



Official Newsletter for the Michigan Conference of Seventh-day Adventists:

# Michigan Memo

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## GC & NAD Presidents Talk About Adventism Today

— Israel Ramos

Associate Communications Director

From August 6-9, 2014, the Adventist-laymen Services and Industries (ASI) National Convention came to Grand Rapids, Michigan under the theme: Lift Him Up. ASI is a cooperative network of lay individuals, professionals, business owners, and ministries who collectively support the global mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church by sharing Christ in the marketplace.

One of the major highlights of this year's convention was a town hall meeting that took place Friday afternoon in the main auditorium. Presidents Ted Wilson of the General Conference and Dan Jackson of the North American Division participated in an interview with Dan Houghton, an ASI board member.

Making an effort to address "elephants in the room," Houghton made good use of time by quickly addressing difficult questions that the church must successfully wrestle with in order to remain relevant in today's society. Regarding homosexuality, Wilson emphasized that,

"Jesus has the power to help us live a victorious Christian life."

"The reality is that Jesus offers freedom," Jackson said. Both presidents took the time to make clear the fact that sexual sin - regardless of its heterosexual or homosexual orientation - must be approached in a loving way that points the sufferer to the Savior.



Photo by Mark Bond/ASI

Pictured left to right: Elder Ted Wilson, GC President; Elder Dan Jackson, NAD President; and Dan Houghton, ASI board member.

A topic currently on the minds of many is the issue of women's ordination. "What will be the impact if the Church votes to or not to ordain women?" Wilson answered, "We must be united in the prophetic mission of the Church." Both leaders understand that no matter the outcome, there will be individuals who will be highly disappointed. They feel that the fundamental decision

that we will all have to make is this: is this God's church or not? Jackson said, "We anchor in Jesus. We acknowledge that this is His church. And we say I want to be a part of this movement regardless of what happens."

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# President's Perspective

## The Fear of the Lord is the Beginning of Wisdom

—Jay Gallimore  
Conference President

If you were Adam and Eve's Creator, what would be the first thing you would teach them? Don't forget, the rebellion of Satan has put everything at risk including Adam and Eve. So what was that first Sabbath School lesson all about?

The book of Proverbs, written for young people, may give us an insight on that very first lesson. Inspiration declares, "*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.*"<sup>1</sup>

Thousands of Christian teachers declare in countless ways that God is love. And they are all correct! God is Love! Yet, how can the "fear of the Lord" be in harmony with "God is love?"

Adam and Eve were not robots. Their continued existence was conditional on their love, trust, and, yes, obedience to God's law. But why is "the fear of the Lord" the beginning lesson? And what does it have to do with love, trust, and obedience?

When God spoke the universe into existence, He designed the laws that keep it moving in harmony. When Paul said that, "God is not the Author of confusion," he spoke of a profound truth.

Organization is dependent on law. Without the law, there is no life.<sup>2</sup> If your body becomes disorganized, what happens? You die. So if the law is broken, then organization and harmony will be broken and life will be lost. That's serious stuff!

Here is why the "fear of God" is the first lesson. The laws He makes are not arbitrary. They are essential to life. But they are also the laws we can choose to break. Yet rebellion is lethal to the universe. That's why God won't tolerate it. Otherwise He would be irresponsible to His created children who depend on Him for life.

To "fear God" means you know and understand that His holiness will never ever in any way tolerate rebellion against the law. To "fear God" is to realize that there will be a sure and terrible consequence if we break His law of life. Death!

Not to teach Adam and Eve to "fear God" is to put them at a terrible risk. Are parents mean who instill a healthy fear of

consequences in their children? Does such training mean they don't love their child? Of course not! It is just the opposite. Love moves them to instill fear over real danger. Not to instill fear is reckless. As a young adult drives off to somewhere, the parting words are often, "Drive safe" and "I love you."

God is not an irresponsible parent. He tells the truth! And if the truth is told about the risk, it will instill a beneficial fear. Because God is love, like any good parent, He wants His children safe! As long as the "fear of God" which is "to hate evil" is in the heart, sin cannot enter.

At the tree of knowledge of good and evil, Eve's first words described her "fear of God" and the consequence of disobeying Him. But the devil attacked her "fear of God" by saying, "you won't surely die." At first, she didn't budge because her "fear of God" was keeping her from sin. Unless her trust in His love

could be broken on which her "fear" rested, Satan didn't stand a chance.

Satan's next move was to lead her to believe that God's love for her was not so pure after all. He lied by leading her to believe that the fruit had some magical

power that would allow her to be like God Himself. In other words, "Eve, God doesn't really love you, so you really can't trust Him. And just to prove it, look at what the fruit has done for me!"

Eve was no match for such reasonable lies. Satan uses his "experience" to "prove" his point. She takes the bait and doubts God's love! The result: she doesn't trust His word any longer! Her "fear of God" crumbles. Her defenses are gone. The next step was inevitable: sin! You see, it is our faith in the love of God that makes us trust the word of God. Because we believe what He says, it preserves our "fear of God" and keeps us from sin.

That is why Jesus said, "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."<sup>3</sup> Today the tempter has a new twist, if you please. We are led to believe that we may love and trust God without fearing God. But the real message is that sin has no consequences. It is a reckless teaching.

*"...it is our faith in the love of God that makes us trust the word of God. Because we believe what He says, it preserves our 'fear of God' and keeps us from sin."*

Lucifer has dumbed sin down by saying, “it is now not as bad as you once thought because God is love.” Before the Cross, he emphasized the “fear of God” without the love of God. After the Cross, he has emphasized the love of God without the “fear of God.” It is by pitting them against each other that he accomplishes his mission – getting people to sin. He knows if the two principles work together they keep people from sin.

Today, much of the Christian world doesn't fear to sin because they believe that God is love. What they affirm is true. God is love! But what they deny is false. Sin is eternally dangerous and God's love will also destroy it.

The Apostles were certainly under no such delusion. It was they who issued serious warnings that were meant to instill fear. Paul warned, “...let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear, for our God is a consuming fire.”<sup>4</sup> John warned us that “...there is a sin leading to death...”<sup>5</sup> Peter warned, “But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved...for fire until the day of judgment...”<sup>6</sup> So shall we walk around in fear all the time? Of course not! A parent who warns his child of danger doesn't want him to live in constant fear. The very warning of danger is to provide a sense of security. If one has a knowledge of the danger and a healthy fear of fire, he will not entertain the notion to play with fire.

Moses got it right. The first commandment is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and spirit. That is why “perfect love casts out fear.” Our love for God causes us to “dwell under the shadow of the Almighty” without fear. By constantly abiding in Christ, He becomes our shield. We don't dwell “in the secret place of the Most High” by hanging onto our sins, but rather, by giving them up.

The first angel's message has the everlasting gospel. That gospel, forged in the pain of Calvary, pours a flood of divine grace on a sinful world. Yet the first words out of the angel's mouth are, “Fear God and give glory to Him for the hour of His judgment is come.”

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*(Continued from front page)*

Rumors have been floating regarding a potential move away from the General Conference headquarters by the North American Division. Jackson addressed the speculations by stating that the idea is currently being explored, but no final decision has been made yet. Room to grow and effectiveness in delivering the mission of God's church in North America were the reasons given for a potential relocation.

Questions were raised regarding righteousness by faith, comprehensive health ministry (also known as medical missionary work), publishing ministry, mission to the cities, and the role of the Spirit of Prophecy today. Most questions, however, came in reference to spiritual formation. “How should we relate to movements which draw us away from what God has entrusted to us?” Reference was made to what is happening in some Adventist circles that seeks to mute our distinctiveness

How can this be? Why didn't the angel say, “God loves you and He understands that you are a sinner and there are things you just can't help?” Why does the everlasting gospel carry such a stern warning?

Here is why. Sin is as dangerous now as it was in Genesis. It will kill eternally. And God still loves His children as much as ever. At great cost to Himself, He has provided a refuge of grace to those who will give up their sins and put their absolute love and trust in Him. But they can't bring their sins with them. Sin and God will never make peace.

Only the “fear of God” can awaken the seriousness of breaking the law of God. And only when sinful men see how awful sin is and what terrible consequences it brings, will they run into the arms of the real grace of God.

The devil has counterfeited those arms of grace. They give a fake and phony hope that you can be saved and still hold on to your sins. It is a sham that will condemn countless millions to hell. For God is not mocked.

That first angel calls us to “give the glory to God.” To dumb down sin is to dumb down grace. Only when we see the awfulness of the one can we appreciate the glory of the other.

Even though the close of human probation is looming ever closer, the arms of God's grace are still open wide. Yet, from the mouth of the everlasting gospel come those solemn words. “Fear God!” Why? Because God's grace isn't able to save anyone who insists that is not a fearful thing to break the law of God! For certain, “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” and His mercy is the sure result.

1. *Proverbs 1:7*
2. *Romans 7:10*
3. *Matthew 10:28*
4. *Hebrews 12:25-29*
5. *1 John 5:16*
6. *2 Peter 3:7*

and promote only Jesus as a person without His message or teachings. Jackson said, “At the core of our beliefs is Jesus who *is* the Word.” Also stressing the importance of theology centered on Christ, Wilson said, “The devil will throw every curve at people interested in truth. Revival is not based on emotion, but on the word of God.” He stressed the importance of basing our experience on a cognitive understanding of God's word.

The meeting ended with encouraging remarks from the General Conference president and a short prayer session. This was the first time that ASI has done something like this, and the hope is it will become a tradition!

Audioverse.org provides all ASI presentations including the town hall meeting with Elders Wilson and Jackson. Visit them on the web for more information.

# Churches Working Together for Health Evangelism

—Tom Mejeur

Project Coordinator, *Lifestyle Matters*

**W**hat happens when churches with one purpose work together to reach a city? They impact both the physical and spiritual.

On May 4, West Michigan Adventists from rural and urban churches joined efforts to provide a health awareness day for Michigan's second largest city, Grand Rapids. The plan was to provide full coverage for the metropolitan area such that all residents had easy access to our health outreach. Three suburban locations on major business routes served outlying communities and a landmark public high school hosted the core city site.

The team presented the *Health Education Resources* (HER) "Health Expo" program, which highlights in a user-friendly accessible way the *Eight Laws of Health*. HER President

Charles Cleveland, joined the health fair, visiting two sites with a video production team from Outpost Centers International (OCI) for features on 3ABN, the Hope Channel, and other Adventist networks.

Lifestyle Matters, the Michigan Conference Health Ministries Department outreach ministry, provided the coordination, where Vicki Griffin and Evelyn Kissinger rotated between the four sites supporting each of the presenters. Pastors Daniel Ferraz and Bob Benson joined us giving technical support and encouragement as well.



Thirty-five people gathered three weeks before the Grand Rapids health fair to organize the event. They selected site coordinators for each of the four locations. These coordinators did a magnificent job

recruiting the 200 volunteers and running each of the sites.

The health fair sites included the central city and three close suburbs. The inner city location was co-sponsored by the Academy of Health Science and Technology at the Innovation Central High School. A northwestern suburban bedroom community offered their Ice and Fitness Center for one of the

fair sites. A beautiful, large new car dealership with two large windowed showrooms offered their prime real estate location for the southeast site. In the southwest, a large suburban high school gym was rented.

Direct mailing sent to thousands brought people to each of the four locations. This was supplemented with public service messages, radio interviews, and two digital highway billboards. Church members also placed posters in stores and schools, as

well as invited friends and family.

Between the four sites, about 400 people attended. The security guards told our leaders how impressed they were with how our people worked so harmoniously. The school wants us to hold the event again next year.



Positive outcomes included

people with unknown high blood pressure and sugar conditions addressing their health risks. Volunteers reported that people decided to quit smoking which had been an issue to their joining the church. Others went to their health professionals to treat their newly identified risks. One person reportedly got help the same day!

Through information gained from drawings, contacts got an invitation to the follow-up Lifestyle Matters Fit & free<sup>®</sup> seminars including *Hearts On Fire* held three weeks later and *From Wanting To Winning* one week before the reaping evangelistic series. The Grand Rapids health fair inspired volunteering staff to go back to their churches and work towards conducting events in their community. Currently, three churches are planning health events as a result of participating.

The health fair and the Fit & free<sup>®</sup> seminars feed into the July 7 *Keys of Revelation* evangelistic series preceding the annual ASI (Adventist-laymen's Services and Industries) International Convention held August 6-9 in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Area churches are holding officially 15 simultaneous evangelistic series with additional series in the area; four series are *Youth For Jesus* youth-led sites. For more information, look up [www.keysof Revelation.com](http://www.keysof Revelation.com).

The Grand Rapids health fair benefited the guests and members participating. We have learned that consistent event presentations over time builds awareness, community gatekeepers support, and compound attendance growth. Many are asking to do it again, bigger, and better!

# Collaborative Effort Impacts Western Michigan

—Beth Thomas  
Grand Haven Church member

For the past 15 years, the Adventist-laymen Services and Industries (ASI) Youth for Jesus program has flooded large cities across America with enthusiastic young people, looking to spend a portion of their summer in evangelistic outreach. Last year, ASI Youth for Jesus leaders approached the Michigan Conference and District 4 leadership to see if their youth participants could have four church sites to hold their annual prophecy series prior to their international convention.



In January 2014, a district-wide rally was held at the Rogers Heights Spanish Seventh-day Adventist Church. To a packed auditorium, Conference leaders, ASI representatives, and laymen shared their vision of reaching the entire

Grand Rapids metro area with the Gospel. Twenty-two churches across Western Michigan signed up to take part in the summer series, *Keys of Revelation*.

Pre-work began in earnest following the rally. Aside from advertising at the health expos, radio and internet ads, strategic billboards, handbills, and specialized GLOW tracts were used to inform the public of the seminars. Opening night of *Keys of Revelation* was Monday, July 7. Conference department heads, pastoral staff, and laymen preached at non-ASI sponsored sites, while ASI youth preached at their four sites. ASI youth speakers spent time with Pastor Mark Howard of Emmanuel Institute gaining some practical tips and information before the series began.

First-time visitors on opening night numbered around 400, and stayed consistent throughout the series. Now that the series has concluded, guests are being integrated into mid-week studies on Daniel and Revelation and will, by God's grace, follow Jesus' example through baptism.

Reports are coming in of visitors who have had life-changing

experiences as a result of the meetings. One couple had faithfully attended the seminar at the Holland Church, until he tragically suffered a stroke. While in the hospital, the gentleman received multiple visits from church members who were concerned about him. He was so impressed that he remarked, "I can't wait to get out of this hospital and get back to the meetings!"



One Sunday afternoon before the series began, another story is told of a gentleman who came into contact with young people from ASI and the National Association for the Prevention of Starvation (NAPS), a traveling youth ministry team from Oakwood University. They were enjoying a picnic in Millennium Park when he struck up a conversation with one of them. They then invited him to join them for lunch. When he inquired what they were doing in Grand Rapids, they quickly got a handbill and showed him the nearest series site, Maranatha Fellowship. He attended all of the meetings and is now preparing for baptism!

At the Wright Church, one visitor remarked that by coming to the seminar, it has caused her to realize that there is more to being a Christian than just weekly church attendance. She is now involved in personal Bible studies. Another visitor mentioned positively that in comparison to the other church he attends, the Adventist church uses Scripture heavily. It is actually preparing him for the Second Coming by looking into the prophecies in Revelation, whereas his other church has never even opened that book!

The Grand Rapids area could be considered difficult territory, because of its heavily churched population. But the Holy Spirit has been working behind the scenes to accomplish miracles in people's lives. Only time will tell the incredible impact that *Keys of Revelation* has had on the Grand Rapids metro area and Western Michigan. Look for good reports of God's leading in the months ahead!



# A to Zomi

—Shirley Finneman  
Battle Creek Tabernacle member

**Y**ou are going to do *what? Why?*” was my astonished response to Mike, the Battle Creek Director of Emergency Response and Homeland Security.

“I am going to teach the Community Emergency Response Training to a group of refugees from Myanmar. It will be my first time to speak with an interpreter. You know there are about 2,000 Myanmar refugees in the city!”



“Myanmar... Oh, you mean Burma!” The word Burma brought a flood of memories. “Don’t you know? Haven’t you heard? Didn’t any one ever tell you?” rang in my ears. This was my father’s favorite expression to us children as we grew up, an echo of Eric B. Hare’s stories fresh from the jungles of Burma. These stories molded my life and at age seven, I determined to be a missionary. About 60 year later I am in the exciting position of starting a foreign mission station in the field of Battle Creek through Community Services.

The desperation in the newly arrived refugee’s voice as he prayed was evident even as he spoke a language I did not understand. He had spent agonizing years fleeing from his country and living in another one, waiting for the opportunity to come to a free nation. Now he was desperately struggling to learn a language that was baffling. He had to get a job to be able to stay in this country, but even a greater concern was the welfare of his family. Through an interpreter, he pleaded with us to teach the family the alphabet. They were getting help with enough English to fill out forms and get a job in a factory, but he longed to understand more. He needed to know God was answering his prayers for his family when he could not see the answers.

It was then when God reminded me of the way I was introduced to foreign languages: through hymns! On my way home, I took their precious well-worn Zomi hymnal and made a stop at a dollar store where I found a handful of simple phonics books. The next day we started a class with hymns in Zomi and English, children’s Sabbath School songs, phonics books, and a white board. There was no interpreter this time - we were to sink or

swim! Our earnest prayer was for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to speak to the families through the hymns that they had picked out and to encourage their hearts, bonding all of us together. We also asked Him to open their minds to learn the language of the land where He had brought them.

We experienced the working of the Holy Spirit in a mighty way! Through the words of the great hymns in their own heart language, Zomi, He spoke of courage, comfort, hope, and the many promises of the care of our gracious Redeemer. Our eyes met as our hearts had been touched by the messages which we both could now understand. Looks, smiles, and songs crossed the language barrier aided by the Holy Spirit.

We learned that hymns were powerful and practical. Those who were too shy to speak the English language would instead sing in English courageously. It was an easier way to learn the sounds of the letters, sentence structures, and the spiritual language. When we hit a challenge with the sound of “R,” we sang Redeemed.

Another surprise was when some Baptist neighbors heard about our class, they came to join the singing, delighted that we sang the “same” songs. We shared with them that Baptist missionaries had

translated the Zomi language using the English alphabet. We would have been lost trying to read the Burmese!

They also were surprised at what we believed - redeemed by the blood of the Lamb! We were witnessing through our hymns!

This was just the beginning. We now have five teams going out into the homes with hymns, phonics, and picture dictionaries. In anticipation of needing Zomi-speaking workers to answer Bible questions, Pastor and Mrs. Torres, from the school of Evangelism in Guam, gave our first class of Bible instruction. Our hearts were thrilled as 17 native Zomi-speaking individuals along with others attended.

Evelyn Kissinger and Dr. Mary McNeilus (who previously helped Southeast Asian refugees) are helping us to develop a medical missionary program to fit their culture and challenges.

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# The End of Nightmares

— Michael Fracker

*Ionia Church Communications Secretary*

When asked about their religious background, Britney Luttman stated, “My mom wasn’t religious and my dad was out of the picture, so I didn’t have any religious upbringing.” Richard Luttman added, “My parents went to the Lutheran church occasionally when I was a child. I did attend Christian schools a couple of years and one year of Catholic high school when my parents split up.”

Britney stated, “We decided to go to the meetings in Ionia because we knew it was the end of times, the FEMA camps - I needed to get the Lord on my side. We could see the end-time events and what the Bible said was going to happen. We came with Jerry Emelander, a former Adventist, to the meetings. Before, I had begged Richie to go to church, but he just said, ‘My beliefs are my beliefs and that’s it.’” Richie added, “I came to the meetings because of my family. That’s the most important thing in my life. And I could see the way the world was going. I was skeptical though about going because, you know, the Seventh-day Adventists are known for being extremist Christians. I heard some false stories about them also, but I knew Jerry, and I knew they weren’t true. I did have a little doubt about the meetings, but the first one we went to that Mike Fracker preached was so powerful, I was sold from then on out.”

Britney continued, “We attended the meetings, started going to church and Sabbath School. I enjoy Sabbath School so much and we have learned so much.” Richie chimed in, “Man, we learned so much: the state of the dead, fermentation, clean and unclean foods; I never knew about E.G. White until the meetings either.” Britney and Richie had lived together for four years, and Britney has three children: Evan Jones, Cody

Britney continued, “After the meetings, Mike Fracker came to our house to study with us every week for five months with the Storacles. I had so many questions on everything. And one night I asked him, ‘We can’t be baptized until we get married, can we?’ And then I said, ‘Oh, I wouldn’t want to be baptized unless we were married anyway.’ But I want to be married in the church where I’m going. Can we do that?” Pastor Monte Landis married Richie and Britney on January 26, 2014 in the Ionia Seventh-day Adventist Church.



And on April 19, 2014, Richie and Britney were baptized by Pastor Landis into the Ionia Church family. Britney stated, “It is important to me to be a member of the church and live the right way. Knowing God makes me not so scared of what is going to happen. I used to have nightmares about evil things, but since we started studying with Mike, the nightmares went away. Now it makes my life a lot easier with God and a lot less stressful. I just know that God will provide for all our needs.”

Richie added, “I am completely sold that this is the true faith. And it scares me because I know I have so many faults. This isn’t getting sent to the principal’s office; this is life and death. But I feel free. Since right before our wedding, when I pray and give it to Him, I can go about my way, smiling, because I know He will take care of everything.” Britney stated, “God brought Richie and me together for a reason. I believe He wants us to do something big.”

Britney added, “I don’t like public school ethics. Evan was in Threshold Academy for four years, but they closed due to a lack of sponsorship this year. We’re planning on putting Evan in the Ionia Seventh-day Adventist Church School next year.” Richie and Britney were the fifteenth and sixteenth persons baptized from the *War in Revelation* crusade in the fall of 2013 that Michael Fracker conducted in Ionia. Jerry and Christie Emelander, and Jerry’s oldest daughter are also preparing for baptism and were strategically involved in the group study in their home. Britney is the daughter of Christie.



Waterman, and Richard Christopher Luttman. Richie stated, “When Britney became pregnant, I did a 180° in changing my lifestyle. At 17, a friend and I had broke into the neighbor’s house that my friend was dog sitting for, and we threw a party for a bunch of people. I spent three years in prison for that. And even after I got out, for years I was just partying and hanging out. But when our child was born, that changed everything. I got a job, worked hard, stayed home; my family is everything.”

# Going Bananas

— Amy Austin  
Alpena Church member

The Alpena Seventh-day Adventist Elementary School has been busy going on God's errands. As with many other Bible Labs programs, we have cleaned yards, visited nursing homes, sold magabooks, and delivered baked goods to those shut-in. However, one of our largest priorities has been handing out GLOW tracts all over town. We love to get creative with how we do this. One of the most memorable ways we have come up with is attaching GLOW tracts to bananas. We tie a banana health information card and tract to the banana, load a wagon, and head out to greet the people. We go in and out of businesses, handing the bananas out even along the street. The students greet each person with a smile accompanied by "have a happy and healthy day," as they hand the person a banana. Almost always the reply is a smile or a thank you and a happy look of amazement. Through this project, we have been able to tell people about our school and church as well as share with people that Jesus loves them. Last



fourth of July, we took this banana idea even further and handed out about 2,400 bananas with tracts attached in our local town parade. People were thrilled to receive a healthy snack and cheered us all the way.

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The community service and outreach coordinators of the Urbandale and Marshall churches are joining us to look for ways to enable the ladies to work at home; sewing machines have already been donated! Others are experimenting with alternate ways to grow crops and to work with different kinds of greenhouses to extend the growing season of food familiar to Burma. This is not only for better nutrition, but work without Sabbath conflicts.

Remember the class for emergency response for the refugees? It never materialized. It seems that was God's way of opening our eyes to the mission field He been equipping us for at our very door step.

Through this project and many like it, we are planting seeds that will hopefully sprout and grow for eternity. Through our Bible

Labs program, we are making a name for our Adventist school and for Jesus. When we are out doing other programs, people will ask, "Aren't you the people who handed out bananas?" Sometimes other church members will let us know that someone they work with received one of our "treats."

Even more recently, we have handed out GLOW tracts with attached items such as mints,

Lifesavers, raisin boxes, apple cider, gum, Christmas survival packs, and more. This past year we claimed Isaiah 52:7 as our Bible Labs verse of the year which says, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who proclaims peace, who brings glad tidings of good things, who proclaims salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns!'" That



is what we want to do – share the good news of Jesus with our community.

If you would like to find out more about some of our Bible Labs projects, please visit [biblelabs.blogspot.com](http://biblelabs.blogspot.com).

## SABBATH SCHOOL

**Joint Weekend for Children's and Adult Teachers Only**

**October 31 – November 2**

- Held at Camp Au Sable
- Model Sabbath School Programs
- Separate Seminar Tracks for Children's and Adult Teachers
- Question & Answer Time
- Teacher's Training and Support
- Mark Your Calendars!



# RAIN in Hartford

—Moise Ratsara

*Former Pastor of the Hartford Church*

God has given us a Great Commission, not a great option. As a young pastor responding to the high calling of ministry, I had to personalize God's commission in Matthew 28:16-20. I had made a personal decision that wherever I was sent, may it be to a remote village in Congo or Las Vegas, Nevada, I needed to preach the Three Angels' Messages not only intellectually, but with my heart. At the end of the 2012, I received the call to pastor in Hartford, Michigan. The city is home to a beautiful mid-size church of about 70 members. The church and the members were precious, but attendance was low and the town was a challenge. In 2000, the town of Hartford had about 6,000 residents, but in 2010, that number dropped to about 2,000. More than half of the residents I had talked to during my time there had multiple negative contacts with law enforcement. Most were unemployed or on some form of welfare. The majority of the residents were migrant workers; hence, language was a barrier. My heart went out to this community and to my local congregation. I realized I myself was in need of a Savior. I decided to claim Christ's righteousness and wisdom.

The pastor prior to me had laid a good foundation and established a positive presence in the community. But now it was left to us, the Hartford Church, to unite with God and spread the Three Angels' Messages to this community, preparing them to receive Jesus. In order to fulfill this task, our church had to first become a praying church. Mothers, fathers, widows, orphans - all of us started to agonize with God in prayer asking God what must we do to prepare His people? After nights of many tears, sore knees, and attacks from the evil one to give up and just "play" church, God reminded us of three quotes from the *Spirit of Prophecy*:

It is evident that all the sermons that have been preached have not developed a large class of self-denying workers. This subject is to be considered as involving the most serious results. Our future for eternity is at stake. The churches are withering up because they have failed to use their talents in diffusing light. Careful instruction should be given which will be as lessons from the Master, that all may put their light to practical use. - *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 6, p. 431

Many would be willing to work if they were taught how to begin. They need to be instructed and encouraged. Every church should be a training school for Christian workers. - *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 149

Successful work for Christ depends not so much on numbers or talent as upon pureness of purpose, the true simplicity of earnest, dependent faith. Personal responsibilities must be borne, personal duties must be taken up, personal efforts must be made for those who do not know Christ. In the place of shifting your responsibility upon someone whom you think more richly endowed than you are, work according to your ability. - *Desire of Ages*, p. 370

After this revelation from God, we realized that not only must our church be a praying church, but we must take personal action. We must become a training center for gospel workers. But more importantly, each member must feel the personal burden for the success of the church locally at large. We, as church leaders, realized that we needed not only to adopt an effective cycle of evangelism, but believe in it and practice it.

The personal ministry director Christian Smith, a zealous young man for the Lord, and I decided to put together a very practical nine-week Bible training course that could be replicated in any local church. This course, RAIN, stood for "Reaching After Individual Needs." While it is still in the process of being perfected, this course focused on teaching members Christ's methods of personal work. Its aims were first to equip the local membership to be successful in gospel ministry. Secondly, the course sought to create a culture of mentors for newly-baptized members or struggling members. Last, but not least, RAIN was to become an army of well-trained gospel workers excited about our Advent message.

In our first year of running RAIN, we faced some challenges. We lost several of our beloved church members, while several of our attendees were in dire financial need. But the Lord was faithful. In one of our outreaches, we had 15 Bible study interests in just 45 minutes of door-to-door work. Members that were frightened to give Bible studies, or had no experience in ministry, started to give multiple Bible studies. As a result,

*(Continued on page 6)*



# St. Johns Re-dedication

—Yvonne DePaepe  
St. Johns Church member



1400 South Oakland, St. Johns, MI

**I**n 1863 just 19 years after the Great Disappointment of 1844, O.B. Sevy from New York state moved to Michigan and settled in the St.

Johns area. This consecrated man built his home and added on an extra room for the Lord's church. Over the next 151 years, there has always been a group of faithful believers in the St. Johns area.

On Sabbath, September 20, 2014, the St. Johns Seventh-day Adventist Church will be having a Homecoming 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary to celebrate the 40 years of being in our present church building. Elder Jay Gallimore, Michigan Conference President, will be our guest speaker for the morning worship service. Several past church school teachers, pastors, and returning members will be attending.

After the morning services there will be a potluck dinner and then a special re-dedication service, a brief historical photo presentation, and a musical program. It is going to be a wonderful high Sabbath and a little taste of heaven! If you have ever been a part of the St. Johns Church family, you are invited to attend.

*(Continued from page 9)*

we had about 24 solid Bible studies that are still being led by members of RAIN.

In our first session of RAIN, more than half of our active church membership graduated from the course. Interestingly, this and other factors lead to an increase in church attendance. At the end of the year, weekly we had almost the same number of church attendees for both Sabbath School and divine service as the membership total on our church books. In addition, our church programs (cooking schools, Vacation Bible School,

church socials, etc.) were well attended by the community. Our church was included in a list of ten churches to attend in the county. Several baptisms have resulted from members of RAIN involvement in personal evangelism and many more are being prepared for baptism. We praise the Lord for His faithfulness. A lot still needs to be done for Christ in Hartford and in our great state of Michigan, but God is our Father, and if we totally depend on Him, He will lead us even in the end of this age. Maranatha.

**Every Monday morning, the Michigan Conference staff meet together for worship and prayer. Here is the list for the months of September and October. Please join with us as we pray for these ministries.**

## September 1-5

East Lansing  
Pastor David Shin

## September 8-12

Holt/Williamston  
Pastor Chuck Hanlon

## September 15-19

Kalamazoo/Kalamazoo Downtown/Filipino  
Pastor Daniel Ferraz  
Bible Worker - Petra Ferraz  
Kalamazoo Jr. Academy -  
William Crawford, Principal, Raquel Gomez,  
Jim Gray, Lata Selvadas, Anndrea Taylor

## September 22-26

Manistique/McMillan Northwoods/Sault Ste. Marie  
Pastor Mike Szykowski

## September 29 - October 3

Michiana Fil Am/St. Joseph  
Pastor Roy Castelbuono

## October 6-10

Alpena/Onaway  
Pastor David Austin  
Alpena - Sarah Taylor, Principal/Teacher  
Onaway - Donald Mapes, Principal/Teacher

## October 13-17

Centreville/Kalamazoo Countryside  
Pastor Terry Nelson

## October 20-24

Bangor/South Haven  
Pastor Immanuel Roth

## October 27-31

Midland/Mt. Pleasant  
Pastor Cory Herthel  
Mt. Pleasant - Tamara Draves, Principal/Teacher  
Midland Community Service Center - Reid Tait

# Transitions in Mission



Kelsea Allen, a graduate from Andrews University, will be teaching grades 7 and 8 at Battle Creek Academy.



Sari Butler, formally teaching at Andrews Academy, will be the principal and grades 6-8 teacher at Holland Adventist School.

Raquel Gomez, a graduate from Andrews University, will be teaching grades 7 and 8 at Kalamazoo Junior Academy.



Heidi Hunt, formally teaching in Umpire, Arkansas, will be teaching grades 2-3 at Greater Lansing Adventist School.



Christian McDonald, an Andrews University graduate, will be teaching science at Grand Rapids Adventist Academy.

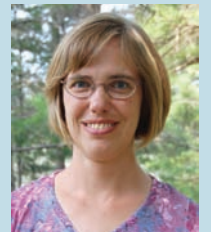


Daniel Morrison, a graduate from Andrews University, will be teaching grades 1-8 at Pine Mountain Christian School.

Corina Nephew will be teaching grades 1-8 at Pittsford Adventist School.



Jody Seigal, formally teaching in Salem, Oregon, will be teaching grades 2-3 at Niles Adventist School.



Last year Lata Selvadas served as a teacher assistant at Kalamazoo Junior Academy. This year she will be their K-1 teacher.

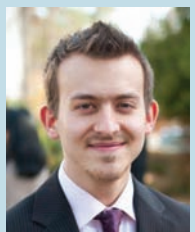
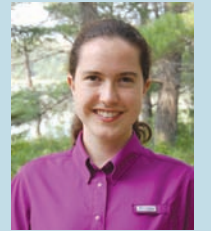


Melanie Taylor will be teaching grades 6-8 at Niles Adventist School.

Raquel Valentin, a graduate from Southern Adventist University, will be teaching K-2 at Metropolitan Junior Academy.



Kari Williams, a graduate from Andrews University, will be principal and grades K-4 teacher at Ithaca SDA Elementary.



Erwin Nanasi comes from Weimar to be chaplain and teach Bible and choir at Great Lakes Adventist Academy.

Emily Graham has transferred from principal/teacher at Pine Mountain Elementary to principal/teacher at Northview Adventist School.

Gabriel Mendez has transferred from principal/teacher at Holland Elementary to teacher at Cedar Lake Elementary.

Melissa Boryca has transferred from teacher at Greater Lansing Adventist School to principal/teacher at Escanaba Elementary.

Rebecca Wade has transferred from teacher at Kalamazoo Junior Academy to principal/teacher at Troy Adventist Academy.

# MICHIGAN CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

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## September

- 1 Labor Day - Office Closed
- 5-7 Adventurer Family Camp - Northwoods
- 7-11 Seniors Retreat - Camp Au Sable
- 11-14 Health Professional Retreat - Camp Au Sable
- 12-14 Pathfinder Workshop - Camp Au Sable
- 18-21 Family Life Retreat - Camp Au Sable
- 19-20 Prison Ministry Awareness Seminars - GLAA
- 23 MI Executive Committee
- 25 K-12 Board of Education
- 26-28 ACS Fall Retreat - Camp Au Sable

## October

- 1-5 LUC Secondary Leadership - Camp Au Sable
- 5-8 LIFT - Camp Au Sable
- 10-12 Mother/Daughter Retreat - Camp Au Sable
- 12-16 Work Week - Camp Au Sable
- 16 Bosses' Day
- 17-19 Lay Advisory Retreat - Camp Au Sable
- 22 Camp Meeting Directors
- 23 K-12 Board of Education
- 24-26 Teachers' Marriage Retreat - Camp Au Sable
- 25 Men of Faith - GLAA
- 28 MI Executive Committee
- 31-Nov 2 Sabbath School Workshop - Camp Au Sable
- 31-Nov 2 Northwoods Romance - Camp Sagola

## CHIP Leadership Training Workshop

**B**ecome a CHIP Facilitator and help your church become the center of health and hope in your community! The Complete Health Improvement Program (CHIP) is a Seventh-day Adventist owned program scientifically proven to reduce chronic diseases such as heart disease, high blood pressure, obesity, type 2 diabetes, and

more. The new CHIP program has been fully updated with state of the art videos and new participant materials. This community-based program is informative, interactive, and fun to be a part of. With CHIP, your church will help people to find health and hope for a better life!

October 4 & 5, 2014  
Cedar Lake Seventh-day Church  
7260 N Academy Rd.  
Cedar Lake, MI 48812

Price: \$250. Includes workshop, CHIP participant kit (textbook, workbook, cookbook, pedometer and water bottle valued @ \$249), Church Manual, and certification.

Workshop price for Adventist affiliated organizations only. Regular price is \$1,499.

For information or to register, call (989) 427-3100 or email [chipcedarlake@gmail.com](mailto:chipcedarlake@gmail.com).



**Impact your community with health ministry**

BECOME A CHIP FACILITATOR IN YOUR CHURCH!

WITHIN	✓	Lower cholesterol
THE FIRST	✓	Normalize blood pressure
30 DAYS	✓	Reduce heart disease
CHIP CAN	✓	Arrest type 2 diabetes
BEGIN TO	✓	Trim body fat

**October 4 & 5, 2014**  
**Cedar Lake, Michigan**  
Cedar Lake SDA Church - 7260 N Academy Rd, Cedar Lake, MI 48812  
October 4: 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM (spiritual emphasis)  
October 5: 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM (nuts and bolts of CHIP)

For information or to register  
989-427-3100 or [chipcedarlake@gmail.com](mailto:chipcedarlake@gmail.com)

Price \$250 (non-SDA pay \$1499)  
Includes training workshop, CHIP Participant Kit (textbook, workbook, cookbook, water bottle, pedometer) & Certification  
SDACHIP.com for more info about CHIP in your church

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