



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



Michigan Memo

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iShare: A Powerful Weekend

— Felecia Datus

iShare Communication Director

Surrounded by acres of lofty trees and quaint cabins, scores of young people from Michigan and Indiana gathered together July 29-31 at Great Lakes Adventist Academy to testify of God’s faithfulness during the nine weeks of intense door-to-door evangelism and other powerful ministries. Spirits were up and joy emanated from each person during the convocation. The canvassers shared testimonies, sang, fellowshiped, and were inspired by spirit-filled sermons.

Friday evening, Nichole Dyjasek impacted the worshippers with a moving testimony of how God drew her to serve Him faithfully. The pastor of the Detroit City Temple Church, Samuel Thomas Jr., ended the evening by reminding the youth to steer clear of all that would distract the mind from a single-hearted devotion to Jesus.

Elder Maurice Valentine delivered the sermon and Elder Jay Gallimore closed the Sabbath with a timely message that encouraged fearless evangelism.

One highlight on Sabbath was the baptism of Xao Vang, a student canvasser. She committed her life to Christ and was baptized amidst a crowd of joyous friends. She entered the summer program as a Catholic and ended up an Adventist!



iShare is a ministry of the Pacific Union Conference that is committed to galvanizing and empowering the laity, youth, and church leaders to live a lifestyle of evangelism. It’s both a lifestyle and a conference, committed to connecting young people to Christ in a personal relationship that will bring spiritual revival and awaken the desire to do evangelism.

iShare 2017 will be held at Indiana Academy August 11-13.



A beautiful sunrise ushered in Sabbath morning and a panel discussion during Sabbath School answered questions that the young people had for church leaders. A special offering during the divine worship hour appealed to hearts in providing over 90,000 *GLOW* tracts to people in Russia.



President's Perceptive

Did Pope Francis Hoodwink Americans Over Religious Liberty?

— Jay Gallimore
Conference President

Just a year ago Pope Francis spoke before a joint session of congress and at Independence Hall in Philadelphia before a mesmerized American leadership and population. He reassured Americans that he was one with them when it came to human rights and in particular, religious freedom.

Listen to this report by CNN:

“Standing before this city’s iconic Independence Hall, Pope Francis gave a ringing endorsement of religious freedom. . . ‘Religious freedom certainly means the right to worship God, individually and in community, as our consciences dictate,’ he said. ‘But religious liberty, by its nature, transcends places of worship and the private sphere of individuals and families.’”¹

On September 23, 2015, before he addressed Congress he gave an even more ringing endorsement at the welcoming ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House. Here are his words as reported by the United States Congress of Catholic Bishops:

“American Catholics are committed to building a society which is truly tolerant and inclusive, to safeguarding the rights of individuals and communities, and to rejecting every form of unjust discrimination. With countless other people of good will, they are likewise concerned that efforts to build a just and wisely ordered society respect their deepest concerns and their right to religious liberty. That freedom remains one of America’s most precious possessions. And, as my brothers, the United States Bishops, have reminded us, all are called to be vigilant, precisely as good citizens, to preserve and defend that freedom from everything that would threaten or compromise it.”²

Yet just a few short months later on February 12, 2016, Pope Francis met with Patriarch Kirill in Cuba and issued a joint declaration that was quite different from his reassurances to the American people. Kirill is the head of the Russian Orthodox Church with 250 million adherents. Cuba was chosen because Pope Francis had just orchestrated the restoration of diplomatic ties between them and the U.S. It is also a bastion of Russian influence in the Americas. In a joint declaration they declared:

“The banning of proselytism is not just contrary to the freedom of religion; it also stands in opposition to all human rights.”

“Orthodox and Catholics are united not only by the shared Tradition of the Church of the first millennium, but also by the mission to preach the Gospel of Christ in the world today. This mission entails mutual respect for members of the Christian communities and excludes any form of proselytism. . . . We seek refuge under the protection of your mercy, Holy Mother of God.”³

To “exclude any form of proselytism” is to strike at the very heart of religious liberty, not to speak of the Great Commission of Jesus. The freedom to worship and freedom of speech guarantees the freedom to share one’s faith. Basic human rights demand that all restrictions prohibiting the sharing of one’s faith must be thrown in the garbage dump of the Dark Ages. This banning of proselytism is not just contrary to the freedom of religion; it also stands in opposition to all human rights.

Once again we have unbiblical Jesuit duplicity on full display. And as could be predicted, this duplicity produced real repression and persecution for Bible believing Christians in Russia.

Fast-forward a few months. On July 7, 2016 President Putin of Russia signed into law an anti-terrorism statute. It included draconian restrictions on religious freedom by forbidding individuals to share their faith unless they were certified by

the government and conducted in an approved place of worship. It banned “proselytizing, preaching, praying, or disseminating religious materials outside of ‘specially designated places,’ like officially recognized religion institutions.”⁴

This was done even though Article 28 of the Russian Constitution protects these rights: “Everyone shall be guaranteed the freedom of conscience, the freedom of religion, including the right to profess individually or together with any other religion or to profess no religion at all, *to freely choose, possess and disseminate religious and other views* and act according to them.”⁵

According to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom:

“The Russian government utilizes its current anti-extremism laws to target religious communities, and it can do so because the legal definition of extremism does not require the threat

or use of violence. Extremism charges can include the peaceful promotion of 'the superiority of one's own religion,' and have resulted in religious texts being banned and members of non-violent Muslim groups and Jehovah's Witnesses imprisoned. The proposed anti-terrorism measures would increase prison terms under the current extremism law."⁶

The one exception to the new law was the Russian Orthodox Church. The former Soviet Union repressed churches because its official religion was atheism. But now the new nationalistic Russia has replaced atheism with the Russian Orthodox Church as its new state religion.

This mutual collaboration between Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill is another example of the rise of Babylon worldwide and its willingness, when given the opportunity, to trample on human rights and in particular a nation's own constitution. One wonders if Russia would have gone this far without the blessing of Pope Francis. Even though the Roman Catholic churches in Russia are not officially exempt, given the joint declaration between the two, there is probably an unspoken agreement that they will be.

For sure there has not been a peep of protest from the Vatican in over a month since this draconian law was signed. So what about all those assurances from the Vatican that it believes in protecting religious liberty? Doesn't that give Americans an expectation that the Pope would defend such liberty?

Apparently not! In fact the Vatican was in bed with the Russian patriarch in giving birth to such repression. So have the Americans been hoodwinked by the Pope's support of religious liberty in Independence Hall? Just ask the Russian Bible believing Christians. I think the evidence is clear.

Here is a stunning prediction:

*"The dignitaries of church and state will unite to bribe, persuade, or compel all classes to honor the Sunday. The lack of divine authority will be supplied by oppressive enactments. Political corruption is destroying love of justice and regard for truth; and even in free America, rulers and legislators, in order to secure public favor, will yield to the popular demand for a law enforcing Sunday observance. Liberty of conscience. . . will no longer be respected."*⁷

The evidence is clear that Michigan Adventists need to be involved in sharing our faith now, more than ever before. Currently we can work in freedom; but who knows when there will be a resolution similar to Russia, given the increasing threats of terrorism, natural disasters, and Jesuit craftiness.

"The evidence is clear that Michigan Adventists need to be involved in sharing our faith now, more than ever before."

¹ <http://www.cnn.com/2015/09/26/us/pope-francis-philadelphia-saturday/index.html>. Accessed August 2016.

² <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/religious-liberty/fortnight-for-freedom/upload/Pope-Francis-Quotes-on-Religious-Freedom.pdf>. Accessed August 2016.

³ http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2016/02/12/joint_declaration_of_pope_francis_and_patriarch_kirill/1208117, emphasis added. Accessed August 2016.

⁴ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/06/23/draconian-law-rammed-through-russian-parliament>. Accessed August 2016.

⁵ <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/evgeniya-me>, emphasis added. Accessed August 2016.

⁶ <http://www.uscirf.gov/news-room/press-releases/russia-uscirf-condemns-enactment-anti-terrorism-laws>. Accessed August 2016.

⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1950), 592.

Prayer Focus

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

September 6-9

Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo Downtown,
Kamazoo Filipino
Pastor Kameron DeVasher
Kalamazoo Jr. Academy
Kenneth Armstrong - Principal, Michelle Odinna,
Lata Selvadas, Linda Ritzenthaler
Community Service Center - Jane Salisbury

September 12-16

Manistique, McMillian Northwoods, Sault Ste. Marie
Pastor Jed Genson

September 19-23

Michiana Fil Am, St. Joseph
Pastor Roy Castelbuono

September 26-30

Alpena, Onawy
Pastor Mike Szykowski

"Let's Build An Ark"

— *Cindy Moore and Brenda Peerar*
Co-Directors of Shelby Vacation Bible School

Shelby Seventh-day Adventist Church held their "Let's Build An Ark" VBS from June 27-July 2. The foyer of the church became the construction zone, and the outside of the sanctuary was decorated as the outside of Noah's ark. The inside of the sanctuary was decorated as the



CNS Photo/Paul Haring

inside. Animals were placed throughout the church. We had 20 non-Adventist children attend throughout the week. The children were given a nail apron with a wooden

hammer to become construction workers for the week. Children practiced all the songs and on Sabbath morning they and the staff performed a musical for the families and congregation. We had 18 staff assist with VBS.

For our outreach initiative, we took up an offering and collected pet food every evening and had the privilege of donating to

a local animal shelter (Oceana County Animal Shelter). We collected \$102 and also two bags of dog food and three bags of cat food. Two of the VBS participants delivered the donation and were given a tour of the animal shelter. The donation went towards assisting with the surgery of an animal that was hit by a car that afternoon.

In the Junior classes, the children were so eager to read the Bible. There were three children that requested a Bible for home because they did not have one.

After the closing program we put on a dinner and invited all to join us. The meal was haystacks (because animals eat hay), fresh fruit, cookies, and punch.

We want to thank Linda Gallimore for all the work she does in training us to work for God's children!



CNS Photo/Paul Haring

News Briefs

Holland Adventist School to become a Junior Academy:

Tuesday, May 31, 2016. Ground breaking ceremony for Holland Adventist School. Officials from Midwest Construction Group, Inc., the Michigan Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, and local church and school personnel gather at the Holland Adventist School expansion site for a groundbreaking ceremony.



CNS Photo/Paul Haring

Grand Rapids Myanmar SDA Company

Sabbath May 21, 2016. The Grand Rapids Myanmar SDA Company was formally recognized at their church in Wyoming, Michigan. Elders Royce Snyman and Daniel Scarone led out in the service. The members, about 50, are made up of refugees from Myanmar and most of them spent a number of years in refugee camps in Thailand and Malaysia prior to their relocation in the United States. Sb Ngaih Cin (pictured third from right) is serving as the lay pastor of the congregation. Special thanks to ASAP Ministries, they have been ministering and assisting with the congregation.



CNS Photo/Paul Haring

Tandem Blind Biker's Camp 2016

— Ray Cook
Tandem Blind Biker's Camp

Although the Tandem Blind Biker's Camp is more than just a biking experience, one of the most exciting aspects of the summer is the opportunity to ride the Fred Meijer Biking Trail from GLAA to adjacent towns in the Cedar Lake area.

Many of the campers state that the summer and winter camps are the highlight of their lives because the camps provide them opportunities to socialize with others who share their life journey. As soon as one camp is over they begin planning for the next one. This is certainly one way of reaching the "least of these" in the community.

Now that the camp is over, our campers and staff have special memories to share of what took place the week of July 25 - 31.

On Monday, the campers and staff made their way to their accommodations and received instructions on their activities for the week.

On Tuesday, 19 campers began their bike trip eastward along the Fred Meijer trail. Their roundtrip ride was about 18 miles on tandem bicycles.



campers around one of the planes, explaining each part before taking them for a ride on the airplane.

After stopping for lunch at Riverdale they were taken to a nearby airport where two small Cessna planes and their pilots awaited to take them flying. The pilots walked the

Afterwards, they made their way to a small restaurant in Riverdale for ice cream and then they were off back to GLAA.



On Wednesday the campers had the opportunity to play a game of beeper kick ball.

On Thursday they made a trip to Charlevoix to go sailing on a forty-foot sailboat with Donna and Lou Diaz. The campers were taken out six at a time to learn how to sail. While some were on the sailboat, others took their turn on a Sea-Doo and tandem kayaks.

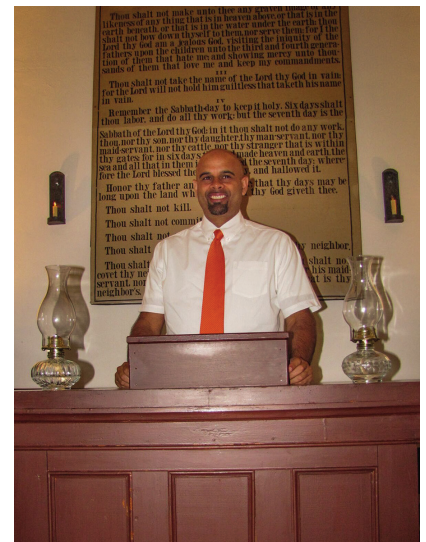
On Friday the campers tested their athletic abilities in a miniature Olympics.



For Sabbath, the group travelled to Battle Creek to tour the Historic Adventist Village and had a special meal in one of the historic homes.

The highlight of the camp week was the camp meetings where Pastor Ben Garcia shared his testimony and preached a mini-series on Elijah.

On Sunday, it was time to pack up and make their way home. But, not without taking with them many great memories and eager anticipation for the next camp!



To God Be the Glory

— Judy L. Shull

Principal, Greater Lansing Adventist School

The autumn sun sparkled through the clear blue Michigan sky. The students at the Greater Lansing Adventist School were busy in their classrooms when the school's door buzzer startled me. Looking out across the lobby, I did not recognize the dignified, gray haired lady standing at the door.

As I went to meet her, I noticed she held a large bell in her hands. As we walked together into the lobby she asked me if the school still had the big bells. I assured her we did, and told her of the two separate bell choirs that performed for various programs and at area churches. She smiled and told me, "My husband and I donated those bells to the school many years ago." She then explained that she was getting ready to move to another state and into a smaller house. She held out the bell in her hands and continued, "The school gave us this bell as a thank you for the bell set. I will not have room for it in my new place. Would you like to keep it with your set of bells?"



I gladly accepted the thoughtful gift. Just before our benefactor left she pointed out that this bell had been engraved with their name, and with that, she turned and left.

"Well, that was an unusual visitor," I thought as I walked to the music room and placed the bell in protective plastic wrapping, and put it on a closet shelf.

The school year continued accelerating toward the Christmas program with many hours spent practicing the special play and the musical numbers with all the bell groups and choir. Everything was going smoothly toward a successful evening when just hours before the big event, the bell director, Heidi Hunt, signaled me to come and look at one of the bells. With wrinkled brow she pointed toward one of the bigger bells, and lifted the

handle which separated from the bell. "This broke off today and I haven't been able to fix it."

I looked at her without a solution in mind, and she continued. "It looks like the screw broke off inside and nothing I have done has been able to get the broken part out." Then she added the really bad news, "We don't have time to send it to the company to be repaired before the program."

It was then that I remembered the bell in the closet. Without any real hope I asked, "Is there any chance that the bell we were given this fall is the same note as this one?"



Hunt looked at the many bells laid out on their cushions and shaking her head replied, "I don't know, it doesn't seem possible."

Together we hurried to the music room closet and lifted the bell off the shelf. Both of us momentarily froze in surprise. On the handle of the engraved bell was the C4 symbol. It was the very same note that the broken bell played!

"How can this be?" Miss Hunt asked, carefully taking the plastic off the engraved bell and giving it a practiced ring. "It is exactly what we need. How could this have happened?"

A Bible text popped into my mind as we made our way back to the church where the rest of the bells sat waiting to make music that we prayed would bring God glory. "And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:19 NKJV. To God be the glory!

Appreciation Award

— Barry Carter

Communications Secretary, Farmington Church

On May 21, 2016, the Farmington SDA Church presented Virginia Keeton with a 50 year service award. Ms Keeton is the senior member of the church, with dedicated loyalty when called to serve. Over 50 years ago, Virginia was a member of the Clarenceville SDA Church, located in The Village of Clarenceville; currently located in South Livonia, Michigan. The Clarenceville Church was growing so fast that members agreed to build a larger church. The church membership contained a large number of skilled tradesman of all disciplines. So, they pooled their talents to build a new church.

Roland Bradley, an uncle of Virginia Keeton, helped pick a building site located in the 10 mile and Middlebelt area in the Village of Farmington. The membership purchased the land, designed the building, and performed all the carpentry, electrical, and plumbing work. The ground breaking took place in 1965. In 1973, all the villages in the area were incorporated into The City of Farmington Hills; the current location of the Farmington SDA Church. Beett Kwon is the current Pastor.

Transitions in Mission



Joelle Acre is joining the staff at Holland Adventist School to teach science. She has been working as a student missionary in Cairo, Egypt for the last two years. She believes her first priority is God and sharing Him with her students.



Doreen King will be the new principal/teacher at Ann Arbor Adventist School. She has experience in both Adventist and public school systems and has had the opportunity to promote educational programs.

Kenneth Armstrong comes from Oklahoma where he was a development director/teacher. Several years ago he taught here in Michigan and is excited to return as principal for Kalamazoo Junior Academy. He works towards leading children to an experiential knowledge of Christ while promoting a safe learning environment.



Esther Nanasi will be teaching at Tri-City Adventist School in Saginaw. She comes to us from Weimar Institute where she received her BA in Christian Education. She is passionate about the Bible, education, music, and young people. Her wish is to win others to Christ's kingdom.



Ronald Arroyo-Watson is joining the staff at Wilson Junior Academy. He started as an English teacher/missionary in Gangnam Gu, Seoul, South Korea, then continued teaching science and math. His interests are wide including camping, landscaping, hobby gardening, and international food.



Monica Nudd comes from South Bend Junior Academy where she was the Head Teacher/Principal for the past three years. She will be working part-time and is responsible for teaching math and science to the 5th and 6th grade students at Niles Adventist School. Monica has a desire to inspire children to learn about God and explore the world around them.

Liz Channell is from Texas and will be the principal/teacher at Pine Mountain Christian School. She spent time at Gwangju, South Korea teaching English as a second language. She enjoys teaching children the word of God and their value in Christ.



Sylvia Suk will be teaching the lower grades at Troy Adventist Academy. She has done a variety of work with children and is looking forward to sharing her interest in music with the students. She spent the last year as a taskforce teacher working in Hawaii.



Staci Fagel is joining the staff at Niles Adventist School as a part-time teacher. She taught there previously until the birth of her first child. While raising her children she stayed involved in the school and is looking forward to getting back in the classroom and helping students to develop their skills and helping them see how God can work in their lives.



Renee Truax started teaching last spring at Hastings SDA Elementary when a replacement was needed and has accepted the invitation to another year. She has a wide variety of experience working with children both in the Adventist and in the public school systems. She enjoys involving students in church services using their God-given talents.

Janel Fields is joining the staff at Battle Creek Academy and will be teaching grades 7 and 8. Janel comes from Kansas City, Missouri where she was the Education Coordinator for Emmanuel Center. She has 17 years of experience instructing and mentoring students from Pre-K through 10th grade.



* William Crawford has transferred from Kalamazoo Junior Academy to be the principal/teacher at Niles Adventist School.

* Daniel Morrison has transferred from Pine Mountain Christian School to Greater Lansing Adventist school to teach grades 2-4.

* Sarah Taylor accepted the principal/teacher position at Eau Claire Elementary School.



September

- 1-5 U.P. Camp Meeting -
Camp Sagola
- 2-5 Labor Day Weekend Holiday
- 5 Labor Day
- 9-11 Family Ministries -
Camp Au Sable
- 9-11 Adventurer Family Camp -
Northwoods
- 11-15 Senior's Retreat -
Camp Au Sable
- 15-18 Lake Union Camporee -
Berrien Springs Fairgrounds
- 21-27 GLAA Home Leave
- 22 K-12 Board of Education -
GLAA
- 23-25 ACS Fall Workshop -
Camp Au Sable
- 24 Michigan Men of Faith - GLAA
- 25 Disaster Response - Camp Au
Sable Deer Lodge
- 25-27 LE Training
- 27 MI Conference Executive
Committee - Conf. Room
- 28 Camp Meeting Directors
- 29-Oct 2 LCU Secondary Leadership -
Camp Au Sable

October

- 2-5 LIFT - Camp Au Sable
- 7-9 Mother/Daughter Retreat -
Camp Au Sable
- 8-9 Disaster Response Training -
Camp Sagola
- 9-14 Camp Au Sable Work Week
- 14-16 Lay Advisory Retreat -
Camp Au Sable
- 20 K-12 Board of Education -
GLAA

Man's Man, or God's Man?

— Gene Hall
Men's Ministries

No doubt you have heard the old cliché, “He’s a man’s man!” Several years ago we used the term “macho” to describe a “man’s man.” Today, we might just say he’s a tough guy, or something of the sort. These descriptors portray the kind of man most men want to be; someone who is *all* man, not a weak person who is pushed around, or unable to control his passions.

While there may be nothing wrong with aspiring to be a “man’s man,” a much greater ambition is to be God’s man. Isn’t it much more important to be the kind of man God wants me to be, rather than the kind of man the world admires?



session on the topic of leading men from disappointment to God’s appointment—strategies for dealing with depression, stress, and anxiety.

Elders Jay Gallimore, Jim Micheff, and Leroy Bruch will also present breakout sessions focusing on Bible studies, Christian manhood, and personal finance. The

afternoon meeting will feature a mini-concert presented by the Lansing Chorale.

This year there will be no registration fee. The day will be funded by your freewill offerings. Lunch will be available on a donation basis

(please register if you plan to have lunch so we can provide a count for the cafeteria).

Plan to attend, and bring a friend! The first meeting begins at 9:30 am.

Location: GLAA Fitness Center,
Cedar Lake, MI
Date: Sabbath, September 24

*To register call 517-316-1581 or email Jody Murphy at jmurphy@misda.org.