



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

Michigan Memo

February 2016, Volume 28, Number 2

One, Two, Three Blessings in One Day

— Ken Stubbs

Communications Secretary for the Holland Church

On November 28, the congregation of the Holland Seventh-day Adventist Church witnessed a beautiful triple miracle of their own. On that glorious Sabbath, a father was re-baptized, a mother baptized, and a daughter dedicated for the Lord, with Senior Pastor Gene Hall performing all three events.

The father, Matt Bernick, has been a member of the Holland church for a number of years and attended the church school there through the seventh grade. Matt's eighth grade year found him in the Saugatuck, Michigan's school system, and that is where his troubles began. He hooked up with the wrong crowd and began experimenting with drugs at age 13. It wasn't long before he was caught with drugs in his possession, on one of the Saugatuck school buses.

When it came time for Matt to enter high school, his parents pleaded with him to go to Great Lakes Adventist Academy. Matt hounded them to remain in public school telling them "If you send me there, I will get kicked out." So Matt attended Saugatuck High School and the drug problem increased.

Matt graduated from high school in 2011 and over the next two years his life began spiraling downward to the point where he didn't know what to do. His parents were separated at the time, so he lived for a while in a cottage with his mother.

When Matt was 20, he noticed a girl at Burger King and recognized her from one of the busses he rode while attending Saugatuck High. Makayla was in her senior year of high school. By this time, Matt was so

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Guest Editorial

The Core of Adventist Education Is Not Common

— Diane Barlow
Superintendent of Schools

With Jesus Christ being the core of Adventist Education, it is anything but common! Adventist Education is not only concerned about preparing students for life today, but more importantly for life eternal.

One of the objectives of Adventist Education is to prepare students to be productive citizens with integrity, in a society that is bombarded with false teachings. Wherever you turn these days, Satan is trying to distract us from the truth. His efforts are intensifying. These messages are displayed right before our eyes on highway billboards, magazines at the grocery checkout, mall displays, state and national park signage about evolution, TV, movies, social media, and the internet, to name a few. These sights and sounds can undermine spirituality. With this in mind, Adventist Education is intentional about helping parents with the spiritual upbringing of their children by giving students an education that will help fit them for heaven.

When the church, school, and home work together, they become a spiritual platform that increases the likelihood that students will choose to have a personal relationship with Jesus and become life-long Seventh-day Adventists. Sadly when any one component of the spiritual platform is missing – the home, church, or school – the child is handicapped and the likelihood of them choosing to be a life-time Adventist and following Jesus is significantly decreased. When one leg of the spiritual platform fails, it is compromised and suddenly worldly influences are much more likely to be adopted as values.

Adventist teachers encourage students to develop their own personal relationship with Christ. They are not just taught about Jesus, but students are inspired to develop a personal relationship with Him. Teachers model this relationship throughout the day. They start each morning with prayer and worship and are intentional about sharing Jesus with the students throughout the day whether it is math, science, or PE. Teachers are intentionally looking for those teachable moments where they can weave spiritual truths into the daily routine. God is intertwined throughout the day in the different subject areas as they are covered. Furthermore, pastors work closely with teachers by

visiting classrooms, having worship talks, Bible studies, and Weeks of Prayer with the students. Often the pastor comes into the school and takes the students to recess or eats lunch with them, where he further develops a personal relationship with the students.

Besides being intentional about the spiritual aspect of education, Adventist students receive an academic education that has been recognized for outperforming the national average in all subject areas as revealed by the recent four-year research study *CognitiveGenesis*.¹ The study involved over 30,000 students in grades 3-9, and 11 being tested. Some significant conclusions:

- The longer a student was in the Adventist school system, the better were their scores.
- The size of the school or demographics did not affect student scores.
- Students from one-room schools did as well as those from large schools.
- Students in Adventist schools had higher-than-expected academic achievement based on an assessment of individual ability.

"The warning to 'come out of Babylon and be separate' includes our children."

Did you know that our new science curriculum for grades 1-8, *By Design*, was developed for Adventists and edited by Adventist professors? This new science program is centered on Jesus and is based upon *Essential Questions* and *Big Ideas*. Each *Essential Question* and *Big Idea* encourages the student to find evidence for God as Designer, Creator, and Sustainer of the universe. You will not find this emphasis in any public or charter school!

For the past few years, there has been much buzz about “Common Core” and many Adventists are questioning if the Michigan Conference Education Department is using it. The truth be known, our elementary math text books do have the phrase “Common Core” printed on the cover. However, that is not the reason behind the North American Division choosing this current math book series. In the book *Education*, pg. 17, Ellen White writes, “It is the work of true education to develop this power, to train the youth to be thinkers, and not mere

reflectors of other men's thought." Several years ago the North American Division (NAD) had a committee of Adventist math teachers review current math textbooks available, as our math books needed updating. After reviewing the different textbooks and keeping in mind the philosophy of Adventist Education, the current series, *Go Math!* and *Big Ideas Math* were selected. These new math textbooks were chosen because they are teaching our students to be "thinkers" and not just "reflectors" of other men's thoughts.

Did you know that the Adventist school system is a product of inspiration? Ellen White had her first detailed message for developing the Adventist school system in 1872. By 1895, there were 20 Adventist schools. Today worldwide there are over 7,800 educational institutions, which include universities and colleges, secondary schools, and elementary schools, with more than 1,600,000 students². We are blessed in Michigan to have 40 Adventist educational institutions, which include Andrews University, one day academy, one boarding academy, two K-12 schools, six junior academies, 20 one-room schools, and nine other elementary schools.

"Those who seek the education that the world esteems so highly are gradually led farther and farther from the principle of truth and become educated worldlings³." This is a very scary thought! Our Adventist schools are here to help educate our children in the truth. Public schools and even other Christian schools mix error with truth. Why subject our children to this, when God

has provided Adventist schools for them? Children, as well as adults, have a hard time deciphering error from truth. Why should we put our children in an environment that mingles error with truth? The warning to "come out of Babylon and be separate" includes our children.

We have been warned in II Corinthians 6:14 not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. I encourage you if you have your children in public school, a charter school, or another non-Adventist Christian school, please prayerfully consider giving them an Adventist Education where students will be taught the truth from God-fearing teachers.

We must do all that we can do to prepare our children for heaven and life on this earth. Providing them with a Seventh-day Adventist education is part of God's divine plan. The Seventh-day Adventist educational system was established to help us prepare our children for eternity. When the Lord comes and asks, "Where are your children, that flock I gave to you?" I want to be able to say, "Here they are. I did everything that You asked me to do to prepare them for heaven."

¹ http://adventisteducation.org/assessment/cognitive_genesis/glance

² <http://education.gc.adventist.org/about.html>

³ White, E. G. (1923) *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pg. 544

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into drugs that he said there were many times when he almost overdosed. He now realizes that solely the hand of God saved him from death. The one thing he had going for himself was that Makayla had moved into the cottage with him.

In 2013, Matt and Makayla were forced to move from the cottage and, with no other place to go, moved into the wet and moldy basement of his drug dealer's home.

In July of 2014 Makayla announced to Matt that she was pregnant. Matt was now forced to make other living arrangements. With the help of his parents, now remarried, Matt and Makayla were able to move into a trailer. Matt's father, Mike, encouraged him to get back to God and the church. So he and Makayla, along with his dad and mom, started coming back to the Holland Seventh-day Adventist Church, where he was met with open arms. His father also got Matt to start a daily devotional time with God. Matt and Makayla were married on September 12, 2014.

Meladie, their daughter, was born on March 24, 2015, and Matt will be the first to tell you that the birth of his daughter, along with God, saved his life.

So, on that wonderful day in November, the Bernick family became one of the finest triple miracle in the history of the Holland church.

Matt, Makayla, and Meladie now attend every week, and his dad and mom are living testimonies for parents and youth everywhere that God will never leave you. Both Matt and Makayla are now involved with the youth of the Holland Church to help them avoid making the same mistakes.

At his re-baptism, Matt quoted from 2 Timothy 3:1-5 where Paul wrote that in the last days, men will be lovers of themselves and from such people turn away. He indicated this described where he was, but Romans 12:2 describes where God has led him today: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." Praise God, that's where Matt is now!

Years ago, there was a commercial where people wanted to "be like Mike." If you are a young adult in a similar position as Matt and think there is no hope, take a Bible and look up Hebrews 13:5-6. Being like Mike is one thing, but I would rather "be like Matt" and make my way back.

"That's OK": Native Ministries Expands to Prison Ministry

— Diana Inman

Communications Director for the Marshall Church

On Thursday evening, I had taken a family member home from Michigan Camp Meeting. Knowing I would be coming back to camp meeting early Friday, I left most of my Native Ministries supplies there.

I had always been somewhat interested in Native American culture, but more so within the past several years. As this interest grew, I asked God, now and then, why no one seemed to be working too seriously among the native peoples in Michigan. Then I got a little crazy and began to ask Him to send someone to do some of that work. In the fall of 2013, I was thinking along those lines when the Holy Spirit spoke and said "You do it." My reply to that was, "I was only joking." But I knew I couldn't joke with God.

A recent census stated there are more than 100,000 Native Americans living in Michigan. The saying "God doesn't call the qualified; He qualifies the called" went through my head many times throughout the next several days. Finally, I told Him that He knew as well as I did, that I was not qualified by any stretch of the imagination, but I was willing to step out and try short term. I would also keep going with it if funding came in for postage and Native Ministries supplies: Native New Day (NND) Lessons, American Indian Living (AIL) magazines, etc. It was these supplies that I left at camp meeting.

While driving back, I knew the Holy Spirit was speaking directly to me when I passed a county jail. "Stop there on your way home on Sunday and offer some of the Native Ministries supplies." My reply was, "Yes, I'll do that," and I was excited.

A blessed weekend followed. With camp meeting over, I loaded my van and headed south. As the miles went by, the excitement began to build. The jail was nearly in sight. Then a strange thing happened. The excitement turned to fear and I zoomed right on past. Immediately, an inaudible voice said, "Get yourself back there." What could I do? In less than a couple blocks, the van was headed north again. I turned into the parking lot, and there I sat, trying to think of every possible reason why I should not go into the building. Eventually I had to open the door and get out.

The ministry primarily handles NND Bible studies through the mail. People are signed up from all around Michigan, as well as Florida, West Virginia, Illinois, North Carolina, South Carolina, Indiana, Wisconsin, and Canada. It seems others are distributing enrollment cards beyond where we are leaving them. Someone asked not long ago, "How far away will you send a NND lesson?" The answer was, "As far as a stamp will take it."

But this was a unique case where the Holy Spirit was telling me to go to a jail. I approached a dark glass window and waited for an officer to arrive. The words "May I help you?" startled me and the following conversation ensued.

"Hi, I'm Diana Inman from Marshall, Michigan, and

I'm wondering if you have a library here for inmates, because I have several issues of *American Indian Living* that I would like to leave with you."

"Yes, but everything has to go through the chaplain and he's not here."

"That's okay."

"He may not want it."

"That's okay."

"You won't get it back."

"That's okay. May I just leave it for him?"

"Okay. Put it in the

drawer to your right and send it in."

"Thank you. Goodbye."

I hurried out of there with a prayer on my lips, thanking God for His courage when mine faltered, because in reality I am chicken-hearted.

On Wednesday morning, three days later, the phone rang. "Hello, this is Chaplain Rick... I just came into my office and found some *American Indian Living* (AIL) magazines, a *Native New Day* (NND) Bible study enrollment card, and a business card on my desk. Are you Diana? I had no idea anything like this existed. How can I get a supply of these items?"

I told him with a chuckle that first he had to contact me and since he already had, I asked what I could help him with. He replied that he would like 24 each of the AIL magazines and the NND enrollment cards. He told me that they often get Native

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Pictured from the left is Sharon Inman and Diana Inman.

GLAS Holds Their First Harvest Celebration

— *Judy L. Shull*

Principal, Greater Lansing Adventist School

The Greater Lansing Adventist School held their first Harvest Celebration in late October. Mrs. Bonnie Velez, Greater Lansing Adventist School's math and science teacher, led the students in this event. She designed this program to help students gain a better understanding of why, as Seventh-day Adventists, we do not celebrate Halloween the way our children see the rest of the country celebrating this holiday.

The ninth and tenth graders took the leadership positions in the morning program. They began with all the students seated in the school gym. Then they led out in singing several songs and prayer. Mrs. Velez then explained what would happen next.

The students in kindergarten through eighth grade were divided into family groups. Any interested home schooling students were also invited and joined one of the four different groups.

Each of the four groups were then sent to one of the four activities planned for them. The groups rotated through each of the activities, spending about 20 minutes at each one.

One activity was choosing between good and evil. The students went outside and were blindfolded. Then different voices tried to convince the children to come with them. The children did not know if it was a good angel or bad angel calling them. If they did not go in any direction, then they were included with those who went with the bad angel. After the blindfolds came off, the ninth and tenth graders explained that the only way we can know whose voice to follow is to know our Bibles so well that we are never confused about what we should do.

Another activity was making sun catchers in the shape of the cross. The goal of this craft was for students to always be reminded of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross for them each time they looked at the cross in their window.

The ninth grade girls worked on another activity. They researched some information about what Halloween really means and made a PowerPoint presentation. While the students

watched and listened to how the jack-o-lantern came about and its original meaning, they munched on freshly popped corn and sipped apple cider. At the end of this activity, the students were cautioned never to get involved with any type of spiritualism. Things that might seem innocent and fun are really a path that leads to eternal danger.

The fourth activity involved decorating heart-shaped cookies. The day before the Celebration, the ninth and tenth graders made dozens of vegan sugar cookies. On the day of the celebration, each student got a cookie to decorate with colored frosting and various types of sprinkles. This was a most delicious activity for many of the students.



Then students returned to the gym for the final event. Mrs. Velez led in more singing, while the ninth and tenth grade students changed into costumes and slipped into position in the back of the gym. The performance was a depiction of the crucifixion of Jesus. The lights were dimmed and soft music played as a figures representing Jesus, soldiers, and women made their way to the front of the gym. The audience shuddered as they heard nails pounded into the wood of the cross. At the foot of the cross, soldiers gambled for Jesus' garment at one side, while women wept at the other. Then Mrs. Velez made an appeal for anyone who

wanted to give their heart to Jesus for the first time, by raising their hands as she prayed with everyone's eyes closed. Three students raised their hands.

After the students were dismissed, they left the gym very quietly. Parents who had joined the school for the morning events had a difficult time not crying from the impact the play had had on them personally. The older students were also choked up and unable to talk for a little while, as they too were made aware, in a new way, what had happened on a rocky hill two thousand years ago.

There was no question in anyone's mind where our focus should truly be, not just at the end of October, but throughout each day of the year.

She Makes Me Wonder

— Gordon Yurk, Sr.
Member of the South Flint Church

Meet Theresa, who received an 87% score on her *Amazing Facts* studies. She has accepted the truths from these along with many other Adventist Bible studies. But she still respects Sunday rather than the Biblical Seventh-day as her sacred Sabbath day. Theresa had completed numerous studies throughout the world before coming into contact with Adventism and has several academic accomplishments with a college degree. She has a deep walk with the Lord and said that she gets up early to spend time with the Lord in His Word and in prayer. She said this is her preparation time when God speaks to her about what He wants her to accomplish each day for His glory!



I received her contact information from the *Amazing Facts* ministry with a request to do a follow-up on her. Those who visited her were various members of our leadership team including our pastor, Elder Greg Z. and the head elder and his wife (John and Diane) from one of our sister churches. At a later time, my wife Vivian accompanied me and asked Theresa if she had read a particular Adventist book. Having not read it, she gladly accepted this book. After reading it, she wanted hundreds of copies to share with others. Then Theresa ordered GLOW tracts from the Michigan Conference to distribute. She shares the tracts on the bus and wherever there is an opportunity to place them on a desk. She will boldly, yet tactfully, tell a person that she has something to share with them to read.

As we followed up with more visits to Theresa's home, we gave her books from the *Conflict of the Ages* Series, plus many more.

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Americans through the local "system" as they are not too far from a reservation.

Since then, there have been well over 20 requests from that one jail for the NND Bible Studies! There are some men who have nearly completed the NND and now want to continue with a prophecy series! One student told me that even though he is 100% French (whereas most are Native Americans), he really enjoys the NND lessons. Requests have also come from three ladies on the outside who are related in some way to inmates. Another of the prisoners has just finished the NND series, stating that he now wants to be re-baptized in a pond, lake, or river, whenever he's released.

Chaplain Rick sent me a note saying, "What a joy it's been to have your Bible studies in the jail. Whichever dorm we enter, your lessons quickly become the topic of discussion. We are

Once Theresa had read these books, she requested small amounts of additional copies. She always has extra copies of these books in her purse to share at every open door and every divine opportunity that God brings into her life, all being a result of her early morning time with the Lord and her other times before the Lord throughout the day.

Theresa's zeal in sharing testifies of her genuine love in obedience for the Lord and for others. Her zeal also reminds me of our obedient responsibility found in 2 Timothy 2:2 which states "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." As Theresa shared these copies with classmates and at her volunteer place of employment, her supervisor asked Theresa to get additional copies for all of the workers, volunteers, and clients! She has recently requested larger amounts of these books to meet these new requests.

We gave to Theresa what we had from our on-hand stock of these books and will order the additional copies that are needed. Each book is stamped with our church info and with a free Bible study offer. Theresa wants to accompany us on our 300-home evangelistic outreach. Since her book-sharing is a recent development, we expect to see God bless with manifold results! This makes me wonder if we, who have the Three Angels' messages and present truth, are we doing our part in sharing? Theresa is!

well pleased with the hearts that have been moved through the Spirit. We could use more of the enrollment cards and if the Spirit moves you to send cards or whatever means for the general and prophecy studies, please by all means do so. We look forward to your material in the future."

Most recently, he said that these materials have done more for "his" jail in the past several months than he's been able to do in the last six years. Of course, I sent more materials to replenish his stash along with a set of NND DVDs for them to "borrow."

I am in awe of what God has done through just that one time of listening to the "still, small voice." I can only respond with "Thank you, Jesus!"

For more information on *Native Ministries-Great Lakes*, contact Diana Inman at PO Box 762, Marshall, MI 49068, 269-781-9673, or gmadidi@yahoo.com.

Transitions in Mission



Jennifer Brummett is a December 2015 graduate from Andrews University and is teaching at Warren Junior Academy. Warren is a one-teacher school offering grades 1-8.



Seth Campbell, a December 2015 graduate from Andrews University, is teaching at Wilson Junior Academy. He is responsible for teaching math and science to grades 6-10, plus Bible, PE, and Social Studies to grades 5-8. He has plans to attend Loma Linda Medical School next summer.

Nature Nugget: Snowy Owls

— Gordon Atkins
Camp Au Sable Nature Director

Many of us living in Michigan think about “heading south for winter” as referring to a condo or a vacation to Florida! But for many Arctic birds, heading south for the winter might be to a destination in “warm” Michigan. One of those species is the Snowy Owl. The open fields located in Michigan (especially in the eastern Upper Peninsula) are favorite locations to spend the winter.



The adult Snowy Owls are skilled and experienced enough to stay all winter on the tundra in the Arctic. Being above the Arctic Circle means it is continuously dark for much of the winter! Younger, less experienced birds could

not survive such extremes, so after they have been raised to adult size on the tundra by their parents, the immature birds migrate south to “balmy” Michigan. Immature Snowies have more brown spots than the adults. Good summers on the tundra mean more Snowy Owls coming south for winter. When food is scarce in the north, some adult Snowies will migrate to Michigan as well. Keep your eyes open this winter – or join a Camp Au Sable Nature tour!

I am reminded about how our lives go through stages like those of the Snowy Owl. God provides the conditions we need to grow and learn, like our families and schools. As we grow we are tested and gain experience to help us for the future. The Bible provides promises to us that no matter our stage in life, we are never given too much in our lives that we cannot bear and sends the Holy Spirit (the Comforter) to aid us along the way.

Crystal Meador has transferred from Wilson Junior Academy to Onaway Seventh-day Adventist Elementary and is teaching Math and Science to grades 5-8 and assisting with the younger grades.



Brenda Sutherland comes from Delta Junction, Alaska and is teaching at Onaway Seventh-day Adventist Elementary School. Brenda is a Pacific Union College graduate.

Prayer Focus

Every Monday morning, the Michigan Conference staff meets for worship and prayer. Here is the list for February. Please join with us as we pray for these churches and ministries.

February 1-5

Burlington, Coldwater
Pastor Peter Iwankiw
Community Service :
Burlington - Peggy Willow
Coldwater - Kay Flowers

February 8-12

Edwardsburg, Glenwood
Pastor Harry Rogers

February 16-18

Hillsdale, Pittsford
Pastor Mike Wise
Bible Worker - Dale Sheridan
Pittsford - Andrea Szykowski, Principal/Teacher
Community Services - Barbara Hukill

February 22-26

Adrian, Belleville
Pastor Nathaniel Gibbs



February

- 7-9 Pastor Prayer/Fasting
- 12-14 CAMPUS Winter Retreat -
Camp Au Sable
- 12-14 LUC Youth Congress
- 12-15 President's Day Weekend -
Office Closed
- 17-21 GLAA Home Leave
- 23 MI Conference Executive
Committee - Conf. Room
- 24 Camp Meeting Directors
- 25 K-12 Board of Education
- 25-28 Teen Bible Camp -
Camp Au Sable

March

- 4-6 Personal Ministries -
Camp Au Sable
- 5 Conf. Pathfinder Bible
Experience
- 8-10 New in Ministry
- 10-20 GLAA Spring Break
- 11-13 Marriage Committee Retreat -
Camp Au Sable
- 19 Union Pathfinder Bible
Experience
- 20 Lay Advisory
- 24 Choir Clinic - GLAA
- 28 Unlock Revelation
- 29 MI Conference Executive
Committee - Conf. Room
- 30 Camp Meeting Directors
- 31 K-12 Board of Education

The Inextinguishable Messages of the Three Angels



The three angels of Revelation 14 are represented as flying in the midst of heaven, symbolizing the work of those who proclaim the first, second, and third angels' messages. All are linked together. The evidences of the abiding, everliving truth of these grand messages, that mean so much to the church, that have awakened such intense opposition from the religious world, are not extinct. Satan is constantly seeking to cast a shadow about these messages, so that the people of God shall not clearly discern their import, their time and place; but they live and are to exert their power upon our religious experience while time shall last.

The influence of these messages has been deepening and widening, setting in motion the springs of action in thousands of hearts, bringing into existence institutions of learning, publishing houses, and health institutions. All these are instrumentalities of God to co-operate in the grand work represented by the first, second, and third angels, the work of warning the inhabitants of the world that Christ is coming the second time with power and great glory.

- *Testimonies to the Church*, Vol. 6, p. 17-18