian Elementary and its friendly constituent church are located on 30 beautiful, wooded acres near Cookeville, TN. Forest School is a vital, year-long part of the Christ-centered curriculum. *Call 931-854-0259 or visit [algoodchristian.org](http://algoodchristian.org)* [10-2]

**SELLING HEALTH FOOD STORE BUSINESS:** Set up with almost 3 years in business and continues to grow. Looking for someone to buy and continue the health ministry. Location in NE Georgia. Price negotiable. *For more details call 706-436-7758 or email [lee.rena.90@gmail.com](mailto:lee.rena.90@gmail.com)* [10]

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Our tour will include a special discount for a year contract.

Check our website: [www.FloridaLivingRetirement.com](http://www.FloridaLivingRetirement.com)



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### Southeastern

Juan Gonzalez (352) 735-3142

### Southern Adventist University

Kimberly Bobenhausen (423) 236-2818



[SUSDAGift.org](https://SUSDAGift.org)

**CAROLINA**

**VIRTUAL WOMEN'S RETREAT** - Nov. 6-8. "Fullness of Joy-Deeper." Gail McKenzie. Carolina Conference Website.

**MINISTERIAL SPOUSES RETREAT** - Nov. 13-15. NPR. Cancelled.

**PRAYER MINISTRIES VIRTUAL MEETING** - Jan. 1. Carolina Conference Website.

**"FULLNESS OF JOY" VIRTUAL WOMEN'S SEMINAR** - Jan. 2. 3 p.m. Carolina Conference Website.

**GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND**

**TLT KICKOFF TRAINING** - Oct. 16-18. Online, www.gccsda.com

**7 BRIDGES MARATHON** - Oct. 18. Run in the country, the location changed to Cohutta Springs Conference Center, Crandall, GA.

**ACF LEADERSHIP REBOOT** - Oct. 23-24. A conference for Adventist Christian Fellowship leaders serving on public college or university campuses. Conference Office, Calhoun, GA.

**CIVIL CONVERSATIONS ON RACE: A BIBLICALLY GENERATED DIALOGUE ON RACE, CULTURE, AND OUR CALL TO BE A PECULIAR PEOPLE** - Oct. 24 at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. This event is for youth leaders and anyone else interested. Georgia-Cumberland Academy Church in Calhoun, GA.

**TOWN HALL MEETING WITH THE CONFERENCE ADMINISTRATION TEAM** - Oct. 24 from 4p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Attend an online panel discussion with the Conference administration team and moderator Mickey P. Evans, Georgia-Cumberland Adventist Elders' Consortium president. www.gccsda.com

**SONG OF SONGS: LOVE OF A LIFETIME MARRIAGE RETREAT** - Oct. 30-Nov. 1. Presenters will be Jorge and Evelyn Torres. Reserve a spot for you and your sweetheart. Lanier Islands Legacy Lodge, Buford, GA.

**PRAYER MINISTRIES DAY** - Oct. 31. Lookout Mountain Church, Rising Fawn, GA.

**PATHFINDER TEEN CHALLENGE** - Nov. 6-8. TBA.

**HISPANIC WOMEN'S ONLINE WEEK OF PRAYER** - Nov. 7-14. www.gccsda.com.

**LAST DAY EVENTS SEMINAR** - Nov.

7. Taught by E.W. Dempsey, adult ministries director. Coalfield Church, Oliver Springs, TN. Events are subject to change during COVID-19, please check the website for the latest details, www.gccsda.com.

**SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY**

**VIRTUAL HOMECOMING** - Oct. 29 to Nov. 1. Save the date! Honor Classes include: '1940, '50, '60, '70, '75, '80, '90, '95, '00, '10. Visit southern.edu/homecoming or call 423-236-2830 for additional details.

**ANNOUCEMENTS**

**PLAINVIEW ADVENTIST ACADEMY, SHEYENNE RIVER ACADEMY, AND DAKOTA ADVENTIST ACADEMY ALUMNI WEEKEND** - Oct. 2, 3. At Dakota Adventist Academy, 15905 Sheyenne Circle, Bismarck, ND. Come and renew your friendships. Honor Classes: '46, '51, '56, '61, '66, '71, '76, '81, '86, '91, '96, '01, '06, '11, '16. For more information call, 701-751-6177, ext. 212 or visit www.dakotaadventistacademy.org.

**FLETCHER ACADEMY VIRTUAL HOMECOMING WEEKEND** - Oct. 2-4. We cannot meet in person this year. Details at: www.fletcheracademy.com.

**INDIANA ACADEMY ALUMNI WEEKEND** - Oct. 9, 10. Alumni weekend will be conducted at the Academy locat-

ed in Cicero, Indiana. There will be a golf tournament on Friday, Oct. 9. For reservations, contact Bill Summitt at lAgolfclassic@gmail.com or call 317-437-8104. On Sabbath, Oct. 10, the services will be streamed via YouTube at Indiana Academy Alumni or on the Alumni website at iaalumni.org. For questions about weekend events, contact Janet Schalk White at janet.white@earthlink.net.

**VILLAGE SDA CHURCH** - Oct. 22-24. Hosting the third annual Daniel 11 Conference, featuring leading Adventist scholars discussing the interpretation of this intriguing prophecy. Learn more at www.daniel11prophecy.com (the most comprehensive Adventist website on Daniel 11), and watch online at www.villagesda.org.

**SINGLES:** Bible study, hikes, socials, banquets, retreats, bowling, cooking class and more! Check out the Calendar of Events at www.gccsda.com/singles-ministries/home.

**IT IS WRITTEN CHILDREN'S APP** - It Is Written's "My Place With Jesus" is excited to introduce a brand new mobile app designed to help children learn about Jesus and the Bible in a fun, interactive way. Players can customize their character, enjoy fun Bible lessons, hang out in the tree house with friends, earn badges for their backpacks, gather collectibles that unlock fun mini-games, and so much more! Explore a world of fun and learning with "My Place With Jesus!" Download it for free now. Available for both Android and iOS devices.

	OCT 2	OCT 9	OCT 16	OCT 23	OCT 30	NOV 6
ATLANTA, GA	7:19	7:10	7:01	6:53	6:46	5:40
CHARLESTON, SC	7:01	6:52	6:44	6:36	6:29	5:23
CHARLOTTE, NC	7:04	6:54	6:45	6:37	6:29	5:23
COLLEGEDALE, TN	7:21	7:11	7:02	6:54	6:46	5:40
HUNTSVILLE, AL	6:27	6:17	6:08	6:00	5:53	4:46
JACKSON, MS	6:42	6:34	6:25	6:18	6:11	5:05
LOUISVILLE, KY	7:22	7:12	7:02	6:53	6:44	5:37
MEMPHIS, TN	6:41	6:31	6:22	6:14	6:06	5:00
MIAMI, FL	7:05	6:58	6:51	6:45	6:40	5:35
MONTGOMERY, AL	6:27	6:18	6:10	6:02	5:55	4:49
NASHVILLE, TN	6:27	6:17	6:08	5:59	5:52	4:45
ORLANDO, FL	7:09	7:01	6:53	6:47	6:41	5:36
TAMPA, FL	7:13	7:05	6:58	6:52	6:46	5:41
WILMINGTON, NC	6:53	6:43	6:35	6:27	6:19	5:13

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