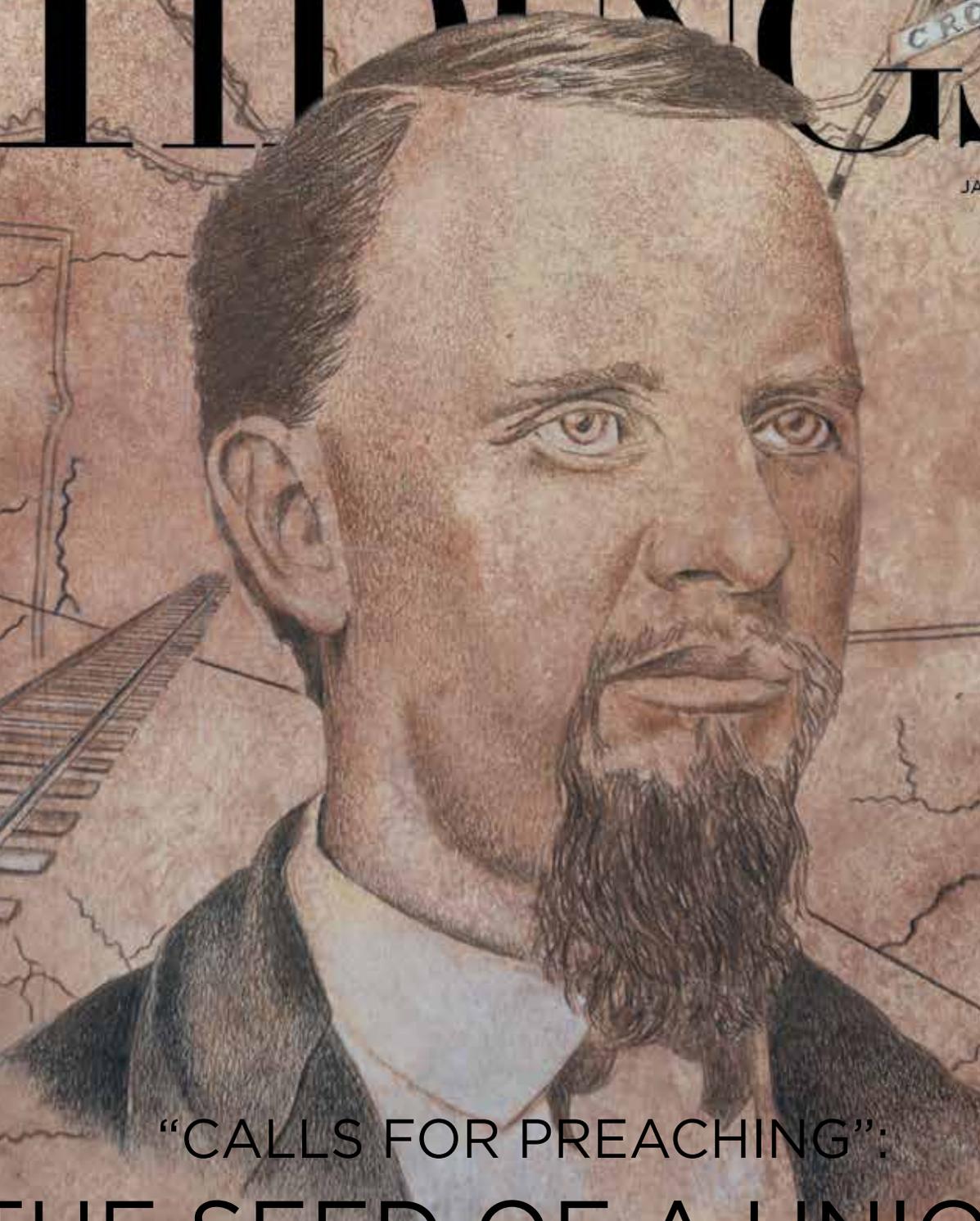


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TIDINGS



JANUARY 2021



“CALLS FOR PREACHING”: THE SEED OF A UNION

THE POLITICIZATION
OF RELIGIOUS
LIBERTY

I AM LOVED TO
THE XTREME

VIRTUAL
EVANGELISM

THE LIFE AND
LEGACY OF
GREGORY ORVILLE MACK

Bright Hopes for 2021



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

“His grace has given us such unfailing encouragement and such bright hopes,” 2 Thessalonians 2:16 NEB.

A new year. A time to add new items to the menu of life, and hope for a better experience than last year. Time to examine the printout of the past with its successes and failures, and to punch into the computer new plans and desires.

January 2021 — a time, above all times, to hope for better things. God sends the Earth around the sun, and starts a new year every 365 days to give us a fresh opportunity to consider and begin anew. Summer and winter, seedtime and harvest, roll around by His decree. As He did ancient Israel, He invites us to go with Him into the year that He has, in His grace, given us.

Then, what might you be hoping for this year? The list probably churns through your mind at the very asking of the question. Like every rational being on Earth, you have a future filled with hope.

My hope for 2021 is to enjoy new beginnings in a positive way with Jesus Christ. A fresh start in Jesus may sting a little as the imperfections of our characters are cleaned out. When this stinging comes, instead of fretting or becoming discouraged, we should rejoice that His cleansing power is working in us, purifying our hearts so that we will be able to serve Him better, and reflect His love to others around us. I am so very thankful that the thoughts of God toward us are thoughts of peace accompanied by a future of hope.

Hope focuses on spiritual as well as worldly objects. The Bible speaks of the hope that God gives or that man places in God. A little reading of the Word will soon show you that such hope isn't a way of raising a question mark over God's future deeds. Not at all. Rather, hope assures us that God waits for us in the future, ready to do for us all the good things that He has done in the past. It's a way of saying, “Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday, today, and forever.”

So, He gives us “bright hopes.” They sparkle in the promises of God. They write a check onto which God invites us to write our name.

God-inspired hope tells us of the activity of grace. What God did for us in Jesus becomes our hope for today and every day of our future. Day by day He presents us faultless before the throne of His grace. Day by day we live in Him. Day by day He gives us victory.

Hope also brings the future into our today. In Christ, we have eternal life. In Christ, we walk in newness of life. Hope in God reaches across the unknowable tomorrow, and gives us the blessings of God's new world today.

Such are God's bright hopes. Fill out your shopping list of promises and let God say, “Yes,” to them in Christ Jesus. The price is paid, and they are all yours.

Finally, as we focus on reconnecting with missing members in 2021, may we not slack in hastening the Good News to every backslider that God has forgiven him/her and that He longs for his/her return.

The Word of God declares, “I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel,” Hosea 14:4, 5. So here is my appeal: Won't you try and get in touch with the prodigal son, and let him know that his loving Father is longing for him to come home? Won't you find the one sheep that has strayed? Please know, as we enter 2021, the heavenly Shepherd will help you. -RCS ①



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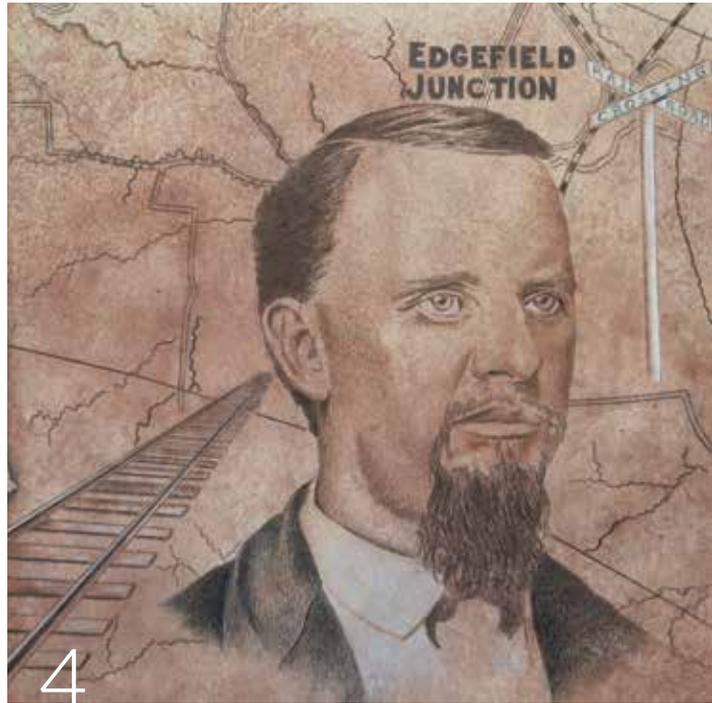
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“Calls for Preaching”: THE SEED OF A UNION

BY R. STEVEN NORMAN III

When young Elbert and Ellen married in 1865, they had no idea how one invitation would change the course of their lives and plant the seed of the Southern Union.

Elbert B. Lane, 25, and Ellen S. Esmond, 21, had met while attending the recently established State Normal School (now Eastern Michigan University) at Ypsilanti, Michigan. After Elbert completed his studies, he returned home to Bedford Township to teach. He was assigned to three schools in Bedford, Pennfield, and Emmett. After teaching for a few years, Elbert proposed and Ellen said yes. They purchased a small farm and looked forward to a life of sowing seeds and reaping bountiful harvests.

The young couple belonged to the recently organized Seventh-day Adventist denomination. Elbert had joined the Advent believers when he was 13 after a year of spiritual depression triggered by a sermon about the “eternal suffering of the ungodly. The speaker stated that if every blade of grass, every leaf upon the trees, every drop of water in the stream, all the sand upon the seashore, and every star in the sky, were numbered, and each star, each grain of sand, each leaf, and

each blade represented millions of ages, and were all multiplied into each other, it would be but the beginning of that boundless age of woe.” Disheartened, Elbert decided God was a tyrant that he could not love (D. H. Lamson).

However, after a year of despair, young Elbert and his family attended meetings held by James White and his wife, Ellen, in Bedford Township. Elbert listened to Ellen White tell how God loved the world and gave his Son so anyone who believes can have eternal life. Moved by God’s love, Elbert surrendered his life to God along with stepfather Richard Godsmark, mother Huldah Lane, brother Sands, and stepbrother Otto.

Now, in spite of their happy marriage and joy in Christ, Elbert was burdened. “As he would take up the *Review and Herald*, his heart would be touched by the earnest appeals and pressing calls for help in the work of the ministry. He was often so burdened that he would leave his work in the field, communicate his feelings to his wife, and together they would bow down and pray to God that if this feeling was not from him it might be removed, but that if it was of God, the way might be clear for him to go forth to the harvest for the Master. With this thought in his mind, he advertised his

little farm for sale; and in less than one week, the opportunity came to sell,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, August 23, 1881, 143.

Elbert wanted to make sure he was making a wise decision, so he sought counsel from James and Ellen White. They encouraged him to go into the ministry. So together, Elbert and Ellen went from sowing and reaping crops to sowing seeds of truth and reaping souls in the winter of 1868.

Elbert’s first assignment was to join A.O. Burrill, who shared his burden to preach the Gospel. They worked together in Vermontville and Chester, Michigan. Notwithstanding opposition, their meetings were successful. Elbert was given a ministerial license on May 19, 1869. After two years in Michigan, Lane’s ministry took him and Ellen to Indiana where they met with heartache and challenging health issues.

On July 20, 1870, they lost their child to death, but they soldiered on through grief, preaching and teaching, and, in October of 1870, Elbert was ordained at a camp meeting in Indiana. After ordination, they were working near Circleville, Indiana, when Ellen became sick with typhoid in November. For nearly a month Elbert nursed his wife while con-

**EDGEFIELD
JUNCTION**

RAIL
CROSSING
ROAD



CALLS FOR PREACHING.

tinuing his evangelistic meetings. (Rasmussen)

During this time Elbert read an advertisement in the September 1870 *Review and Herald*. The headline was “Calls for Preaching.” It read, “We have received calls for preaching from the following places, which we publish for the benefit of those who may be seeking fields of labor: Nasonville, Wood Co., Wis., Grant’s Hill, Mo., Edgefield Junction, Tenn., Grass Lake, Mich., Meeme, Manitowoc Co., Wis., Akron, Tuscola Co., Mich., Plano, Ill., Delta, Eaton Co., Mich., Afton, Iowa, Memphis, Mich., Skinner, Bay Co., Mich., Ford’s Corners, Mc Lean Co., Ill.,” *The Advent Review and Herald* September 20, Vol. 36, p. 112.

Out of the 13 places calling for preaching, Lane felt led to go to the only one in the South — Edgefield Junction, Tennessee. This had to be a daunting decision. The Civil War had ended just five years before, and feelings between the North and South were still raw. The trip would not be easy, but Lane chose to go anyway.

After he completed evangelistic meetings in January and February of 1871, Lane traveled to Edgefield Junction, a small township located 10 miles north of Nashville, Tennessee, on the junction of two major southern railroads. He arrived in March and submitted a change of address notice to the *Review and Herald* so people would know where he was. “The P.O. address of E. B. Lane will be, until further notice, Edgefield Junction, Davidson Co., Tenn.,” *The Advent Review and Herald of the Sabbath*, April 11, 1871, p. 136.

The May 2, 1871, *Advent Review* carried another report:

“After a few days preparation, I came to this place, Edgefield Junction, near Nashville, Tennessee. Here are a few keeping the Sabbath who desire baptism. They embraced the truth from reading publications, having never heard a discourse from one of our ministers.

“There is but one church (Catholic) in the place, and, as the school-house was small, we accepted an invitation to

occupy the station and telegraph rooms in the depot building, the white people occupying one room, and the colored the other. These, however, soon became insufficient to accommodate the people. Accordingly, the freight room was prepared, and the platform, outside also seated before all could be comfortably entertained. I have now given thirteen discourses which have brought me to the Sabbath question, which seems to be received without unusual opposition, and I look for some to embrace and keep it, with all God’s commands. I will before long give my views in another article of the South as a field of labor. Yours striving for eternal life. E. B. LANE,” *The Advent Review and Herald of the Sabbath*, May 2, 1871, p. 6.

In May, Elbert Lane organized a church in Edgefield Junction, composed of four white families and a Black minister, Harry Lowe. R. K. McCune submitted the following report:

“We have had a very refreshing visit from Bro. E. B. Lane, and a great reviving in our midst, considering the short stay he made with us. Seven were baptized, a little church of thirteen members organized, and some others are willing to join, but circumstances at present hinder them from so doing.

“We have organized S. B. [systematic benevolence] to the amount of thirty-three dollars, which would have been more but for the fearful work the cholera is making around us. It is said to be the most destructive malady that ever visited Nashville, and all kinds of business is sadly deranged. We beg the prayers of our people, that the destroying angel may pass us by, and God’s mercy be extended to the community at large,” “Tennessee,” R. K. McCune. Edgefield Junction, Tenn., *The Advent Review and Herald of the Sabbath*, July 1, 1871.

A Few Seeds Grow in a Union

Precious seeds of truth planted by Elbert B. Lane, Squier Osborne, C. O. Taylor, D. T. Bordeaux, and many others found receptive hearts throughout the-



PHOTO BY: CITATION: FOSTER, W. F. & G.W. & C.B. COLTON & CO. (1871) MAP OF DAVIDSON COUNTY TENNESSEE.

Edgefield Junction was located just a few miles from Madison, Tennessee, as shown on this 1871 map of Davidson County, Tennessee.



PHOTO BY: R. STEVEN NORMAN, III

Squire Osborne, who organized the first Adventist church in Kentucky and served as president of the Kentucky and Tennessee Conference, is buried in Shepherdsville, Kentucky.

South. Soon other congregations were organized in various states, and the Kentucky and Tennessee Conference was organized in 1876. At the General Conference of 1883, C. O. Corliss gave the report for the General Southern Mission. He re-

ported that there were 267 white Sabbath keepers and 20 colored, (Hansen, p. 33).

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

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

Louis E. Hansen opened the health work in the South with a health exhibit at the Tennessee Centennial and International Exposition from May 1 to October 31, 1897.

Finally, on April 9, 1901, the Southern Union Conference was organized. At the time there were only four conferences within its territory: the Cumberland Conference (1900), Florida Conference (1893), Kentucky Conference (1879), and Tennessee River Conference (1889).

150 Years of Adventist Evangelism

2021 marks 150 years since Elbert B. Lane came south to Edgefield Junction preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We will commemorate these 150 years of evangelism this year with a series of articles recounting some of the history of this Union.

But, we must celebrate not just by taking a reflective look back. 2021 is also a year where we are focused on making and maintaining connections with each other and Christ. Even though we are separated by COVID-19, we can and must stay connected to Christ and to each other.

To do this we invite you to do just three things. One, ask God to deepen your personal connection to Him through prayer and Bible study. Two, use the “one an-

other” commands of the New Testament to build and strengthen your connection with members of your church and community [see sidebar]. Three, identify with at least one inactive member of your congregation; pray for that person and allow God to use you to strengthen their involvement in the church.

After Elbert Lane left Edgefield Junction, he and Ellen preached and gave temperance lectures in many places. Indeed, Ellen S. Edmonds Lane held a ministerial license from 1875 to 1889.

In 1881 the Lanes were both holding evangelistic campaigns in Michigan at the same time. Elbert was preaching a meeting in Camden, while Ellen was preaching in Casanovia.

During the meeting, Lane became critically ill. “He was urged quite strongly ... to telegraph to his wife, but he said she was engaged in a series of meetings, and he did not wish to alarm or disturb her. Such was his abnegation of self. He finally consented to send the message, and the physician was preparing to write at his dictation, when he said, ‘Let me rest a little, and then I have something to tell you.’ These were his last words,” *Review and Herald*, August 23, 1881, 143. Elbert B. Lane died at 9 a.m. on Sabbath, August 6, 1881 at Ransom Center, Michigan. He was 41.

As news about Elbert B. Lane’s death spread, news of another death stunned the young denomination. James White, co-founder of the denomination, died the same day. Interestingly, both of their wives were named Ellen. After Elbert’s death Ellen Lane continued to pastor districts and run evangelistic meetings for a while, but finally committed most of her ministry to the Health and Temperance Society.

Elbert Lane heard a call for preaching and boldly came to the South to preach to eager hearers. Today, calls for preaching continue. People still want to hear the Gospel. They need someone who will share the Good News of salvation with them. Will you go? 📍



PHOTO BY: CENTER FOR ADVENTIST RESEARCH

Robert M. Kilgore served as superintendent of General Conference District #2, formed in 1890. He would also be the first president of the Southern Union Conference.



Ellen S. Esmond Lane, wife of Elbert Lane, was a licensed minister (1878-1889) who preached evangelistic meetings and gave temperance lectures.

R. Steven Norman III, is the communication director and Southern Tidings editor at the Southern Union Conference.

Bible Ways to Stay Connected DURING COVID-19

BY R. STEVEN NORMAN III

One of the challenges of this pandemic is staying connected with family, fellow church members, and friends. The New Testament has numerous “one another” commands that were given to the early Church to help them build connections and promote a sense of fellowship in the body of Christ. These one-another commands also promote a spirit of empathy and compassion. We invite you to prayerfully study these commands, and think of ways to use them in your relationships.

SERVE ONE ANOTHER (GALATIANS 5:13)

We are to “care for one another” (1 Corinthians 12:25), “bear one another’s burdens” (Galatians 6:2), and show hospitality to one another” (1 Peter 4:9). How can you help those who have lost their job, or are facing eviction? How can you help people suffering from depression, or who just need a friend?

PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER (JAMES 5:16)

One pastor sends a personal text to his congregation to alert them that he will pray for them that day. He invites them to share any prayer requests or praise reports. A classmate types a prayer and texts them. You might want to consider doing this with people on your prayer list or people that you know are experiencing a crisis.

FORGIVE ONE ANOTHER (EPHESIANS 4:2, 32; COLOSSIANS 3:13)

Forgiveness is a key means of promoting unity. This is a good time to review



your relationships and offer the gift of forgiveness. Or, you may need to apologize to someone. How do you get started? Perhaps, make a list of people that you need to forgive or apologize to. Then prayerfully begin to forgive or apologize to them one by one.

SPEAK TO ONE ANOTHER WITH PSALMS, HYMNS, AND SPIRITUAL SONGS (EPHESIANS 5:19)

Music is a wonderful way to lift people’s spirits. Some musicians have been doing mini-concerts on Facebook. I do not sing or play an instrument, so I share links to songs on YouTube with friends who are bereaved or in need of encouragement.

USE YOUR GOD-GIVEN GIFTS FOR THE BENEFIT OF ONE ANOTHER (1 PETER 4:10)

Our talents can be used to bless people during the pandemic. Henrietta says, “I love to cook! I cook lots of food

and carry it to people’s homes. I wear my mask, ring the door bell, and leave it on the porch.” What are your gifts and talents? How can they be used for the benefit of others?

LOVE ONE ANOTHER (JOHN 13:34)

Jesus says love one another. We are to love people as Jesus loves us. The love Jesus calls us to empathizes with and seeks to understand people, and then shows compassion through helpful acts of love. There are many ways to show love during the pandemic. Two simple ways are to wear a mask and practice social distancing.

TEACH ONE ANOTHER (ROMANS 15:14; COLOSSIANS 3:16)

Jesus says to go into all the world and teach. We cannot physically travel to teach, but we can still fulfill Christ’s commission. One way is to send a handwritten invitation to watch the It Is Written or Breath of Life telecast to your friends and neighbors. Yaime Cordova gives Bible studies on Zoom. William Smith uses Facebook Live to share an encouraging message and pray for people’s prayer requests. He says, “I am reaching classmates and friends that I would never reach any other way.”

However God leads you to use these one-another commands, let’s seek to stay connected and build new connections during 2021. 📌

R. Steven Norman III, is the communication director and Southern Tidings editor at the Southern Union Conference.

Evidence-based Information Combats COVID-19 VACCINE HESITANCY

BY ADVENTHEALTH STAFF WRITERS

With a COVID-19 vaccine beginning to become available, many are deciding if and when they will be interested in taking it themselves. As the world watched an extraordinarily rapid development process paired with political dialogue on the topic, some Americans have drawn their own conclusions that contribute to hesitancy or even rejection of the vaccine. However, experts in vaccine safety who have studied the new COVID-19 vaccines are finding that they are safe and effective, meaning we may finally have a crucial tool to mitigate this pandemic — unless people don't use it.

Adding to the danger of vaccine hesitancy is the speed at which misinformation and non-evidence-based data can spread, due to its ability to stoke fear and shape opinions that are not based in fact or science. As part of the research and approval process, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) must adhere to multiple levels of regulations and safety measures while providing transparent and publicly available evidence outlining the findings of research studies that illustrate the vaccine's safety and effectiveness.

"We trust the FDA and CDC to guide us on the authorization or approval and recommendations for the vaccines, such as how to administer them, who is the right target, and other details," said Jeffrey Kuhlman, M.D., M.P.H., chief quality and safety officer for AdventHealth. "The information available suggests the first set of vaccines available are the safest and most effective in vaccine development history. Un-



like measles or historic polio, which were live viruses, the modern vaccines stimulate the body's natural immune system with inactive RNA [ribonucleic acid] mimicking the virus."

After a vaccine has been rigorously approved as safe and effective, a phased rollout commences that helps ensure an equitable prioritization based on the exposure risk and vulnerability of various populations. In the first phase, high-risk health care workers and first responders will have access to the vaccine, helping protect those who have so courageously served on the front lines to care for our communities. From there, the vaccine will become available to those with comorbid and underlying conditions that put them at significantly higher risk, along with older adults living in congregate or overcrowded settings. Phase 2 and subsequent phases prioritize populations based on certain

high-risk job functions and living arrangements, along with the remainder of older adults not included in phase 1.

Through unparalleled collaboration between health care, governmental agencies, the business community, and many thousands of Americans who volunteered as study participants, the advent of a COVID-19 vaccine marks a major milestone in humanity's ability to ward off this virus and begin a path to recovery and healing. Where the pandemic goes from here is up to the responsibility of each individual.

Angeline Brauer, health ministries director for the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists, has shared the Church's view on vaccination. "The Seventh-day Adventist Church strongly encourages that we care for the well-being of individuals in our families, churches, and communities. We have scientific evidence that vaccines have protected the health and safety of individuals and populations, so as a Church we support responsible vaccination. As stated in the guidance regarding immunizations, the worldwide Adventist Church body also supports freedom of conscience and respect for individual choices regarding vaccinations," she said.

The Bible tells us that our bodies are the Lord's temple, and we are tasked at protecting it. It also tells us to love our neighbors as ourselves. During the coronavirus pandemic, both of these responsibilities mean doing all that we can to protect ourselves and others from COVID-19. 🕊

The Politicization of RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

BY AMIREH AL-HADDAD

Fifteen years ago, I was engaging people in thinking about how a pandemic would affect our ability to worship together in congregations when the first Avian Flu virus jumped from birds to humans. That virus never made it to the United States, and our feeling of immunity to another country's health problems made even religious liberty advocates cease talking about issues of quarantining and the impact such could have on religious liberty and our society.

2020 brought the issue to life in a way that we could not have anticipated. Between an election and a pandemic, religious liberty has been politicized in a highly worrisome way over the last year. In addition to the constant fluidity that seems to be the catch phrase of the pandemic, it is this quick flow of actions and changes that are endangering religious freedom today.

Should Adventist churches make a conscientious effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19? Yes, indeed. Are there religious liberty concerns we need to be worried about? Absolutely! But, we need to look at the whole picture and put our own political preferences aside. The protection of religious liberty should be everyone's concern. If we continue to politicize religion and subsequently lose our religious freedom because of our own biases, we will still be accountable to God for not protecting His precious gift to us.

Church/state scholars have been watching what is happening in the United States regarding religious liberty. More than just a single news stories, these scholars are compiling the history and changing norms being brought about by both soci-

ety's and the court's changing reactions during the pandemic. At the beginning of the pandemic, we saw massive church closings in states with highly concentrated populations. An abundant number of Seventh-day Adventist churches (and others) decided autonomously to close ahead of the mandated state closure rules. Others closed only after the closing orders came down. And, some churches never closed, because there was not a high rate of infection in those states and no additional mandates requiring such.

While only a small fraction of churches filed court actions against the pandemic closures, they have garnered a lot of press. The courts have been scattered in their rulings, and there has been a learning curve as we have gone through the year. Courts seem to be ruling quite differently now than when the pandemic first started. In part this is due to a failure to understand or plan in advance how to handle a pandemic. Conflicts between religious liberty and public health concerns did not factor into the difference between an emergency shutdown vs. a long running pandemic plan. Most people are not going to question a temporary shut-down of church for a few weeks for health concerns, but when you start talking a couple of months and up to two years of closures, then we have a problem.

Calvary Chapel in Nevada has filed several claims in court. Their most recent was a charge of religious discrimination in that, comparing the two, casinos were being treated more favorably than churches. Here lie some serious issues involving religious liberty. When the state of Nevada reopened its casinos, they re-

Even in a pandemic, the Constitution cannot be put away and forgotten."

SCOTUS, November 2020

fused to lift an overly restrictive ban on church openings. If a casino had a capacity for 2,000, they could let 1,000 in the door at a time. Whereas if a church had the capacity for 2,000, they could only allow 50 in at one time. Calvary Chapel had approached the courts earlier in the summer asking for a lifting of the 50-person cap, but in a narrow 5-4 vote, the Supreme Court refused the churches' request to block enforcement of the order.

There have been a lot of comparisons between churches and casinos/bars/restaurants/grocery stores and the list goes on. Maybe we should stop making comparisons between the godly and the ungodly. Church and religion in America have always been treated special. If you start asking to be treated like other venues, you place religion's special status in jeopardy. Do you really want your church compared to a bar or casino?

Undeniably, churches pose a health risk in this pandemic when safeguards go unchecked. We congregate in a closed space; we speak and sing and touch shared objects like the offering plate and hymnals. Some religions share a common communion cup and kiss icons. None of

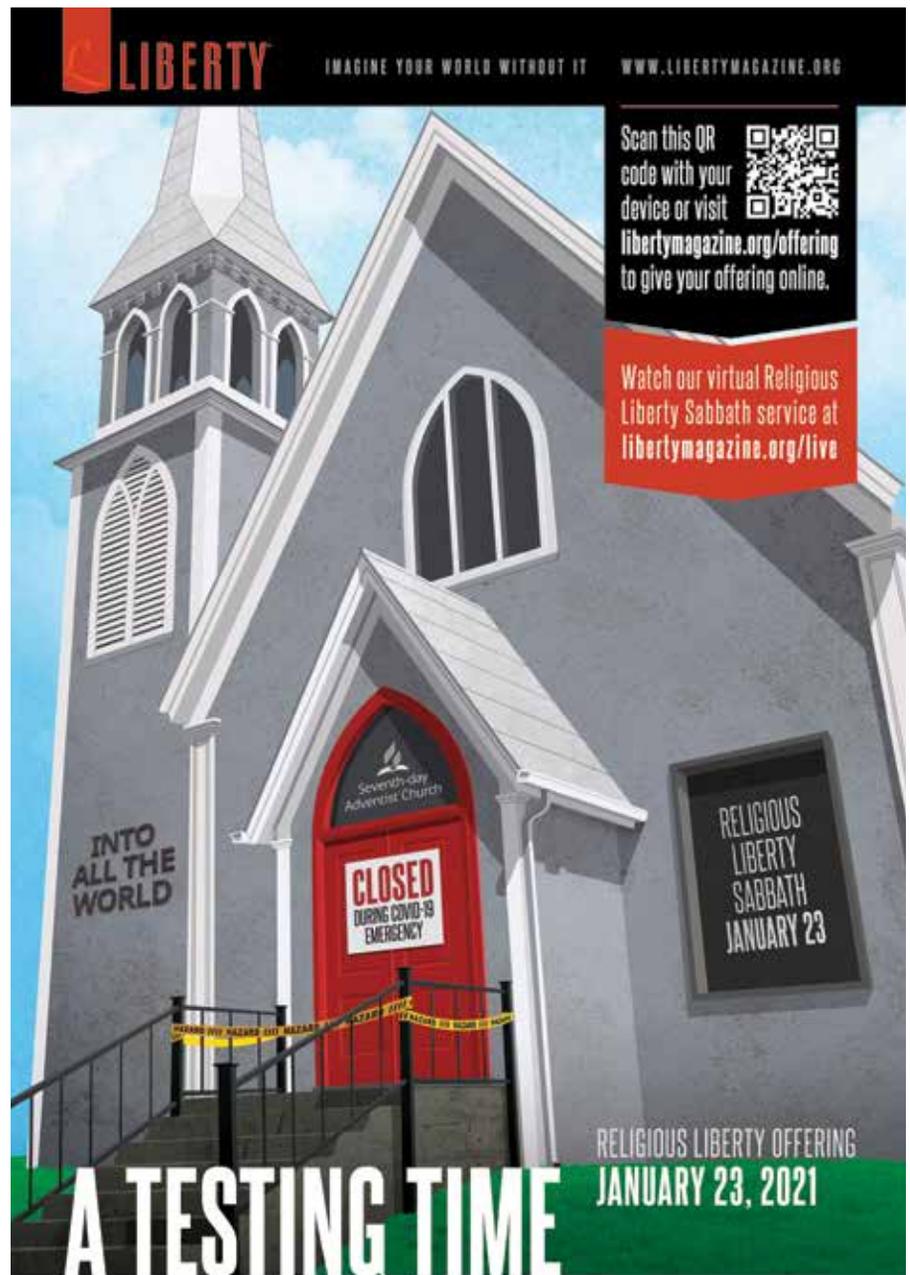
these things are good for stopping a virus that spreads through droplets. So, putting aside the politicization of the virus, and only looking at how disease spreads, there are very valid public health concerns that churches need to consider. The question is ... can churches adapt worship styles without compromising their beliefs?

In Nevada, the government lumped similar activities together for the close-down, but when opening back up *there was a value judgment made by the state*. Casinos were more important than churches. What is the value judgement in this case? The obvious answer is tax revenue. Nevada rakes in upwards of almost 39% in tax revenues from casinos. What value do tax-exempt churches give to the state? I can think of many, but Nevada obviously could not. For Nevada, church value has not been immediately apparent. And yet, churchgoers believe that having churches open and available for worship has great societal value and should be treated just as essential, if not more so, than keeping the liquor store or casinos open. If your church really is special, I would not put it up for comparison to a casino. Religion is incomparable.

While the Supreme Court voted against the Calvary Chapel Church in July, a decision in a New York case in November reversed that course, provided the churches with injunctive relief, and barred the government restrictions on religious services in New York.

Even with this turnaround, it should not go without notice that a change in the politicization of the Supreme Court affects religious liberty and the outcome. The politics of the restrictions on churches is reflective of what is going on in American culture in general — the fight between the secular and the sacred. Both must be able to exist peaceably together. The pandemic is stoking fear over cultural wars regarding religion.

Polarizing religious freedom comes at a cost. We should resist the prodding forces that would downplay the seriousness of the pandemic. When we misuse religious liberty for political reasons, it hampers ef-



forts to keep religious liberty neutral and valued in society. Now is not the time to lose our freedoms because of political dis-

Ellen White wrote these words, “We are not doing the will of God if we sit in quietude, doing nothing to preserve liberty of conscience,” *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 714. In balancing

religious freedom, we can find ways to accommodate the current situation, and remain faithful to protecting religious liberty. ●

Amireh Al-Haddad is the director of religious liberty and public affairs at the Southern Union Conference.

I Am Loved TO THE XTREME

BY JOSÉ MARRERO



PHOTO BY: MUSIC VIDEO STILL FRAME

Lake Wales Spanish Church Pathfinders perform the Varsity iCamporee theme song that they composed.

I Am Loved to the Xtreme reflects what can be seen at Lake Wales Spanish Church. Every Sabbath, at least before the pandemic, a band of 10 to 15 musicians have praised God with hearts and instruments as a big part of the church service.

Instruments including violin, cello, flute, trumpet, trombone, acoustic and electric guitars, bass, percussion, light percussion, etc., join a joyful manifestation of praise every Sabbath. Most of the musicians are youth and active Pathfinders, and the hand of God can be seen at work in this church. The church embraced this form of worship, and God added all the pieces necessary to form joyful praise.

One day in early 2020, José Díaz, Varsity Pathfinder director, visited Lake Wales Spanish Church. He heard the worship team during the service and invited them to become part of the Varsity iCamporee. The invitation was taken as an indication from God that He was happy with what the team was doing. Imagine the surprise when Díaz asked the team to write an original theme song for the iCamporee.

The challenge was accepted! The

title of the iCamporee inspired the words of the theme song. The team leaders wanted the youth to be aware of how much each one is loved. When that is understood, there is no limit to what can be accomplished.

In September, our praise team spent time practicing and preparing recordings of the music for what had become an online camporee due to quarantine restrictions. We were so excited to have others learn the theme song, sing it, and be reminded that we are loved to the Xtreme!

Imagine the surprise to hear Andres Peralta, Pathfinder director for the General Conference and guest speaker for the iCamporee, explain how everyone is God's special treasure — without knowing that was part of the lyrics of the theme song. It was like divine intervention was putting all the pieces together. Only God can do that! 🎧

José Marrero is the Pathfinder director of the Lake Wales Spanish Church in Florida.

I AM LOVED TO THE XTREME

*Theme song written for
Varsity Pathfinder iCamporee by
Lake Wales Spanish Church,
Florida, Pathfinders*

(Verse 1)

I've got courage to walk on water
Confidence to reach the border
I believe, I believe
I can conquer any mountain
Freely drink from the fountain
I believe, I believe.

(Chorus)

I am loved, loved to the extreme
I belong to Jesus, I am redeemed
I am loved, loved to the extreme
My eyes look up to the heavens
I'm living my dream.

(Verse 2)

He left His throne He had in heaven
Risky it all like no one ever
Just for love, just for love
He gave all beyond all measure
So I can be His precious treasure
Just for love, just for love.

(Bridge)

I am loved beyond all measure
I am Jesus' treasure
I believe, I believe
I can conquer any mountain
I'll drink from the fountain
I believe, I believe.

(Finale)

I look up to the heavens
Jesus loves me.

Virtual EVANGELISM

BY HASANI TAIT

With churches closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many things have been done virtually. Hasani Tait, pastor at Ephesus Church in Greenville, Mississippi, has found new ways to do virtual evangelism in safe, practical, and socially distanced ways. After much prayer, fasting, and conversation with Michael Lewis, pastor from Birmingham, Alabama, on his experience with virtual evangelism, Joe Grider, D.Min., South Central Conference ministerial director, and Hasani Tait conducted a virtual Revelation seminar entitled “Revelation Fire.” The results were 32 individuals joining the church via baptism or profession of faith, and zero COVID cases. Here’s how they did it.

COVID-proofing the Church

The South Central Conference sent out guidelines to pastors some months ago on precautions, protocols, and procedures to prepare churches for future reopening — socially distanced seating charts, shampooing carpets, disinfecting entire church, removing all unnecessary furniture items, remodeling bathrooms, temperature guns, masks, sanitizer stations, safety signs, floor markers, and sanitizing microphones. The church members completed every health and safety protocol.

Bible Work

A team of four, two professional Bible workers and two local church volunteer workers, trained in socially distanced Bible work went door to door in the Greenville, Mississippi, territory from September 28 to October 23, 2020. The team was trained to wear masks and gloves, keep a distance of about 10 feet,



Hasani Tait, pastor of Ephesus Church in Greenville, Mississippi, prepares the candidates for baptism.

and place Bible studies in bags when visiting each home. The team made many good community contacts. Once the virtual evangelistic meeting began, Lewis and Alfred Miller, evangelist from Birmingham, led the team.

Virtual Evangelistic Meeting

A nightly, virtual evangelistic meeting was streamed from October 24 to November 7, 2020, at Ephesus Church to reap individuals who had been studying with the Bible work team. Tait preached doctrinal truths from the book of Revelation in new, relevant, exciting, and applicable ways. Topics included “3 Angels Message,” “7 Seals,” “7 Plagues,” “Mark of the Beast,” “Second Coming of Christ,” and “Heaven.” Each evening, no more than 10-12 community guests were allowed in the building. As they entered, they were given masks if needed, had temperature checked at the door, and sanitized hands upon entry. The 10-12 guests sat socially distanced at marked seats in the approximately 300-capacity sanctuary. Each meeting was opened by Lewis, followed

by a musical selection, and ending with the message by Tait. The nightly total stream, not including the intro, was less than an hour. Other guests, church members, and Bible study interests not in the building watched the replayable stream either on the Greenville Ephesus YouTube Channel or the church’s Facebook page.

Baptisms

Thirty-two individuals who had made a decision to accept Jesus as Lord and Savior and join the Ephesus Church were encouraged to join via profession of faith. Those who insisted were allowed water baptism. During the evangelistic meeting, six profession of faith and baptism sessions were held. Baptisms followed South Central Conference’s safety procedures for baptism during COVID-19.

Praise God, the meeting was a huge blessing and major success as many individuals accepted Christ in Greenville, Mississippi. 🕊

Hasani Tait is the pastor of Ephesus Church in Greenville, Mississippi.

Reflections of the Life and Legacy of GREGORY ORVILLE MACK, PRESIDENT OF SOUTHEASTERN CONFERENCE

BY SHARON R. LEWIS, D.ED.

He had courage that could not be shaken, faith strong enough for the darkness, strength sufficient for the tasks, ambition to rise to any occasion, compassion for the weary soul, loyalty to his kingdom's goal, and an inner spirit that lifted souls unto God."

These inherent attributes describe Gregory Orville Mack, referred to by his peers as "Mack," born March 5, 1955, in Camden, South Carolina, to the late Carrie Bell Marx and John Henry Mack.

His Education

His early education began at Washington Shores Elementary School in Orlando, Florida, and continued in Miami, Florida, at Robert E. Lee Junior High and Miami Jackson Senior High School, where he graduated in 1973. At the age of 19, he received Bible lessons from Geneva Lewis, elder, accepted the Lord in his life, and joined the Miami Bethany Church.

His inner drive and aspiration motivated him to enroll at Oakwood College (now Oakwood University) in Huntsville, Alabama, where he earned a bachelor of arts degree in theology and an associate of arts degree in communications. He later matriculated at Andrews University where he earned his master of divinity.

His Love and Family

In 1978, Mack married his sweetheart, the former Verel Jean Johnson. From this union they were blessed with two sons, Clint and Darren (Faith) Mack. Mack loved serving God and his family.



He was a kind, compassionate man who always put others before himself.

His Life's Work and Career

In 1983, he began his service career with Southeastern Conference as an intern. He was ordained in 1992, and pastored more than a dozen churches. Mack successfully led efforts to build and reno-

vate several churches and schools during his pastoral ministry. In 2008, he was elected to serve as the executive secretary of Southeastern Conference, during the presidency of Hubert Morel, D.Min.

On May 29, 2016, at the 11th Regular Session of the Southeastern Conference, Mack was elected to serve as the sixth president of Southeastern. As president,

he fostered the collective ministry and mission of the churches.

During his leadership, the Conference experienced tremendous growth in tithing; baptisms; and departmental missions, such as when the Personal Ministries Department shipped seven cargo containers of food and supplies to the Bahamas in support of families devastated by recent hurricanes, and also managed a state-run disaster relief warehouse in Tallahassee, Florida, after Hurricane Michael.

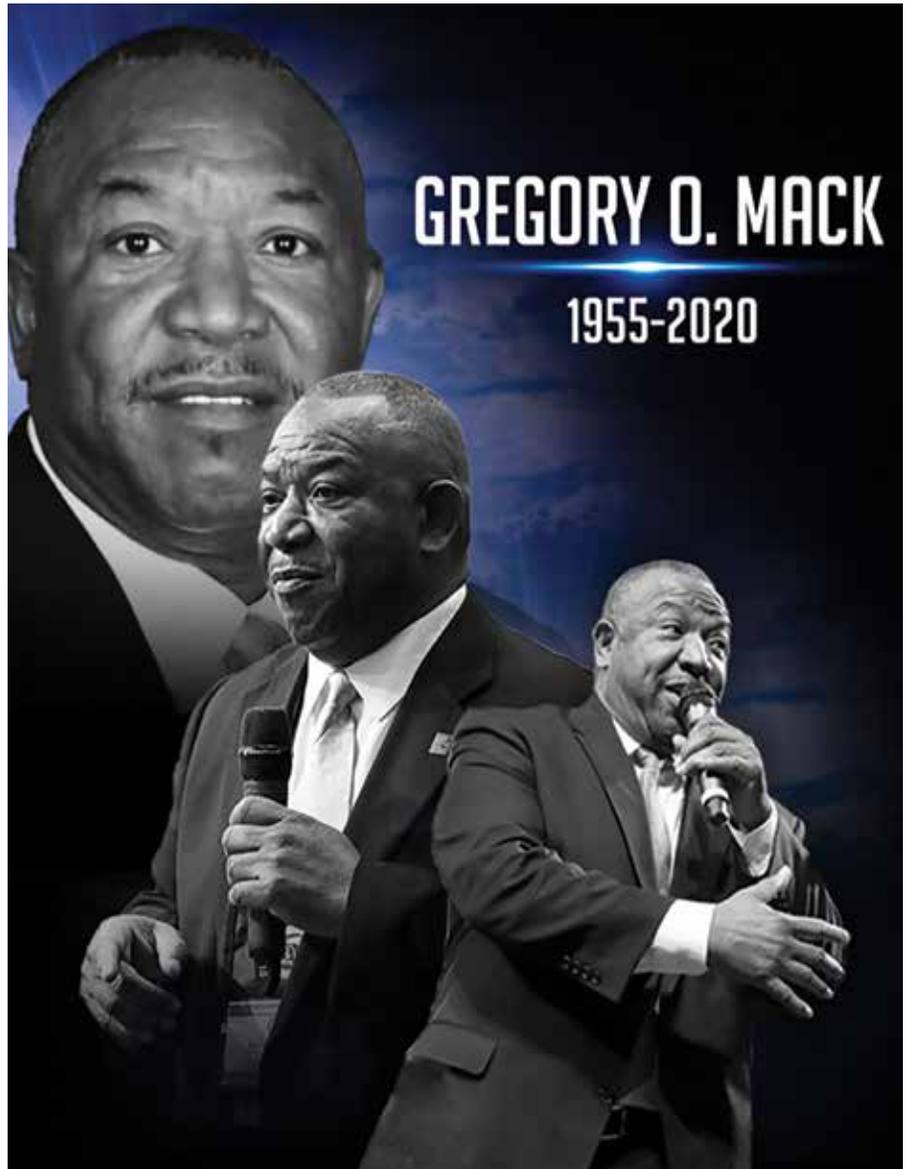
The youth ministry programs experienced phenomenal growth as well. A new zip line, rock climbing wall, and skating rink were installed on the campgrounds for the youth, and a state-of-the-art multi-purpose gymnasium is being constructed. The youth took part in mission trips to Jamaica, Haiti, and the Bahamas. Adventist Campus Ministry and the Medical Cadets were also established.

There was also rapid growth in technology and media-broadcasting ministry. SECTV was launched during the novel coronavirus pandemic. Their broadcasting has been a blessing throughout the Conference. During the pandemic, many engaging and uplifting programs were broadcast across the country for the members who were homebound. Prayer ministries conducted a prayer line, and there were many interesting programs through the broadcasts. They also held their annual Prayer Breakfast and “Take It to The Streets” ministry.

The campground in Hawthorne, Florida, was Mack’s favorite place. He wanted to ensure that members could attend and enjoy the beauty and comforts of cabin living for 10 days. Under his leadership, new refrigerators were installed in the cabins, new concrete walk paths, new outdoor furniture for relaxation, and the lake was restored.

Cherished Memories

Mack took his rest on Tuesday, November 10, 2020. He leaves to cherish his memories and rejoice in peace: his loving, devoted wife, Verel Jean Mack; two



sons, Clint Mack and Darren (Faith) Mack of Atlanta, Georgia; one sister, Cynthia (William) Gravitt of Ft. Pierce, Florida; one brother, Larry Mack of Ocala, Florida; two aunts, Velma Myers Pearson of Orlando, Florida, and Juanita McQuiller of New York; one great-aunt, Mary Ann Robinson of Orlando; and a host of other relatives and friends.

Reflections of a Fallen Soldier

Be hopeful, my family and friends. Often darkness fills the pathway, and we cease from going forward, but the Lord who plans so wisely leads us both

day and night. It is not how long I have lived, but the richness of my life. Trust the Great Composer, trust the Engineer Eternal; surely He knows best, and His works are right, although you might not understand. Trust in the Lord and be hopeful as we wait for the great getting-up morning. Remember my smiles and my songs! 🎵

Sharon R. Lewis, D.Ed., is an elder at Miami-Bethany Church and a member of the Executive Committee at Southeastern Conference.

My Dad, My Hero Glenn E. Smith

January 11, 1925 – December 2, 2020

BY DAVID E. SMITH

Glenn Edward Smith now rests. Although the sun set for him on December 2, 2020, one month shy of 96 years old, the sky glow of this great though unfamous man will continue until split by the Master he served. Edith, Glenn's tiny mother, taught him to sing, "Jesus, Rose of Sharon, Bloom Within My Heart," in a chorus of seven brothers and sisters at a parlor piano in the 1920s in upstate New York. Her meek piety gave voice to the Call of God and Glenn's nine decade Gospel ministry began.

Lila Rex Smith, the wife of his youth, called him, "GE," and together they raised sons Jerry, David, Doug, and Ted. She boosted the young pastor's preaching under evangelistic canvas, and in halls and converted theatres. Together, they lit Adventism's flame in western Pennsylvania's hamlets and cities in the 1940s and 1950s, from Six Mile Run and Punxsutawney, to Johnstown. God's call took the Smiths to the Chesapeake Conference's (1950s) Martinsburg district and Spencerville Church, and then westward to direct the Nebraska Conference's Stewardship Department in the early 1960s. The General Conference's Inter-American Division (late 1960s) chose Smith to direct the Stewardship Department and train pastors throughout Central America, the Caribbean, and northern South America in spiritual principles of stewardship. The Florida Conference (early 1970s) brought Smith



stateside again to lead its Stewardship Department, and, as members learned spiritual partnership with God, churches and schools in their field reaped benefits from greater financial consecration. The General Conference's Trans-Africa Division (late 1970s) needed Smith to direct trust services, so he and Lila travelled the Dark Continent for the Lord.

Smith's hands wore out his Bible, but also gripped hammers, trowels, and wrenches to build four churches and many homes. In the 1970s, he preached a series of sermons to a mass congregation in the sweltering temperatures of Soweto, South Africa. Ravenous for the Gospel, 20,000 listeners broiled in the sun but kept coming back day after

day. Like the Galilean Preacher concerned for His hungry hillside horde, Smith's practical side strategized a solution. Rolls of burlap suspended by wires were stretched above the seating area. This sun break comforted seekers while the Comforter brought conviction to hundreds.

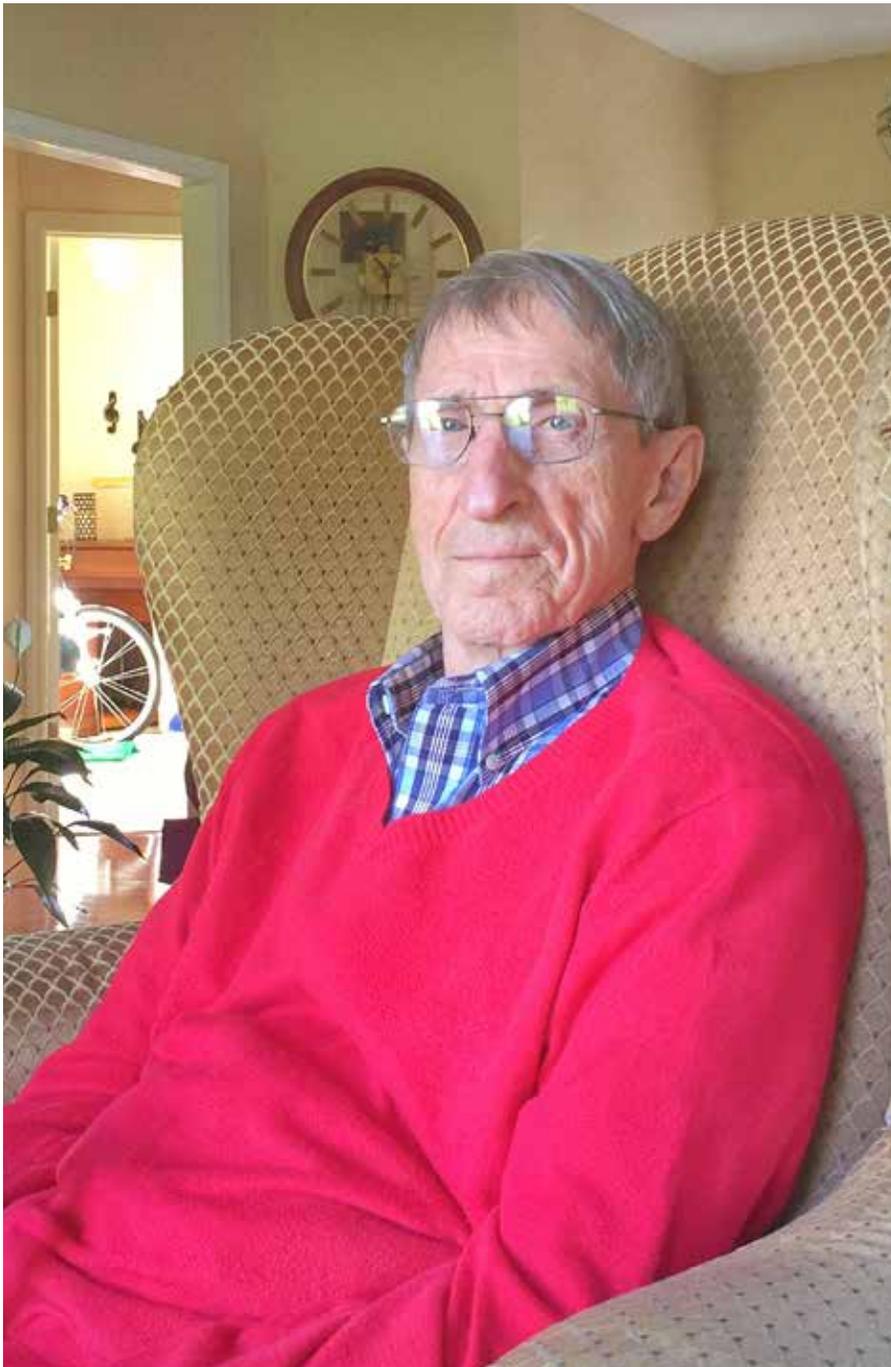
As handy replacing head gaskets as giving black light prophecy lectures, Smith balanced mechanic's tools for his family and biblical typology for the Lord. Driving to General Conference Sessions introduced his boys to every continental state and many National Parks. Before it was paved, the Smiths drove the Alaska-Canada Highway's 1,387 miles with tires atop the roof to replace those shredded by the road bed's grader-sharpened stones.

Smith's paid ministry closed as trust services director in America's Southern Union Conference in the early 1980s. Richard Center, retired Southern Union treasurer, who worked briefly with Glenn Smith, remembers him as "a sincere man whom people trusted to guide them with their estate planning."

Retiring to Calhoun, Georgia, he has been engaged for 35 years supporting pastors as an elder, applying his skills to the church structure and lawn when needed, and making friends for the Adventist Church in Gordon County.

Roberta Berkeley Smith sparked fresh love in Smith's later years. They loved their way across the nation by motorhome and across oceans via cruise ships. Their bond was stronger than late-life dementia, her faithfulness a powerful testimony to married affection.

Thousands heard him preach and came to trust the Savior. Hundreds called him "Pastor" and emulated his everyday faith. Dozens took his hand as they stepped down into baptismal waters. Beloved by four generations of Smiths, Glenn Smith was my Dad, my hero. 🕊



David E. Smith, is the retired chaplain for AdventHealth Gordon.

Southern's Outreach Program CROSSES INTERNATIONAL BORDERS

BY CIARAH CLARK



PHOTO BY: XANDER ORDINOLA

International student China Williams poses for her portrait at Southern Adventist University. Williams came from New Zealand to participate in SALT.



PHOTO BY: XANDER ORDINOLA

At Southern Adventist University, China Williams bows her head for prayer as class begins.

When 20-year-old China Williams attended an evangelistic meeting in May of 2020, she had no idea she would end up leaving her home in Auckland, New Zealand, to live in the United States three months later. After a long day of work, sitting in a meeting was the last thing on Williams' mind, but her mother had convinced her to go.

"Once I got in [the meeting], I felt a presence," Williams said.

During the session, Williams heard about Southern Adventist University's Soul-winning And Leadership Training (SALT) program from Douglas Na'a, SALT direc-

tor, who is also from New Zealand.

"I told God, 'I want to be able to teach people,'" Williams said. "And then when I saw [Na'a] standing with Soul-winning And Leadership Training, I just thought, 'Okay, that's it. I'm coming.'"

After the meeting, Williams spoke with Na'a about joining SALT.

"My mind was blown," she said. "This [program] was what I was waiting for. I was not going to miss this opportunity."

Williams is one of three international students who traveled to the U.S. last August to be a part of the SALT program without enrolling at Southern. While SALT can be taken for college credit for

students seeking a minor in evangelism, students can also register for SALT as non-credit participants, taking evangelistic classes at Southern without them counting toward a major or minor. Na'a reported that 21 students are a part of SALT for the fall 2020 semester, eight of whom registered as non-credit participants. Three of the non-credit participants are international. The other two students are Doh Htoo from Thailand and Aadesh Biswa from Nepal.

SALT is an outreach program organized by Southern in partnership with It Is Written. It teaches students how to share the Gospel, and has students go to



PHOTO BY: XANDER ORDINOLASAU

At an outside tent at Southern Adventist University, China Williams stands on stage for Week of Prayer. The theme of the event was “Repair and Restore.”



PHOTO BY: XANDER ORDINOLA

Douglas Na’a and China Williams pose for a picture after class. Na’a is the SALT director and one of Williams’ teachers.

homes throughout the Chattanooga, Tennessee, area to offer Bible studies. Na’a said international students have been

joining SALT since it first began in 2011. And, while their participation is not widely known, it is not uncommon.

Na’a said SALT goes beyond teaching and door-knocking.

“Students experience transformation and community in their [lives],” he said. “Students find purpose and belonging.”

He said international students bring a worldview of evangelism and leadership that is very unique to people in the U.S.

“Because of that, learning and exchanging of ideas occur,” he said. “It becomes a collaborative experience for students, both overseas and local.”

Williams’ journey from New Zealand to the U.S. was not without its challenges. She experienced delays in obtaining her visa. She did not know how she would pay for her trip. In addition, she had to prepare herself for international travel in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I thought, ‘I’m going to do this. I’m not going to miss [this opportunity], be-

cause if I do miss it, [God] is going to use someone else,’” Williams said.

When the pastors at Williams’ church heard about her trip, they began to spread the word about her financial need. Soon after, her trip was fully funded with the help of her church and conference.

“Once I got on the plane, everything that I went through was worth it,” she said.

Williams has enjoyed SALT since her arrival, she said. And, she loves meeting new people, teaching them about God, and learning from her experiences in outreach.

“SALT is an amazing program that will test your limits,” Williams said. “They take care of you, and they bring out something [in] you, and it’s not them. It’s God.”

This article was originally published in Southern Adventist University’s student newspaper, the Southern Accent. 📍

Ciarah Clark is a news reporting student at Southern Adventist University.

ADRA, NAD Partner to Fight Hunger in the Carolinas



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), the international humanitarian arm of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, partnered with the North American Division’s Adventist Community Services to help relieve the hunger crisis in the Carolinas due to the impact of the coronavirus.

Back in March, when businesses and schools began closing due to the spread of COVID-19, parents who depended on free school lunches suddenly found themselves without a source of income or means to feed their children. To combat the hunger crisis, some churches in the Carolinas found a way to promote evangelism through food pantries.

“ADRA donated \$10,000 to be divided between 10 active food pantries,” said David Graham, community services director of the Carolina Conference. “A box of cereal may be \$3 in the grocery store, but food banks can obtain the same box for less than 50 cents. Ten thousand dollars will go a long way in feeding hungry people in the Carolinas.”

The Charlotte Spanish food pantry helps

2,000 families on average each month.

“We started only making small boxes of food,” said Francisco Tadeo, ACS director of the Charlotte Spanish Church. “We did it with the belief that we could make an impact in the community. We let God use us as His vessels to serve the underserved. Ten volunteers became 60. A few pounds of food became 1.4 million pounds, and suddenly we were the largest distributing department in Mecklenburg County. Our ultimate goal is to make a difference in someone’s life, someone who perhaps was laid off due to COVID-19, or someone who was already struggling to make it and has now seen even more difficult times. We do not judge, we serve.”

A few weeks ago, Tadeo says he got an anonymous prayer letter:

“Dear Jesus, You know my necessities and know that I don’t have money, but I ask you that you will bless everyone who helps donate this food. I hope You not only bless me, but all others who need food as well. Please bless every one of the volunteers at this church. Thank you, Jesus, for Your love and mercy. You are holy and majestic. Your word says, ‘Ask and you shall receive,’ and I asked for food, and today You are giving it to me. Please forgive me for not being able to donate money, You know what I’m going through right now. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Amen.”

Other community services reported similar experiences.

“The funds were a real boost for our crisis ministry,” said Marcella Sampayan, community services director of the Foster Church in Asheville, N.C. We assist the disadvantaged through different programs throughout the year. The pandemic has changed our normal routine, but we are still able to serve the clientele that visit our facility each week.”

Sampayan and her volunteers provide

a drive-through food distribution every Tuesday morning, serving a to-go hot breakfast and pre-boxed food items to those in need.

“With tears in their eyes they thank us and tell us what a blessing we are to them,” Sampayan said. “But, what they don’t realize is the blessing they are to us. One lady just happened to be dropping someone off near our facility and saw what we were doing. She asked if she would be able to get a box of food, and said that she had just separated from her husband. She and her small children were living with a friend, and she had no income except the small stipend from taking people to their appointments a few times a week. She was so grateful as she hadn’t known what she was going to do when all this happened.”

Sampayan continues, “Another person who came seemed ashamed that he needed to ask for help with food, but he was reassured that it was okay — sometimes we are in a season of need, and sometimes we are in a season of plenty. He was in a season of need. His words wouldn’t come, but the tears in his eyes spoke his gratitude. A kind word and a smiling, masked face as we greet our clients can make a world of difference — this is God’s ministry to those in need, and we are honored and grateful to be a part of it.”

Graham agreed, “Church pantries are badly needed now. They have become a blessing center and are an avenue to establish relationships for the Kingdom. They are a connection with the people since churches and many ministries are temporarily shut down,” he says.

Read more about the ADRA and ACS partnership at <https://bit.ly/aCsFD62420>. 📍

BY CRYSTAL EARNHARDT AND DAVID GRAHAM

Carolina Associate Answers the Call



PHOTO BY: REBECCA CARPENTER



PHOTO BY: REBECCA CARPENTER

On November 8, 2020, at the Spartanburg, S.C., Church, another young pastor stepped under the mantle of ordination and was dedicated to a new phase in his ministry. Ross Knight has been pastoring in the Carolina Conference since 2015, first in the Boone/Banner Elk, N.C., district as senior pastor, and then since 2019 in S.C. as associate to Don Davis, pastor, in Spartanburg. Family, friends, and church members all desired to be present for this special service, but due to social distancing, many had to be content with virtu-

ally supporting and affirming him over the live stream. There was no doubt as to the number of people who care about this young man and his wife, Meggan.

During the ordination service, all four Carolina Conference officers took part, as well as Davis and three members of Knight's former churches, Wanda Hindman, Michael Stevens, and Mark Heisey. Each had a memory or word of appreciation to share about their time with their pastor, and recommended him wholeheartedly for ordination.

As a child, Knight often spoke of his

desire to follow in the footsteps of his father to become a pastor. It was in his junior year at Mount Pisgah Academy (MPA) he felt his calling to ministry, and pursued studying theology upon entering college. He attributes the influences of his parents, Stanley and Valeri Knight, the MPA staff, and the experience of working at Nosoca Pines Ranch for helping him realize his spiritual gifts. Stanley Knight proudly presented a message of inspiration to his son, charging him to continue to rely on God for support, and treat each person as His special child.

Knight hopes to give back and to impact younger generations spiritually the way he was blessed as a child growing up in the Church. He is grateful for God's relentless pursuit of him, and the call to ministry he received that changed his life. 📌

BY REBECCA CARPENTER

MPA Adds Disc Golf Course to Campus

With the construction of our disc golf course, students and staff at Mount Pisgah Academy are able to enjoy the outdoors in a new way this school year. Disc golf is exactly what it sounds like, the game of golf played with Frisbees. While it might be hard to imagine an entire golf course on the campus of Mount Pisgah Academy, it is actually well suited for disc golf. "For many, having a disc golf course on campus was a long sought after dream, and COVID-19 was the perfect excuse to finally build," says Darrell Bedwell, local parent, supporter, and designer of the



PHOTO BY: ADAM BOYD

course. Bedwell, with the help of many others, was excited at the opportunity to give students the ability to get outside

while doing something fun and active together. Currently, MPA has nine holes completed, and plans to expand to a full 18-hole course in the future.

There are many negative things that one could focus on this year alone; however, MPA has been blessed by seeing the joy a simple thing can bring to campus, and thanks everyone that has made this small dream come true. 📌

BY ADAM BOYD

Conference Medical Cadet Corps Completes First Mission

The day began before sunrise at Sanford International Airport at the site of the Lockheed-Martin Space and Air Show. The airfield was lined with chairs, pop-up tents, and various booths, but void of people. Water bottles had to be unloaded, and totes of first aid supplies needed to be shuffled to the first aid stations manned by local fire departments.

This was behind the scenes for the first mission of the Florida Conference Brigade of the Medical Cadet Corps (MCC). Within an hour, the airfield came alive with firefighters, EMTs, vendors, and medical cadets, all in masks. By 10 a.m., a throng of 12,000 spectators streamed through the gates.

Shawn Treloar, Sanford Fire Department Battalion Chief, tossed MCC Cadet Casey Ramey the key to an all-terrain vehicle to facilitate moving emergency personnel, basic life support bags, automatic defibrillators, oxygen kits, and other essentials between first aid stations. Stethoscopes and blood pressure cuffs had to be sanitized, cots wiped down, and water and snacks provided for the patients amidst the roar of F-16 Vipers, A-10 Warthogs, and many other military aircraft.

As deafening Thunderbirds zoomed overhead, the team leader, Sergeant



Sherida Santana, explained, “I like MCC because it’s different. I like to work for my church. With MCC, you can show love to other people who may not know Jesus.”

Florida Conference Brigade of Medical Cadet Corps commenced operations

in June 2020. Cadets started training with online FEMA classes and a brigade-wide orientation to better understand how to assist local and federal relief agencies, which is the modern focus of the MCC.

“God has helped us every step of the way as we develop MCC,” says Pedro Perez, Florida Conference Brigadier General. “One of our goals is to continue training cadets to be ready to give spiritual comfort when the opportunity arises. We are in constant communion with God, praying for open eyes and an open heart to testify when the chance presents itself.”

BY CASEY RAMEY, CADET

Camp Kulaqua Helped by Fundraiser

For the first time in 67 years, summer camp at Camp Kulaqua in High Springs, Fla., was canceled.

Since the middle of March and the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Florida Conference camp facility has been nearly empty. Most churches and groups could not attend their scheduled retreats and various events due to the quarantine orders. Only a handful of groups chose to visit.

Staffers began to lift up voices in prayer for Camp Kulaqua. Prayers were offered for ...

- families who were without work,
- the safety of those who visited, and
- those who would miss out on the beloved camp experience.

God answered those prayers, as testimonies show. He hears the cries of His children in time of need.

One answer to prayer came when a

group of Camp Kulaqua friends from various departments at the Florida Conference suggested a fundraiser and offered to organize it. This resulted in the Camp Kulaqua Fund Race, a virtual 5K walk/run with a 25-mile bike component.

People from all over the world participated in helping the Camp raise funds to sustain its operation. A goal of \$50,000 was set. With God’s blessing, \$58,000 was raised. When His children



A small group of Camp Kulaqua Virtual Fund Race participants paused for a photo during their bike ride.

BY PHIL YOUNTS

Varsity Pathfinders Hold Virtual Camporee

Hundreds of high school-age Pathfinders (known in the Florida Conference as Varsity Pathfinders) met online for a first virtual camporee, branded as an iCamporee. The theme was “I Am Loved to the Xtreme!”

Varsity Pathfinder Director José Diaz, along with Javier Santiago, camping director, and dozens of volunteers, worked diligently with the Florida Conference Pathfinder and Adventurer Department to make sure the older Pathfinders could have a great digital experience.

Pathfinders were challenged during the worships to recognize and realize how God loves everyone to the extreme and continues to love each person in amazing ways.

The guest speaker was Andres Peralta, pastor and Pathfinder director for the Adventist World Headquarters. Those who attended also had access to a library of more than 100 pre-recorded sessions to earn honors, and dozens of honors were taught live. A choice of many activities were held on Sabbath and Sunday.

The goal was to give older Pathfinders an online experience to connect with friends, make new friends, engage in activities, learn new skills, and, most importantly, to



PHOTO BY:

Some small club groups chose to set up tents inside meeting rooms to enhance the camporee experience.

be reminded of how much God loves them.

“If a young person can begin to grasp and understand God’s love,” says Pedro Perez, Conference Pathfinder director, “It can change their whole way of thinking and their life. We want our Pathfinders to be very clear on how loved they are by their heavenly Father, and be so

amazed by His love that they want to surrender their lives and commit to being lifelong followers of Jesus.”

“Civil Conversations on Race” Held for Conference Academy

In response to the recent racial tensions, the Youth Department held “Civil Conversations on Race, Biblically Generated Dialogue on Race, Culture, and Our Call to be a Peculiar People,” October 24, 2020, online and with a limited in-person attendance.

“We need to have difficult, honest conversations if we are going to make progress,” said Jonathan Montes, youth ministries director. “We should be a light on a hill in all that we do, including how we treat our fellow brother and sister. We need to stop feeling so comfortable being separate, and start being united in the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Held at the Georgia-Cumberland Academy Church in Calhoun, Ga., about 50



PHOTO BY: TAMARA WOLCOTT WATSON

Roger Williams, pastor at the Eureka and Orleans churches in California, was the guest speaker for the Civil Conversations on Race event offered by the Youth Ministries Department to a limited audience at the Georgia-Cumberland Academy Church in Calhoun, Ga., in October 2020.



Roger Williams was the guest speaker for the Civil Conversations on Race event offered by the Youth Ministries Department.

PHOTO BY: TAMARA WOLCOTT WATSON

Matthew Dormus, a junior at GCA, thinks education is the best way to move forward as a Church. “The Bible educates us, but then it transforms us. So, when we come to events like this, we are being educated,” said Dormus. “When we seek God to work in our hearts, we are transformed to take up the challenge and do what God is wanting us to do.”

Anna Lewis, a junior at Collegedale Academy, says she attended to “make sure that I was getting my foundation and my knowledge based on God’s word instead of trying to formulate my own opinions.”

Kate Ermer, a junior at Collegedale Academy, said she attended to understand racism and to know how to respond if asked.

Williams ended his message with the love of Jesus, saying, “when Paul said, ‘Your racism is a violation of the grace and mercy of God to you,’ he was also advising Peter’s fear. He appealed, ‘You’ve forgotten Christ’s love for you, Peter.’”

to 60 high school students and teachers attended. The guest speaker was Roger Williams, pastor for the Eureka and Orleans churches in California. There was also a panel discussion in the afternoon.

Williams shared information providing ways for people to interact, respond, and love during racially tense conversations.

He said, “First, Paul’s analysis of the sin is noteworthy. He does not simply say racism is a sin, although it is indeed a failure to love one’s neighbor as one’s self. Rather, Paul is laying bare the spiritual roots of racism — a rejection of the Gospel of salvation and a return to justification by our moral efforts or pedigree.”

BY TAMARA WOLCOTT WATSON

7 Bridges Celebrates 10 Years, Holds Race at Cohutta



sen to be easier to ship, and the ‘finishing’ masks were a big hit which were branded with the race logo and the SDA logo.”

Members of the Zeismer family from Las Vegas, Nevada, and Cleveland, Tenn., have run several races, from the 5k to the half marathon. Shari Zeismer, from Las Vegas, said she runs this race because it is tradition and two of her children attend Southern Adventist University. “I think why we keep doing this race is because it is home. It is also such a feel-good race. You see a lot of the same people. It is a legit big race and still feels local.”

Chad Nash, a member of the Collegedale Church in Tenn., ran the first few years because it was conveniently located in his hometown. He said, “Now it has become a challenge to keep the streak alive.” He likes the Cohutta Springs course as a replacement, and was happy the race happened. “I do prefer that actual 7 Bridges course for the uniqueness; running through the city and across all the bridges is a lot of fun.”

Christy Zeismer, a member of the Collegedale Church who lives in Cleveland, Tenn., said, “It’s been awesome. Our son runs cross country and decided to do the half. I said if he is doing it, I will do it. He smoked me by 30 minutes, but I beat last years’ time.”

In total there were 202 +4 relay teams participants who ran the marathon, 350 +4 relay teams runners in the half marathon, 122 5K runners, and nine in the fun run. The marathon has been sponsored by the Georgia-Cumberland Conference of Seventh-day Adventists since 2015. ●

The Zeismer families from Las Vegas, Nev., and Cleveland, Tenn., run the 7 Bridges Marathon each year. They have participated in runs which include the 5k to the full half marathon. It has become a family tradition.

PHOTO BY: TAMARA WOLCOTT WATSON

The 7 Bridges Marathon, organized by Scenic City Multisport and sponsored by Georgia-Cumberland Conference, held their 10th anniversary race at Cohutta Springs Conference Center in Crandall, Ga. Traditionally a downtown Chattanooga, Tenn., race spanning seven bridges, the pandemic provided the opportunity for a location change.

“Running my first full marathon at Cohutta Springs was not only physically, but mentally, emotionally, and spiritually challenging and rewarding!” said first-time marathoner Tony Sandoval, pastor for the Chattanooga Impact Company and the Ooltewah Hispanic Church in Tenn.

“I’ve grown closer to God in preparation and accomplishing the full marathon.” Sandoval said he has wanted to run a marathon since he was a child, and enjoyed seeing fellow employees from the conference as well as church members.

“We tried to anticipate every ‘rough edge’ of moving the race to Cohutta,” said Jay Nevans, partner at Scenic City Multisport. He shared, “Everything went so well that we’re making some of our adjustments best practices in the future for other races: drive-through packet pick up, on-site lodging and pre-race food (where available), awards given at instant results kiosk (COVID precaution to reduce crowding). Awards were cho-

BY TAMARA WOLCOTT WATSON

Former Communication Director Publishes Sharing Book

Rebecca Grice worked as a literature evangelist in Pennsylvania when her husband, Clay, served as the publishing director for the Pennsylvania Conference. During her time in service, she recalls how well-received Adventist literature was among the Mennonites and Amish. As many literature evangelists do, she wondered what effect her books' sales might have made on those in the community. Later, as she heard stories of success from people joining the church due to literature, she decided to write a book that told a story of someone's spiritual journey. She chose to create a fictional account, but one that was based on real people she knew and their personalities. Grice changed their names but turned her Mennonite acquaintances into characters for the story titled *The Time of the Remnant*. "The first thing the story is about is making a decision. How are we going to make a decision to follow God in the last days? What might that experience look like?" says Grice. "The second thing is that it serves as an encouragement to anyone who has worked in the literature ministry, to help them see their work has great potential."

Grice didn't start writing the book until the late 1990s when they moved to Montgomery, Ala., for her husband to serve as the publishing director of Gulf States. During their time there, the Conference asked her to serve as the communication director after serving as a secretary to several departments. Grice continued working on the book and completed the original manuscript in 2001. When she attempted to have it published, she encountered an issue when the publisher told her there were too many end-time books on the market, and rejected her project. Disappointed, Grice put the book in a drawer and thought it might be a nice thing to share with her children



When Grice found the forgotten book transcript, she felt that God was calling her to get it published.

someday, but that it wouldn't go to print.

In July of 2015, her husband, Clay, passed away, and as Grice was cleaning some things out of their home in preparation to sell it, she found the manuscript. She sat down to read it and felt like she was reading someone else's book, almost as if someone re-wrote it while it sat in the drawer. She felt like God was telling her now was the time to work on it and get it published. Grice spent some time working on the book and updating it,

then had a few people read it and eventually submitted it to be published, and it was. Grice also sold her home and moved away from the communication position.

Grice has been able to use the book as a sharing tool with acquaintances who aren't Adventist. As part of the book's theme to make a decision to follow God, Grice partnered with Amazing Facts to include an appeal in the back of the book for Bible studies through their ministry. As the author, Grice can invite others to read the book on the merit of their friendship, which is a great way to reveal Bible truth to those around you.

Grice loves creating art and has painted and written stories since grade school. She encourages others that have a knack for writing to turn it into something and publish it. "The hardest part of writing is the first word, so put it down and just write. Then, go back and redo it," says Grice. "Have a friend read it that will be honest with you." Grice believes that there is a place for other art forms in ministry too. God gives each person skills and abilities, and they can use them for His glory. "Ask Him how we can best use the talents He gives us." 📖

BY SHANE HOCHSTETLER

Conference Hosts Young Adult Weekend



Holding in-person events has been a challenge in 2020, but one of the groups that have been needing it most is young adults. It might seem odd that those who may be considered digital natives would be the ones that want face-to-face interaction, but they do. This need led Josue Sanchez, youth director of Gulf States, and Ricky Woodruff, young adult coordinator of Gulf States, to arrange a weekend getaway at Camp Alamisco in Dadeville, Ala. All necessary precautionary measures were in place, such as distancing at all times and mask-wearing while indoors. The event was made available at no cost to the participants, including three meals and an overnight stay in the newly renovated rooms. “We want this to be an opportunity for you to recharge spiritually,” said Sanchez as he addressed the group.

The weather couldn’t have been better for the dozen or so attendees. The



cool evening was well-balanced by a campfire on Friday night, and the partly cloudy Sabbath day allowed for worship outdoors and a relaxed canoe ride in the afternoon. Woodruff offered the evening devotional on Friday and encouraged the group with Nutella’s origins story as a product that came from adverse conditions. Similarly, despite the difficulty of 2020, God has something good to make from this experience. On Sabbath, Sanchez directed the group in an exercise he experienced as a theology student,

reading a passage of scripture, then imagining themselves in the story as one of the characters. After some time walking in nature, everyone was invited to share their thoughts on this particular story of Jesus. Each person took a different perspective, and in sharing their own experience, it broadened the impact of the passage.

Todd and Shelley Ward, camp ranger and food service director, enjoyed the opportunity to cook for a smaller group and to try new variations of recipes for the young adult group. As experienced cooks, their experiments were a delight to everyone who tried them.

The weekend was relaxed as promised, and feedback from the attendees was positive. Many exchanged contact information and are looking forward to continued fellowship and friendship following this event. ●

BY SHANE HOCHSTETLER

Members Practice Giving, Receiving

While the pandemic rages, there are still people in the community that have great needs. The Memphis-Raleigh Church decided to continue with its tradition of sharing food baskets for the Thanksgiving holiday. The Community Service Department asked those who attended worship services to sponsor families, give food, or provide monetary donations. Although attendance has been down during the pandemic, the response was exceptionally good as members were eager to share.

In past years, the Pathfinders had done a food drive by placing brown paper bags at many doors in the community with notes attached asking for help to feed the needy. Since the pandemic began, the Pathfinders have not been meeting, but the food drive was a need they would not ignore! They found that COVID-19 had not extinguished the goodwill of the Memphis community. The respondents were generous with food items as usual, but some also gave monetary donations.

The Thanksgiving food basket project was truly a joint effort by church and



PHOTO BY: DON KENERSON

Augustin Valasquez (front, left); Luke Stewart; Jadel Morales; Kendra Marshall; Geovanni Guzman, club co-director; Becky Massey (back, left); and Amanda Marshall

community to serve the Lord. Hours were spent in gathering and sorting the items, filling “baskets,” and making deliveries. Each basket also received Glow Tracts and a prayer. The plan was to provide food baskets for nine households, but there was such abundance that 12 households were served. On the day of deliveries, a microwave which was do-

nated was delivered and gladly received with a food basket.

The Spirit of the Lord is a spirit of caring, sharing, and joy. Both the givers and the receivers were encouraged and blessed! 🙏

BY LESLIE CAZA

Pathfinder Club Has Successful Food Collection

For over 30 years, on Halloween, the Ridgerunners Pathfinders of the Ridgetop, Tenn., Church have collected non-perishable food items for distribution at the church Community Service Center instead of trick-or-treating. With fewer club members this year, they had help from adult volunteers. Together they collected approximately 3,100 canned goods from the local community.

Co-director Jeff Massey said, “Many supporters expect to see us every Hal-



Bags of food donated to the project

loween. It’s a way of showing our Pathfinders that they can have a fun time doing good things for other people. Thanks to all who helped in our food drive, and a special thanks to all who gave.” 🙏

BY JEFF MASSEY

Madison Students Honor Veterans



Evelett Ortiz (left) and Jaden Cecil, students at Madison Campus Elementary, participated in the parade.

On the “eleventh day of the eleventh month at the eleventh hour,” Madison Academy (MA) and Madison Campus Elementary (MCE) held a Veterans Day Parade to honor the men and women who so nobly served or are currently serving this great country. This year’s event was different, but a safe and effective way to say “Thank You” to the heroes and the families of those in the Armed Forces.

The parade began at the Madison Campus Church’s Pathfinder building where the drivers were met and organized by Ken Wetmore, pastor; Jeff Fisher, U.S. Army Chaplain (Ret.); and Tonya Hancock, Metro Nashville District 9 Councilor. The short route extended up Academy

Road and around Sutherland Drive’s circle. Students and staff, dressed in red, white, and blue, hoisted flags, shook banners, and even handed-out poppies.

The real stars of the day were the veterans and their families who, from the safety of their cars, waved and smiled as they drove through the avenue of applauding children. Several drivers had taped names and/or pictures to their windows and were honoring veterans who could not be present. The “In Remembrance” car listed names of local servicemen who have died in the last several years, including three WWII veterans.

Master Sergeant Leon Crayton, U.S. Air Force, who served as a Tuskegee Airman for 31 years, attended the parade

from his home in Alabama. His proud son, Maurice Crayton, drove in the parade with his phone on Facetime to represent him and honor those who defend the country.

MCE and MA consider it a privilege and a responsibility to honor veterans. This special event provides both a way to thank them, and an opportunity to learn a little history outside the traditional classroom. The little Madison parade was short, but important — small, but powerful. 🇺🇸

BY KRIS FUENTES
PRINCIPLE, MADISON ACADEMY

AHU Alumnus Extends Christ's Healing Ministry Through Medicine

Developing skilled professionals who live the healing values of Christ means being an institution where students are cared for – mind, body, and spirit – so that they may carry those values forward in their career as caregivers. Charde' Holt is one student who lived this mission, pursued her dream, and overcame many personal challenges along the way.

"I grew up poor, in a small town," explained Holt. Rather than attend preschool, she helped her single mother take care of her grandmother, who was a three-time cancer survivor of the lungs and larynx. "She was 4'10", had no voice, and carried oxygen as tall as she was," said Holt.

She taught Holt about Jesus and the Bible, as well as how to count, sing the alphabet, draw, and more. In return, Holt helped her with baths, medications, and reaching items high in the cabinet where she could climb. "I feel like I was born into caring for others," she said.

She recalled how "the strength and knowledge of Christianity my grandmother instilled in me was at peak." And, that she "wouldn't have known how much I was going to need it after this point." When her grandmother passed away during her freshman year at high school, she felt she had lost everything.

She found happiness again as a cheerleader for two years until she suffered a traumatic brain injury. She recalled, "I lost the ability to speak properly, and could no longer cheer. I had over a hundred seizures a week, so I could no longer attend school. At this point, I was in deep depression." She described her struggles with addiction to pain medications, which she took from waking to sleeping. "I did not want to remember. I did not want to be present. I even began dropping out of school. I started giving up."

When Holt's friends were accepted into a collegiate high school where advanced

students could earn full-time college credit as they earned their high school credits, her best friend recommended she take the acceptance test. While suffering through migraines and side-effects from her medications, she tried and failed the entrance exam.

At the insistence of her mother, Holt tried again and was accepted. Upon finishing, she had earned her first college degree at the age of 18. She said, "I knew I could only afford to apply to one college. My mother and I navigated the process of applying to college alone."

Holt applied and was accepted to AHU. She said, "As a first-generation college student, I ... felt the pressure on me. I could not fail." She decided to become a physician's assistant. For a while, life was going well. She was earning good grades and had become engaged. "My fiancé was such a huge supporter of me getting into PA school," she said.

Three months later, her fiancé, who had cystic fibrosis and was awaiting a double lung transplant, developed pneumonia. At his bedside in the ICU, while he was comatose, Holt would read healing scriptures. He passed away at 21. Holt recalled the painful moment, saying "I cried every single day for a year, because I missed him, and it seemed as if everything I loved died in some fashion."

Not long after, life presented another series of tumultuous twists for Holt and her family. She was diagnosed with idiopathic intracranial hypertension, leading to many hospitalizations and neurology appointments. Simultaneously, her mom had escaped an abusive marriage and became homeless.

Holt said, "I remember missing so much work due to being sick. I remember ... I'd have candy for dinner. [I remember] wringing the rainwater out of my clothing after walking to appointments or the pharmacy." Through it all, she persevered until



Charde' Holt (left) shows off her diploma next to her mother, Delisia Drayton (right), who was always "my #1 fan," according to Charde'.

earning her bachelor's degree. She said, "I never wanted to be a burden to anyone ... despite the pain, I kept going. Something inside of me kept me going."

Unlike other students in her class, Holt could only afford to apply to one PA program, and she chose AHU's highly competitive PA program. She was accepted in the first round.

Now she is married, has a new home, and, as a certified PA, is working her "dream job" in emergency medicine. She said, "I was not alone. God was there Now, I understand why everything happened to me. God used me as a vessel, from the young age of 3, to do His work!"

Holt exemplifies the mission-focused, uncommonly compassionate student that AHU is blessed to mentor and develop. She said, "I am extending the healing ministry of Christ. I can't get enough of older patients seeing me so young and insisting that I mentor their grandchildren, or being that guidance to other poor, first-generation college students who don't know the way." 📌

BY LISA MARIE ESSER

Full Sail University and AdventHealth University Win at I/ITSEC's Annual Iron Dev Competition

Two universities in the Orlando, Fla., region have partnered to advance the use of virtual reality in the health care industry. Full Sail University and AdventHealth University are proud to announce that their team for the Iron Dev competition has been named the winner in the category of Most Innovative Solution. Iron Dev is an annual competition held by the Interservice/Industry Training, Simulation and Education Conference (I/ITSEC). Winners in each category were selected based on the merit of their technology-based solution according to the scores of the judging committee and votes of the viewing public.

The virtual reality (VR) solution, which is currently a prototype, created by the Full Sail and AdventHealth team serves as a proof of concept for a virtual command center to help health care facilities and systems, like AdventHealth, visualize hospital resources and COVID-19 data points. The technology would allow health care providers to quickly make real-time decisions by streamlining the distribution and allocation of resources.

“With the unprecedented nature of COVID-19, we knew we wanted to create a futuristic solution to a current problem. Our technology allows users to visualize inputted data, including COVID-19 data points such as contact tracing and regional cases, as well as the available resources at health care facilities like the number of beds, nurses and other medical necessities,” said Brandon Baker, director of the Immersive Technologies Lab at AdventHealth University. “We are extremely proud of the collaboration between Full Sail



Brandon Baker, AHU's director of Immersive Technologies Lab, demonstrates the prototype that won the team Most Innovative Solution in the Iron Dev competition.

University and AdventHealth University, and the incredible work everyone on our team has done to advance the use of VR in the health care industry.”

Students and alumni at Full Sail University were able to learn and utilize their skills in creating a VR solution prototype both under the time restrictions of the competition, and in recognizing the real-world applications that are relevant to the current global pandemic. Important lessons students learned included time management, collaboration, and an in-depth look into the challenges and triumphs of VR.

“Our partnership has been the foundation of some great VR solutions in the health care industry,” stated Luis Garcia, vice president of Emerging Technologies at Full Sail University.

“In addition to the visualization technology produced for the Iron Dev competition, we have also created a VR training solution that students at AdventHealth University use as a response to COVID-19 restrictions. In fact, the VR training solution enabled some of our graduates to gain employment with AdventHealth University where they work on various projects, including the Iron Dev competition. We look forward to furthering our partnership and seeing what is next for us.” ●

BY ADVENTHEALTH UNIVERSITY

Six Baptized During Week of Prayer

Southern Adventist University's Fall Week of Prayer culminated in the baptism of six students, with several others committing to be baptized or re-baptized at a later time. This joyous event was a fitting conclusion to the week of inspiring presentations by MyRon Edmonds, D.Min., pastor of Grace Community Church in Euclid, Ohio, who brought to life the theme "Revival."

"This theme was based on our desire to see an increased spiritual interest and renewal in the lives of students and employees across our campus," said Anna Bennett, associate chaplain. "While revival is something we experience cor-



On the last night of Fall Week of Prayer, Addison Garcia (right), senior nursing major, was baptized by Joseph Khabbaz, vice president for spiritual life.

porately, it always begins within each person individually."

Edmonds' authentic, Christ-focused approach resonated with students, and attendance increased each night of the week. Ultimately, students were given the opportunity to make a public declaration of their commitment to Christ in the form of baptism.

"There is revival when we encounter God's love and grace," said Addison Garcia, senior nursing major and one of the students who was baptized. "I am excited to call Jesus my best friend." 📌

BY TRISNEY BOCALA

Students Offer Marketing Support to Local Organizations

Students in Southern's chapter of Enactus — a global, innovation-driven organization — are assisting small Chattanooga, Tenn., organizations with digital marketing support. Housed within the School of Business, the Enactus team created and launched Marketing Kit Tools (MRKT) to support local business owners who were negatively impacted by the onset of COVID-19 and tornadoes this past spring.

The students worked closely with their first client, Adventist Muslim Friendship Association (AMFA), to create a website, branding, business cards, online store presence, and social media strategy for the organization's Peace of Thread Chattanooga project. This outreach gives refugees an avenue for income through making and selling purses and facemasks.

One of the students' first steps was to organize photo shoots to provide a collection of quality images for brand definition and promotion. Next, they taught volun-



Enactus students organized photo shoots showcasing the textile work of refugee women.

tiating Peace of Thread Chattanooga," said Darleen Handal, local coordinator for AMFA. "As the refugees create art through sewing one-of-a-kind purses, they feel empowered and loved, thanks to the incredible support of these college students and other volunteers."

Along with a second AMFA project called Pillars of Health, the Enactus students have taken on projects with other independent ministries and individual entrepreneurs in the area.

"Personally, MRKT has given me an opportunity to make a difference in our community while also helping me better my skills within the business field," said Nicole Kay Gultom, freshman nursing major. "I've witnessed how a group of talented and determined individuals can make a difference in people's lives when they all work together." 📌

BY TRISNEY BOCALA

teers how to create posts for Instagram and Facebook, connected them with resources for staging photos of their products for sale, and streamlined internal processes to help members learn new skills more quickly.

"Southern's Enactus students have been invaluable in their varied contributions to the marketing aspect for ini-

GIBBONS JONES, JO ANN, 87, born April 25, 1933 to the late Jacob Eugene Gibbons and Elsie Davis Gibbons in Louisville, KY, died Nov. 20, 2020 in Hendersonville, NC. She was a member of Fletcher Church in Hendersonville. She attended Pine Forest Academy in Chunky, MS, and then continued her education at Madison College in Madison, TN, where she achieved her Bachelor's degree in nursing in 1957. Nursing was her passion.



Her giving spirit along with her remarkable dedication propelled her to become an assistant director, director of nursing, and a licensed nursing home administrator, as well as a state surveyor for long term care facilities and hospitals. On June 30, 1958, she married Haskell Jones and they had one daughter, Karla Marie. The family made their home in Memphis, TN. In 1972, Jo Ann and Haskell accepted the call to serve as missionaries to Jamaica where Jo Ann was a nursing instructor at the University of the West Indies. Many amazing adventures were had and lifelong friends were made while there. Upon returning to the U.S., Jo Ann and Haskell settled in Hendersonville, NC, and she accepted the position of assistant director of nursing/in-service director at Fletcher Hospital (AdventHealth).

Over the course of the next several years, she worked as director of nursing at St. Luke's Hospital in Tryon, NC; Carolina Village in Hendersonville; administrator of Brentwood Hills in Asheville, NC; and North Carolina State surveyor. Jo Ann truly followed her giving heart throughout her career in healthcare so that she could spread the love of Jesus wherever she went. She also gave much of her time and energy to financially help worthy students attend Fletcher Academy. Her passion for life, dedication to her family, and her unwavering faith in her Lord and Savior are just a few of the gifts she gave her family and countless others. Jo Ann is loved beyond measure, and will be missed by so many whose lives were touched just by knowing her. She truly was a bundle of sunshine.

She is survived by her only daughter, Karla Marie Zaborowski; two granddaughters: Emma Zaborowski and Kimberly Thompson Bucy (Matt); two great-grandsons: Julian and Oliver Bucy; one sister, Elsie Worthen, (all the above live in Hendersonville); one sister-in-law, Nancy Gibbons of Keene, TX; several nieces; nephews; and many countless friends. She was preceded in death by her parents: Jacob Eugene Gibbons (1987) and Elsie Davis Gibbons (1998); siblings: infant brother, Charles Gibbons (1928); sister, Louise Christian (1983); brother, Lieutenant Colonel Jack Gibbons (2015); and son-in-law, George Zaborowski (2018).

MORRIS, EUGENE, 66, born June 12, 1951 to the late Tero James Morris and Victoria Potts Morris in Charlotte, NC, died Sept. 15, 2019. He was the 10th child of 14 children. Gene grew up in the Grier Town and Cherry communities. He received his formal education in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System at Billingsville and Morgan Elementary Schools, and graduated from Myers Park High School in the class of 1972. He attended King's Business College in the mid-70s, and various classes at CPCC throughout his life. He received a B.S. degree in accounting in May 1988 from Pfeiffer College in Misenheimer, NC. As a lifelong learner, he was always continuing his education. He was a notary public for Mecklenburg County from 1982 until 1987. He graduated from Focus on Leadership Class IV in June 1991, and completed a CPA Review Course at the Accounting Institute Seminars Inc. in CPA Law, Auditing, Financial Accounting & Reporting in 1994. At the University of Oklahoma, he completed Cost Accounting Standards, The Disclosure Statement, and Accounting and Auditing in Nov. 1996. He accepted Jesus as his personal Savior during the Crusade for Christ Evangelistic series led by Pastor Robert C. Connor, and was baptized August 1976. As a member of Berean, he served as a deacon and in the treasury department as assistant to the late Annie Hood. While serving on the Finance Committee, he was instrumental in establishing the benevolent fund to assist members who were experiencing financial issues. He also was a guard on the Berean Men's Varsity Basketball Team. On July 9, 1978, in Charlotte, NC, Gene was united in holy matrimony to Deborah M. Morris by Pastor Ralph Franklin at Berean Church. Eugene and Deborah celebrated 41 years of marriage in July 2019. Their union was blessed with one daughter, Frederika Z. Morris. Gene enlisted in the United States Marine Corps on Nov. 28, 1972. He began as a PFC (E-1). He rose quickly through the ranks while stationed at MCAS El Toro, Santa Ana, CA. During his leisure time, he enjoyed most sports — football, tennis, bowling, and wrestling, but basketball was his favorite. Other interests include music, reading, and learning new things. He is survived by his wife, Deborah Morris; one daughter, Frederika Angus; four grandchildren: Jalen Angus, Isaiah Angus, Brianna Angus, and Elijah Angus all of Charlotte, NC; sister, Lorraine Morris House and her five children of Jamaica, NY; sister, Virginia Morris Johnson and her three children; sister, Vickie Morris (Eddie) Rogers and their four children; sister, Bessie Morris (Thomas Ray) Andrews and their one child; three sisters-in-law: Eartha Morris (four children), Judy Miller (two children), and Elizabeth Lynch (three children) all of Charlotte; 25 nieces and nephews; and a host of other relatives and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents: Tero and Victoria Morris; sister, Addie Morris Reed; two infant sisters; sister, Carolyn Morris Rogers; five brothers: Tero Morris Jr., Steven Morris, Andrew Morris, Alonzo Morris, and Willie Morris; three brothers-in-law: Daniel Reid, Raymond House, and Thomas Johnson.

master's or doctoral level. *For a full job description please visit: southern.edu/jobs* [1]

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks a **full-time teaching position in the School of Journalism and Communication**. The successful candidate will have expertise in social media, public relations, with intercultural experience a plus. Master's degree in Public Relations, Communication or related field required (PhD preferred). Minimum of 3+ years of professional experience or 3+ years of teaching experience. *For a full job description please visit: southern.edu/jobs* [1]

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks a full-time **Associate Director of Catering** in Food Services. The Associate Director of Catering will have primary responsibility of overseeing the catering and special function requests from the various departments of the University. They will also work with Guest Services to cater various events for customers outside of the University. Experience required: college or trade school education preferred. A minimum of 5 years experience in Food Service. Supervision and management experience. *For a full job description please visit: southern.edu/jobs* [1]

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks a full-time **Mental Health Counselor** (LPC) in the Student Success Center. The successful candidate will conduct individual and group counseling sessions in a caring, culturally accepting and confidential environment. A Master's degree and licensure in counseling (LPC). A minimum of three years of successful counseling related experience. *For a full job description please visit: southern.edu/jobs* [1]

IT IS WRITTEN is seeking a full-time **Planned Giving Field Representative**. Candidates must be highly motivated, some work from home office, travel routinely to communicate with supporters, and represent the ministry at assigned events. NAD trust services certification preferred

but not required. *If interested, please email your resume; work@iiw.org* [1]

STALLANT HEALTH, a Rural Health Clinic in Weimar, CA is accepting applications for an **Optometrist** as well as an **NP or PA** to join the team. Interested individuals should contact Marva by email: marva@stallanthealth.com [1,2]

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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 for used books and your local ABC or www.TEACHServices.com for new book releases.* [1-4]

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* [1-5]

SINGLE? WIDOWED? DIVORCED? Meet compatible SDA's from USA ages 18-98. Each provides: birthday, marital status, race, occupation, interests, goals, year baptized, lots more! Safe, confidential, effective, fun! *For information, application and current catalog, send \$30 to: SDA Pen-Pals, PO Box 734, Blue Ridge, Georgia 30513.* [1, 2]

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* [1, 2]

ENROLLMENT FOR 2021 at Atlanta Adventist Academy is now open! Atlanta Adventist Academy offers excellent Adventist education locally (Atlanta, GA) as well as virtually through our live online program for homeschoolers and distance campuses. To enroll your student, call 404-699-1400 or visit aaa.edu/admissions [1-3]

"LET IT BE YOUR STUDY to select and make your homes as far from Sodom and Gomorrah as you can. Keep out of the large cities. If possible make your homes in the quiet retirement of the country, even if you can never become wealthy by so doing. Locate where there is the best influence... Take your families away from the cities is my message." *The Adventist Home 139.1-3.* Advent Construction Services (ACS) has the solutions you need to obtain an affordable home "in the quiet retirement of the country". Fundamental to our business model is to prepare God's people for transition out of the cities. As such, owner financing to purchase a home may be provided in certain circumstances. ACS also provides construction management solutions in the following areas of need: new construction, renovations, alternative energy systems installation, etc. *Marcus Gaines, MEng. Phone: 205-910-2552, Email: adventconstructionservices@gmail.com, Website: <https://adventconstruction2.wixsite.com/website>* [1, 2]

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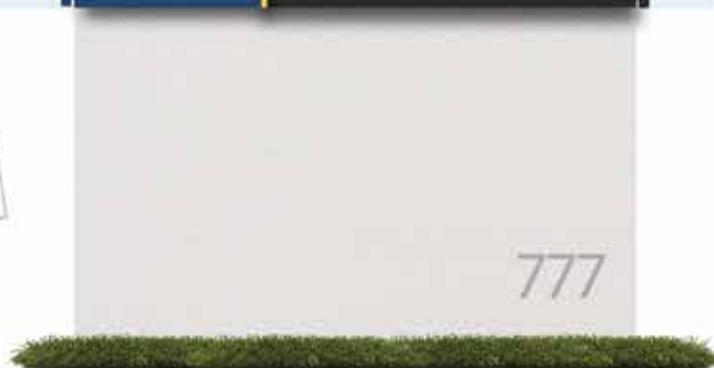
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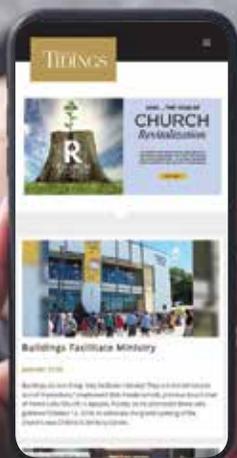


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Ken Thought He Had Prepared

Ken, a member at the Waynesville, N.C. Church, was familiar with estate planning. Not only did he name Carolina Conference as his beneficiary, he encouraged others to do the same.

Ken, like many others, was so certain he had properly executed his will that he didn't review it for needed updates or verification.

When his safe was opened after his passing, his original, unsigned will was in it. However, an unsigned will is like having no will.

► To ensure your personal affairs are in order, contact your local conference or university Planned Giving and Trust Services Director.

Carolina

Rick Hutchinson (704) 596-3200

Florida

Phil Bond (407) 644-5000

Georgia-Cumberland

Ray Hartwell (706) 629-7951

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Southeastern

Juan Gonzalez (352) 735-3142

Southern Adventist University

Kimberly Bobenhausen (423) 236-2832

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

ALUMNI OF HOOVER CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, BRAKEWORTH JUNIOR ACADEMY, AND BIRMINGHAM JUNIOR ACADEMY - April 3. Please join us to celebrate 73 years of Adventist education in Birmingham, AL. Call 205-987-3376 or email office@hooverchristianschool.org for more information.

SOUTHERN UNION CONFERENCE WOMEN'S CONVENTION - Sept. 8-11, 2022. Orlando, FL.

CAROLINA

Romance at the Ranch - Feb 12-14. "Escape to Italy." Dr. & Mrs. Edgar Wyhmeister. NPR.

Romance at en el Rancho - Feb 19-21. "Escape a Italia." Eli & Loyda Rojas. NPR.

Evangelism Impact - Feb. 18-21. Virtual Seminars. Carolina Conference Website.

MPA Musical Festival - March 4, 5. MPA.

Alive Youth Rally - March 6. Spartanburg Church.

Communication Workshop - March 7. Virtual. Carolina Conference Website.

"Fullness of Joy" Virtual Women's Seminar.- March 13. 3 p.m. Carolina Conference Website.

Pathfinder Work-Bee Campout - March 19-21. NPR.

Adult Sabbath School, Community Services, and Personal Ministries Workshop - March 26-28. NPR.

GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND

Pathfinder TLT Convention - Jan. 15-17. Online.

Hispanic Women's Leadership Convention - Jan. 17. Online with Zoom and limited in-person capacity at Atlanta, GA, First Hispanic Church.

Watch an Online Conversation with Kyoshin Ahn, executive secretary for the North American Division, with moderator Mickey P. Evans, president of the Georgia-Cumberland Adventist Elder's Consortium - Jan. 23. 4-5:30 p.m. Online.

Hispanic Children's Ministries Convention - Jan. 23. Online with Zoom and limited in-person capacity. Atlanta Metro region.

Pathfinder Bible Experience Regional Level - Jan. 23. Online.

Mobilize Young Adult Training Conference - Jan. 23. Zoom.

Hispanic Children's Ministries Convention - Jan. 30. Online with Zoom and limited in-person capacity at the Chattanooga, TN, Hispanic Community Church.

Leadership Training for Health and Personal Ministries Leaders - Jan. 30. 3-6 p.m. Ooltewah, TN, Church Fellowship Hall.

Hispanic Men's Leadership Convention - Jan. 31. Online with Zoom and limited in person capacity at the Chattanooga, TN, Hispanic Community Church.

Oasis (High School Retreat) - Feb. 5-7. Online.

Children's Ministries Convention - Feb. 12-14. The Conference links hands with the North American Division and Southern Union Conference to provide a general training that will assist the children's ministries coordinator, Sabbath school leaders and teachers, and the Vacation Bible School leaders and teachers. Location to be announced



SUNSET

	Jan 1	Jan 8	Jan 15	Jan 22	Jan 29	Feb 5
ATLANTA, GA	5:40	5:46	5:52	5:59	6:06	6:13
CHARLESTON, SC	5:25	5:31	5:37	5:43	5:50	5:56
CHARLOTTE, NC	5:22	5:28	5:35	5:42	5:49	5:56
COLLEGE DALE, TN	5:40	5:46	5:52	5:59	6:06	6:13
HUNTSVILLE, AL	4:47	4:53	4:59	5:06	5:13	5:20
JACKSON, MS	5:07	5:13	5:19	5:25	5:32	5:38
LOUISVILLE, KY	5:34	5:40	5:47	5:55	6:03	6:11
MEMPHIS, TN	4:59	5:05	5:12	5:19	5:26	5:33
MIAMI, FL	5:42	5:47	5:52	5:57	6:02	6:08
MONTGOMERY, AL	4:51	4:57	5:03	5:10	5:16	5:23
NASHVILLE, TN	4:44	4:50	4:57	5:04	5:11	5:18
ORLANDO, FL	5:40	5:46	5:51	5:57	6:03	6:09
TAMPA, FL	5:46	5:51	5:57	6:02	6:08	6:14
WILMINGTON, NC	5:13	5:19	5:26	5:32	5:39	5:46



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