



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

Michigan Memo

September / October 2015, Volume 27, Number 6

Recent Changes from the General Conference Session

— Daniel McGrath

Pastor of the Marquette, L'Anse, and Houghton churches

Almost a month has gone by since the General Conference (GC) Session where Seventh-day Adventist delegates from around the world convened in San Antonio to tackle the business of the church. Still some are uncertain about what happened and what the implications are for the church.

Every five years, the Church meets to address current issues with theological significance like this year's women's ordination topic. But beyond women's ordination, there are many other important decisions delegates make: things like changes or additions to the church manual, fundamental beliefs, and/or the constitution and bylaws that govern the church organization and the local congregation. These decisions affect every member of the world church.

Church Manual

There is a special committee that meets prior to General Conference Sessions. They are charged with the responsibility of reading through the manual and making suggestions to the GC things that would help make the wording clearer or more

accurate. Occasionally there are new additions to the manual that need to be brought before the body, too. Besides the minor editorial changes and grammatical edits, there are some newsworthy additions.



Photo by Pieter Damsteegt

- *Public Campus Ministries (PCM):* The church recognizes we have a mission to reach out to the millions of public university students across our world. PCM has been operating under the Youth Ministry department since 2014, and now the *Church Manual* will incorporate this long-neglected ministry within its pages. In addition, a Public Campus Ministry position has been added to the list of local church board officers.
- *Church Board Duties:* The changes to the "Church Board and Its Meetings" section of the manual demonstrate a new chapter in the evangelistic strategy of the Adventist Church. The focus is now squarely on discipleship, making it the chief concern of the church board. Churches will have an "active discipleship plan in place that includes both the spiritual nurture of the church and the work of planning and

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President's Perspective

The GC Vote On Ordination: Its Background and Outcome

— Jay Gallimore
Conference President

Now that the General Conference (GC) Session has voted on the long awaited subject of the ordination of women, I believe you deserve a report from me from where I sit. Even though it is through my glasses, it does reflect the journey as I observed it.

As I introduce this subject, it is important to note that the issue has never been whether the Church needed women in ministry, but rather in what way? The real question boiled down to, "Should women occupy the *office* of elder/minister/pastor as spiritual leaders for the church?" Our society and culture would not hesitate a moment in saying "yes." But for the Church, society is not our authority. We want to know what the Bible teaches. Is there a "thus says the Lord?"

Throughout both the Old and New Testaments, women were involved in ministry and received the gifts of the Spirit. Yet, they never functioned in the *office* of priest, apostle, or elder. The reason, according to the Apostle Paul, was that the Lord reserved that office for men based on the divine order set up at Creation (1 Timothy 2:12 – 3:7).

The second time that the GC Session voted on this was in 1995 in Utrecht, Netherlands. At that time, the North American Division (NAD) requested the GC Session to allow the divisions to choose whether to ordain women or not. Regardless of the "no" vote, the pressure has continued and intensified in the NAD and from several other smaller divisions. Together they represent about ten percent of the membership of the Adventist World Church.

At the 2010 GC Session, a NAD delegate asked the GC to review this matter again. The request was against the background of this tension. The result was that the GC asked every division to study the issue. So each division had a Theology of Ordination Study Committee (TOSC). The GC itself also put together a TOSC which reviewed all of the division committee reports as well as conducted its own dialogue. The GC TOSC advanced three different scenarios which became known as Position One, Two, and Three. These positions were published and made

*"But for the Church,
society is not our
authority."*

available to the membership as well as to the delegates of the GC Session.

Position One said the Bible did not allow the ordination of women to the *office* of elder/minister/pastor. Position Two said the Bible did allow it. Position Three said the Bible was against it, but it didn't matter.

The Intense Promotion of Position Two

As this was gearing up and going on, the NAD at its 2012 Year-End Meeting (a gathering of about 250 leaders) voted to allow women, by means of a commissioned minister's credential, to be presidents of conferences. This was in direct opposition to the GC policy that allowed only ordained ministers to hold that office. Nonetheless, it was voted, even though the Annual Council had just denied their request to allow a variance on this issue. At the next NAD

Year-End Meeting, the members had to undo the vote because the GC told them they had no standing for such a vote. The divisions are part of the GC itself and their presidents are also vice presidents of the GC, elected by the GC Session, not the division.

Then in the mix of all of this, the Columbia Union and the Pacific Union called special constituencies and voted to ordain women anyway. Elder Wilson, GC President, appealed to both unions not to do so. In addition, the Southeastern California Conference elected a woman to be their Conference President.

When NAD set up its TOSC committee of 15, only two who believed the Bible did not support the ordination of women, were chosen to participate. This NAD TOSC presented its report including a video with a long list of NAD scholars and leaders who gave their support to the NAD position. In addition, another video was shown of some church members that did not want a woman pastor, but later changed their minds after their head elder had a dream.

It seemed to me that in the absence of solid Bible support, a lot of effective emotional promotion was filling the vacuum. And as Adventists, we have never based our beliefs on dreams. Otherwise, we would have never started keeping the Sabbath. The establishment of Sunday worship is backed up by dreams! It is the Bible by which we test subjective experiences, not the other way around. These presentations were so amazing that one person, while in favor of women's ordination, suggested from the floor that the Division was over-doing it.

In one of these meetings, there was even a motion that attempted to force every leader, conference, and institution to support and give proclamation to the NAD position. I was grateful for the voices that spoke against it. The attempt was defeated, but the motion itself did show the passion behind the issue.

At the next Year-End Meeting, the Division presented six building blocks for progress. One of the building blocks was to increase women as pastors of churches. They even offered to pay conferences for the first year's salary, if they would hire a woman pastor.

The Pacific Press, now under NAD leadership, printed a book promoting women's ordination. They gave the ABC's a fantastic financial incentive plus a good deal of encouragement to carry it. Would they have put money into this without thinking they were going to win the GC vote?

Then in a surprise move, the Division leadership sent every church in North America a bulletin insert for Sabbath morning promoting women's ordination. Many church magazines also promoted the Division's position. Most North American Universities, including the Seminary at Andrews, were energetic, if not passionate, in promoting this position on their campuses. It seemed from where I sit that the Division, with its fellow supporting divisions, thought they could win the vote at the GC Session. Surely, they must be given credit for sincerity and fervor.

Even though I did not agree with them theologically, I too thought they had a real opportunity to win. Their position was promoted by most of the "microphones" in the Division and even beyond. And these were very influential. As I saw the weakening and weariness on the part of division leadership from around the

world, I could not help but believe that this was going to be no ordinary conflict. Some very large divisions began to tell their members that they were supportive of NAD or at least were neutral.

The Role of Annual Council

The Annual or Autumn Council is the GC Executive Committee between sessions. As usual, the one before GC Session sets the agenda for the Session. At the 2014 Annual Council, the GC officers, vice presidents, and division presidents proposed to the Annual Council a motion to be taken

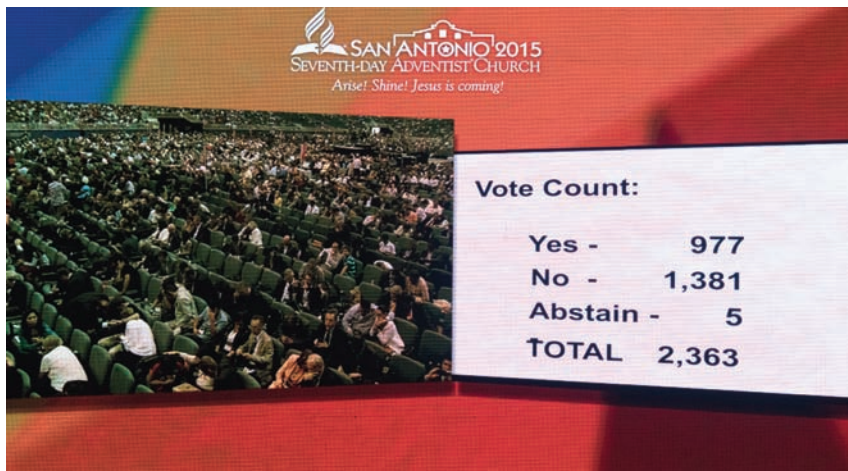


Photo by Pieter Damsteegt

to San Antonio. That motion was to be impartial, allowing the floor of the Session to decide. There was real resistance to that proposal by certain ones who wanted Annual Council to send a motion supporting women's ordination. They knew the power of such a recommendation. The attempt was overwhelmingly defeated, leaving the item to go to the GC Session without bias. As the GC President said, this item belongs to the GC Session.

The Result

As the Session approached, it seemed to me that the NAD confidence was not so pronounced as it had been earlier. Not long before the Session, one very influential higher educational administrator was reported to have said that they would win by a small majority. After being at the Session a couple of days, NAD leadership started giving signals that their position would be defeated. What they had hoped to win

by a small margin was lost by a very large margin.

Since then, some who were supporting the NAD position, have tried to compare this to the past where the numbers were even stronger. But this was no 1995. NAD leadership certainly believed in its cause and used its organization, superb talent, and intellectual resources to promote it. Many arguments were marshaled in opposition to the Church's established position. Even though it was all skillfully focused, their position still lost by 58% to 42%.

Maybe it is time for all of us in NAD to humble ourselves before the Lord. Maybe it is time to believe that God answered the prayers for the Holy Spirit to guide the Session. Maybe it is time to accept the decision as one from the Spirit of Truth. Maybe, after three tries, it is time to accept that ordaining women to the office of minister will not be recognized as biblical

by the Church. Maybe it is time to for the General Conference to issue a new credential for women in paid ministry that is in harmony with the Bible and the GC vote. Maybe it is time to get back to mission. Maybe this has distracted us long enough.

After all, the Pope is coming in September to address both houses of the U.S. Congress. After all, millions are dying for the Everlasting Gospel. After all, the Holy Spirit is ready to light up world with God's remnant people. Surely, "darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people." Surely, with the GC theme ringing in our ears, it is time to "Arise! Shine! Jesus is Coming!"

Reach the Campus, Reach the World

— Israel Ramos

Public Campus Ministries Director

Public Campus Ministry has recently emerged in the Seventh-day Adventist Church as one of our most important denominational ministries and a focal interest for the General Conference. According to World Church statistics, conservative numbers show that more than 80% of our Adventist young people are attending non-Adventist universities. One of the greatest challenges that this statistic poses is the sad reality that a large portion of them will abandon Adventism by the time they start their careers.

Delegates at the General Conference Session in San Antonio showed special attention to Young Adult Adventists in two major ways. The *Give Them the Keys* initiative dedicated the entire sum of the Sabbath Offering for youth evangelism projects selected, organized, and conducted by young people. A portion of those funds will be allocated to Public Campus Ministry around the world. Additionally, delegates voted a major change to the Church Manual by appointing Public Campus Ministry Directors for local churches. These directors are to serve as leaders in Public Campus Ministry, also serving on local church boards.

Both decisions taken in San Antonio came as recommendations from a recent Public Campus Ministry Summit and Symposium held at the Church Headquarters last spring. Symposium delegates who represented the 13 World Divisions presented multiple recommendations to General Conference leadership stressing the need to properly invest in our Adventist young people studying in non-Adventist universities.



For more than 15 years, the Michigan Conference has led the front on Public Campus Ministry. To date, it is the only local conference in the world that has a department that solely addresses this ministry. The Michigan Conference Public Campus Ministry Department primarily supports local church pastors ministering to congregations in university towns, promotes public campus ministry in local churches, and trains Adventist young people to evangelize their campuses using God's Word while strengthening their own doctrinal beliefs and biblical spirituality.

Additionally, the Michigan Conference established the Center for Adventist Ministry to Public University Students (CAMPUS), a division of the Public Campus Ministry Department. CAMPUS runs the Missionary Training Program where students take a year of the academic career to serve as missionaries on public campuses in Michigan. More than 100 young people have been trained in this program, many of them serving as soul-winning missionaries on their college campuses and leaders in youth organizations like Generation.Youth.Christ (GYC) and others.



CAMPUS also provides apologetic resources to help students on their journey with faith and academics. Finally, CAMPUS provides training and opportunities for graduates and young professionals to serve the church with their talents, service, and resources.

By locally participating in Public Campus Ministry, members of the Michigan Conference have invested in the World Church with this venture bearing fruit in San Antonio. More than half of the North American Division Mission Year Volunteers come from Michigan. A large majority of Public Campus Ministry chaplains in our division are serving our local territory or have been trained and impacted by CAMPUS. And Michigan's model that focuses on empowering local churches to take charge of Public Campus Ministry continues to gain momentum around the world as one of the most viable and uniquely Adventist models of this ministry.

As the Seventh-day Adventist Church moves forward in developing Public Campus Ministry, we can be thankful to God that Michigan had vision in organizing this ministry at the conference level. We must, however, remain aware of the fact that there is still a lot of work to be done. Thousands of our Adventist young people are being lost every year on public campuses. Millions are graduating from one of the most crucial stages in their lives without the opportunity to hear the message of the crucified, risen, and soon coming Savior. In Michigan alone, we need hundreds of baptisms on our college campuses!

What can you do to help? If you are a local church in a university town, create a Public Campus Ministry Director to sit on your board. Our goal is to have every church near a campus appoint someone to this position in the next year. Support your student group with funds, food, or space to hold small groups,

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Creation Celebration: A Rally Just for Kids

— Sarah Canada

Belleville Church VBS and Children's Ministries Leader

Who invited the lions, elephants, jellyfish, and swinging monkeys to the latest District 12 outreach rally? It was some of our creative children's ministry leaders, of course! Sabbath, March 28 was an exciting day for our local churches. In preparation for this year's rally, our District 12 pastors and conference officials decided to make an extra effort to include families with children at the rally. They put together a special team of volunteers from the Ann Arbor, Belleville, Cherry Hill, and Farmington churches to develop a unique program just for kids.

It was exciting to see that our children's ministry leaders didn't just show a video to entertain our kids or put them in a room to babysit for a few hours. They developed a program that hopefully our children will remember for many years to come. The Troy Adventist Academy's gymnasium was transformed into the Garden of Eden, complete with life-sized animals, the Tree of Life, and a glittering waterfall.

The opening program began with songs and an interactive Bible story for kids and adults to participate in the telling of the Creation story. The children were then separated into groups to experience a two-hour Vacation Bible School-type program.



(Continued from page 4)

social events, evangelistic meetings, retreats, and conferences like GYC. Contact our department when you know of a student who has decided to attend a public college or university in Michigan or anywhere else. In most cases, the decisions that students make within the first month of their college life will affect the rest of their time in college. Even if you are not a member at a university church, you can still support Public Campus Ministry by sponsoring a missionary or sending a non-Adventist student contact to GYC or our Hi-C and Spring Retreats.

Public colleges and universities have students from around the world. Literally, world missions comes to us. When we reach the campus, we reach the world. Let's pray for and work with our students, our missionaries, our Adventist ambassadors on our public colleges and universities. That the day will soon come when reformations of primitive godliness will be revived, led by the Seventh-day Adventist Church preparing public campuses for the imminent return of Christ.

One of the goals of Creation Celebration was to have kids participate in events that helped them learn about our Creator and what He formed on each day of the Creation week. Every rotation was designed with this in mind. In the snack station, kids put together their own trail mix with edible reminders from each day. White yogurt chips and dark carob chips represented the darkness and light on Day One. Other delicious items included Frosted Mini-Wheats cereal; pretzel stick trees; edible sun, moon, and stars; goldfish; and animal crackers. Perhaps the most creative snack, though, were the vegan marshmallow pillows to remind us God rested on the seventh day.

Next it was off to games, where our kids enjoyed racing to separate small animals, plants, flashlights, balloons, and more into piles of what was created on each day. The hands-on science station taught how clouds are formed and had the children make some unique creations of their own.

The craft rotation was designed with the Grow Michigan Evangelism Initiative in mind. Colorful paper lunch bags were decorated to be used as a

witnessing tool for each child. They then included a miniature Primary Treasure, a bag of mints with a label that read "You were MINT to know Jesus," and a bookmark that used the acronym CREATION to help others learn about healthy lifestyle choices.

God truly blessed these efforts in planning for this unique children's ministry event. Creative ideas, props, craft materials, and talents were shared among the various children's ministry leaders. While the team worried about setting up in an unfamiliar gym, developing a program, and spreading a \$100 budget for 70+ kids, God took charge of this event. Not only did He bring in many of the children from our churches, He also brought several visitors from the Troy Seventh-day Adventist Church's Preschool program.

As parents watched the setup on Thursday evening, many were intrigued, and came Sabbath afternoon to attend with their children. One local teacher pointed out that a little girl who had the opening prayer was actually a Hindu who just prayed to Jesus for the first time. It was amazing to see how God used these humble efforts and brought many volunteers together to help. If you'd like to find out more about exciting events like these, please check your local church for upcoming Vacation Bible Schools and children's ministry events.

Heroes of Faith with Doug Batchelor



Heroes of Faith will be broadcast LIVE from the Lansing Seventh-day Adventist Church. If you are in the area, please come - it is absolutely FREE! Each onsite participant will also receive a free copy of our *Heroes of Faith* workbook!

Note: All Programs are Eastern Standard Time

"Broken Chains" – Friday, October 2, 7:00 PM

"From the Prison to the Palace" – Saturday, October 3, 7:00 PM

"At Jesus' Feet" – Sunday, October 4, 7:00 PM

"Rahab's Red Rope" – Monday, October 5, 7:00 PM

"Washed in the Jordan" – Tuesday, October 6, 7:00 PM

"Double Portion" – Wednesday, October 7, 7:00 PM

"The Glorious Mountain" – Thursday, October 8, 7:00 PM

"The Sign of Jonah" – Friday, October 9, 7:00 PM

"The Unsinkable Ship" – Saturday, October 10, 11:00 AM

"Day of Good News" – Saturday, October 10, 7:00 PM

Lansing Church Auditorium
5400 W. St. Joseph Hwy
Lansing, MI 48917

MEET THE HEROES OF HIS-STORY!

Join Pastor Doug Batchelor for the *Heroes of Faith* 10-part live event as he presents stories of salvation for the whole family. Bring your friends and neighbors to hear authentic and inspiring presentations on fascinating Bible characters that point us to Jesus!

A FREE EVENT!

Use the *Heroes of Faith* Series to Reach Your Community! You can play a key role by turning your home or office into a *Heroes of Faith* satellite location in three easy steps:

1. Invite your friends and neighbors with FREE materials.
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Hi, friend! In this fresh new series designed for the whole family, I'll highlight the real heroes of faith—like Joshua, Mary Magdalene, Elijah, and Rahab—who point us to the ultimate Hero, Jesus Christ. In a time when good heroes are so hard to find, imagine what could happen if people of all ages could encounter the real heroes of His-Story from God's Word! Don't miss it!— Doug Batchelor

WATCH LIVE!



YouTube

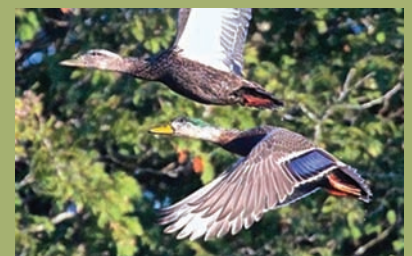


Nature Nugget

— Gordon Atkins
Camp Au Sable Nature Director

In the natural world, there are many examples of hybridization between two species. For the last two winters at Camp Au Sable, we have some Mallard/Black Duck hybrids. Normally Mallards do not breed in northern woodland lakes, but they have invaded these lakes as land is cleared around them by human activity. The native Black Ducks have suffered by direct competition with the more aggressive Mallards. In addition, the gene pool of Black Ducks has been diminished by hybridization with Mallards. This phenomena is so wide-spread that some fear the pure form of the Black Duck will become extinct (or

maybe already has). How much of the pure character of Christ has been “hybridized” with the sin of Satan? The Bible warns of the effects of sin being “genetic” - “unto the third and fourth generation.” Let’s pray that we are able to separate ourselves from the disabling effect of sin and remain a pure Christian witness for God.



Annual African Camp Meeting

— Joel Mpabwaanimana
Pastor and African Camp Meeting Leader

From Thursday, July 30th to August 1st, we had a blessed annual African Camp Meeting in Grand Rapids, MI. 500 campers attended the meeting. It was such a great and amazing opportunity! During this period of time, I felt God's presence and blessings upon us. Most of these people were refugees from Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Rwanda who recently arrived to the United States via Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Ethiopia, Malawi, Zimbabwe, and Uganda.



We are very appreciative for Michigan Conference's support provided to this group of people that has many special needs. Thanks to Pastor Daniel Scarone, Associate Ministerial Director and Multiethnic Ministries Coordinator of the Michigan Conference and Pastor Bob Stewart, senior pastor of Grand Rapids Central Seventh-day Adventist Church who is also a coordinator of the African groups in Grand Rapids. Their presence meant a lot to us. Thank you very much. Please pray that God will provide for them all that is needed to let His name be blessed.



(Continued from Front page)

fostering evangelism." Discipleship is now the number one job of the church board.

Fundamental Beliefs

There were some tense moments in the discussion over the Fundamental Beliefs, especially Number 6 on creation. The suggested changes were a continuation of what began in Atlanta's 2010 GC Session, when the committee was charged with clarifying our theological position. It was the desire of the Atlanta constituency to avoid the use of ambiguous language and reaffirm our belief in the historical credibility of *Genesis 1* while avoiding any room for an evolutionary reading of the passage - theistic or otherwise.

The new language of this Fundamental Belief does just that. Here is the new wording in its entirety:

"God has revealed in Scripture the authentic and historical account of His creative activity. He created the universe, and in a recent, six-day creation, the Lord made 'the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them' and rested on the seventh day. Thus He established the Sabbath as a perpetual memorial of His creative work, performed and completed during six literal days that together with the Sabbath constituted the same unit of time that we call a week today. The first man and woman were made in the image of God as the crowning work of Creation, given dominion over the world, and charged with responsibility to care for it. When the world was finished it was 'very good,' declaring the glory of God. (Gen. 1-2; 5; 11; Ex. 20:8-11; Ps. 19:16; 33:6, 9; 104; Isa. 45:12, 18; Acts 17:24; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2; 11:3; Rev. 10:6; 14:7.)"

Woman's Ordination

The most anticipated subject of Women's Ordination was given an entire day for discussion. At the beginning of the meeting, delegates were informed about what the motion meant. It was not a motion to repeal previous decisions that allow women to serve as pastors or elders, but was a motion that would allow divisions to ordain women in their territories or not.

During the course of the day, much was said and many viewpoints were shared for and against. When the time for voting came, there were still many delegates lined up at the microphone waiting to voice their opinions. It seemed to be the desire of many delegates to continue into the following day, but time ran out before a proper motion could be made for an extension, forcing delegates to vote then. In total, 1,381 voted against the motion and 977 voting in favor. This means that Adventist ordination practices will remain the same as they were before the GC Session.

CALLED TO INFLUENCE

September 26, 2015

Great Lakes Adventist Academy

Register \$10/person at misda.org or 517-316-1552

[open August 10 - September 18]



Main Speaker: Justin Torossian

Justin studied Theology at Pacific Union College in Northern California. Currently finishing the M.Div. at Andrews University, he has worked on the pastoral staff of Fresno Central Adventist. A descendant of James and Ellen White, he has a passion for Adventist heritage and how it can impact us today in the 21st century.

Seminars with:

- Steve Conway
- Jay Gallimore
- Jeremy Hall
- Rich Holz
- Jim Micheff
- Erwin Nanasi
- Joel Nephew
- Wes Peppers
- Israel Ramos
- Scott Ritsema
- Don Sawvel
- Royce Snyman

MICHIGAN MEN OF FAITH 2015

Retreat Inspires Michigan Women to Rest in Christ

I am so ready to go back home!” exclaimed Ness Dinnan from the Tawas City church when I asked her how she was enjoying the Michigan Conference Women’s Retreat.

Oh, no! I thought. *She must be having a terrible time!*

But Dinnan wasn’t finished. “I am so ready to go back home and just love my husband!” she added. The seminar “Surviving and Thriving in a Spiritually Mismatched Marriage” had inspired her, and she couldn’t wait to put what she had learned into practice.

Dinnan was one of 690 women who found spiritual refreshment at the retreat, held the first three weekends of April at Camp Au Sable.



This year’s theme, “Rest . . . in the Lord and wait patiently for Him,” reflected the need of many women, said Jane Harris, Michigan Conference women’s ministries director.

“Sometimes we are so busy doing the good stuff that we don’t have time for the God stuff,” she said. “The retreat lets us set aside time to be with Jesus so we can hear God speak.”

Keynote speaker Tami Milligan, a pastor’s wife from Cadillac, turned REST into an acronym: Recognize and Evict Stinking Thinking. She emphasized the need to be honest with ourselves and let God change us so we can stay in the “sweet spot” with Jesus.

Seminars on prayer, overcoming sexual abuse, card making, meal planning, and essential oils rounded out the weekend. Renee Coffee’s seminar about ways to study the Bible was a favorite of many attendees.



The 17 women on the Women’s Ministries Board are already planning next year’s retreat, “Faith, Not Fear.” It will focus on “how to stand firm to the end and cling to Jesus no matter what trials may come,” said Harris. Seminars will include Bible memorization, end-time events, exercise, and edible wild plants.

Start planning now for a special getaway next April with a mother, granddaughter, sister, or friend! Better yet, invite a woman who doesn’t attend church to come and nurture her walk with God.

Rachel Cabose is a member of the Lansing church. A first-time retreat attendee, she enjoyed spending this special weekend with her mom.

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

Aug 31-Sept 4

Carp Lake, Cheboygan, Petoskey
Pastor Jason Sliger
Community Service -
Carp Lake - Ruth Nestle
Petoskey - Verna Gross

Sept 7-11

St Johns
Pastor Daniel Scarone
Community Service - Fay Denton

Sept 14-18

Covert, Hartford, Pullman, South Haven
Pastor William Richardson
Bible Worker - Christian Smith
Community Services - Glenda Rogers

Sept 21-25

Bauer, Wyoming
Pastor Dan Rachor

Sept 28-Oct 2

Edwardsburg, Glenwood
Pastor Harry Rogers

Oct 5-9

Dowagiac, Eau Claire
Pastor Ted Toms
School Eau Claire Elementary -
Ashley Johnson, Principal/Teacher

Oct 12-16

Benton Harbor Fairplain, Coloma, Hartford Indonesian
Pastor Phil Mills, Jr.

Oct 19-23

Elk Rapids Spanish, Shelby Spanish
Pastor Raul Parra

Oct 26-30

Wyoming Rogers Heights Spanish
Pastor Eric del Valle

Michigan Sabbath School Summits (S³)

— Justin Kim
Sabbath School Director

Church studies in North America show an estimated half of our adult church membership numbers attend divine service. Half of that number are active participants of Sabbath School. With pastors ministering in multiple districts, there are sometimes far too few helpers to champion the Sabbath School cause. Those who do are often busy with other church responsibilities also.

In addition, Sabbath School training events held at Camp Au Sable and Camp Meeting are often too far away or ill-timed for Sabbath School staff needs. Our state-wide conference training events are not attended as they should be. With many of our local Sabbath Schools being boring, dead, purposeless, and/or aimless, leaders either go the “traditional pattern” route or seek to eliminate it altogether.

For the 2015-2016 school year, the Sabbath School department will be holding district Sabbath School Summits (S³).

Not as a forced requirement, or an addition burden to our dedicated Sabbath School staff, these Summits will seek to place a re-emphasis and rejuvenated purpose on Sabbath Schools again. Especially with unbalanced emphases on the divine service, unhealthy local Sabbath Schools cannot continue in the current direction. These SS Summits will be forums to share good ideas, coordinate collaboration on church planting opportunities, and glorify the Lord for the SS work.

S³'s seek to:

- Inspire churches to return to the original mission of SS – organic CHURCH planting
- Get into the study and memorization of the WORD
- Train to be dynamic, evangelistic, and prepared teachers and students of the Bible without reading the Quarterly
- Train superintendents to be intentional, purposeful, and competent administrators of church growth
- Re-envision world missions as a world church comprised of glocal (global and local) Adventists
- Assist the pastor in personal evangelism, visitations, and local leadership development
- Teach the evangelistic synergy of the children's, youth, and adult SS's



at Camp Au Sable. This weekend will be a joint-venture designed for all those involved in Youth, Adult, and Children's Sabbath Schools departments.

Other district Sabbath School Summits for adult ministries are being planned as follows:

- Districts 4 and 5 - October 3, 2015 - Grand Rapids Central Adventist Church
- Districts 7, 8, and 11 - January 16, 2016 - Lansing Adventist Church
- Districts 9 and 10 - April 2016 (TBA) - Filipino-Am Adventist Church
- District 12 - May 2016 (TBA) - Detroit Metropolitan Church
- District 1 - UP Camp Meeting 2016 (TBA)
- *Nearby Districts 2 and 6 can attend the Au Sable training weekend mentioned previously.*

Mark your calendars; announce this to your Sabbath School Councils; let's get the Sabbath School work humming again!

Planned Giving and Trust Services

Durable Financial Power of Attorney

A durable power of attorney for finances is a simple and reliable way to arrange for someone to manage your finances if you become incapacitated (unable to make decisions for yourself).

A financial power of attorney is a good document to make for yourself, but it can also be a great blessing for your family. If you become unable to decide for yourself and you haven't prepared a durable power of attorney, a court proceeding is probably inescapable. Your spouse, closest relatives, or friend will have to ask a court for authority over at least some of your financial affairs.

Your Planned Giving & Trust Services Department can help you, free of charge, get this important document in place. Call us at (517) 316-1520 for more information.



All Districts are welcome to attend the Sharpening Skills for Sabbath School weekend on **October 30 - November 1, 2015**

UP Camp Meeting 2015



Photos by Dan McGrath and Laurie Snyman

(Transitions continued from page 11)

Diane Barlow is the new superintendent of Education for the Michigan Conference. Linda Fuchs will be the Lake Union superintendent of Education.

Bob Benson will be pastoring the Mesick, Manton, and Cadillac 13th Street Churches.

Cathy Buell is the teacher for the newly opened Marquette Seventh-day Adventist School.

Nicki Grimsley is transferring from Oakwood Jr. Academy to Holland Seventh-day Adventist School, where she will teach K-2.

Connie Hickman is the new principal for Oakwood Jr. Academy.

Alan Meis is joining the staff at Battle Creek Academy where he will teach Bible and History. He has transferred from Adolphian Jr. Academy.

Joel Nephew will be taking the responsibilities of the Stewardship department in addition to his role as director of Planned Giving and Trust Services.

Michelle Odinma is a part-time 9-10 teacher at Kalamazoo Jr. Academy. She has transferred from Oakwood Jr. Academy.

Transitions in Mission



Melissa Bresnahan is the principal/teacher at Tri-City Seventh-day Adventist School, where she will be teaching grades K-8. She is a recent graduate from Andrews University.



Diana Knapp is the principal/teacher at Onaway Seventh-day Adventist Elementary School teaching grades 1-8. Originally from Boyne Falls, MI, she taught grades 1-8 last year at Golden Heart Christian School in Fairbanks, AK.

Burney Culpepper is the new principal at Grand Rapids Adventist Academy. He comes from Milo Adventist Academy in Days Creek, OR. He earned his B.S. from Southern Adventist University and a M.Ed from the University of Southern Mississippi.



Crystal Meador joins the teaching staff at Wilson Junior Academy where she will be the 5-8 homeroom teacher. She comes from Gem State Adventist Academy, ID.



A recent graduate of Andrews University, Richard Davisson is the new seventh grade teacher at Village Adventist Elementary School.



Ben Martin is the pastor of youth ministries for Pioneer Memorial Church. He enjoys photography, camping, and spending time with his wife Brianna. They are looking forward to their first child in October. His predecessor Michael Goetz took a call to the Rocky Mountain Conference at Champion Academy.

Charlotte Green is joining the staff at Grand Rapids Adventist Academy as the new seventh and eighth grade teacher. She earned her B.S., Elementary Education degree from Southern Illinois University.



Traci Nietling is from Lake City, MI, and is joining the Northview Seventh-day Adventist Christian School in Cadillac. She will be teaching grades 1-4.



Chad Higgins is teaching grades 5-8 at Gobles Junior Academy. A Southern Adventist University graduate, he was a missionary teacher at the Palau Adventist Elementary School.



A recent graduate of Union College, Alan Petersen is the new ninth and tenth grade homeroom teacher at Adelphian Junior Academy.

Alicia Hutchinson is the new K-2 teacher at Oakwood Academy. Originally from East Orange, NJ, and a 2013 Andrews University graduate, she spent last year teaching grades K-2 in Seoul, South Korea.



Andrea Szykowski, an Andrews University 2015 graduate, will be teaching grades 1-8 at Pittsford Seventh-day Adventist Elementary. She spent a year as a missionary teacher in Micronesia at the Yap Adventist School where she taught sixth grade and was also the middle school coordinator.



Having previously worked at the Michigan Conference, Alanna Knapp is the new secondary English teacher at Battle Creek Academy. She is a graduate from Michigan Technological University and the Center for Adventist Ministry to Public University Students Missionary Training Program.



Sung Um is the founder of Upper Room Fellowship (CA) and the speaker for Faith for Today (Korean). With a doctorate in marriage/family studies, Sung is married to Jewel and they have three grown children. Sung is pastoring the Berrien Springs Living Word Fellowship. His predecessor Peter Ahn will be the program director of the same church.

(Continued on page 10)

MICHIGAN CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

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September

- 4-7 Labor Day Weekend -
Office Closed
- 10-13 Wellness Training -
Camp Au Sable
- 11-13 Family Ministries -
Camp Au Sable
- 11-13 Adventurer Family Camp -
Camp Au Sable
- 13-17 Senior's Retreat -
Camp Au Sable
- 17-20 Health Professionals Retreat -
Camp Au Sable
- 18-20 Pathfinder Camporee -
Camp Au Sable
- 22 MI Conference Executive
Committee - Conf. Rm
- 23 Camp Meeting Directors -
Conference Room
- 24 K-12 Board of Education
- 25-27 ACS Fall Workshop -
Camp Au Sable

October

- 1-3 LUC Secondary Leadership -
Camp Au Sable
- 4-7 LIFT - Camp Au Sable
- 9-11 Mother/Daughter Retreat -
Camp Au Sable
- 11-16 Fall Work Week Camp Au Sable
- 16-18 Lay Advisory Retreat -
Camp Au Sable
- 23-25 Pathfinder/Adventurer
LUC Training
- 23-25 Family Life Retreat -
Camp Au Sable
- 30-Nov 1 Sabbath School Workshop
Camp Au Sable
- 30-Nov 1 Northwoods Romance -
Camp Sagola

Three Things at a Rest Area

— Jonathan Chitwood

Pastor of the First Flint and Clio churches

While traveling through the Upper Peninsula, I turned into a rest area and parked across from the restrooms. I had been listening to Strong Tower Radio, and as I walked towards the restrooms, I was surprised to hear what sounded like the same program coming from a pickup truck. I tried to identify the muted sound of the radio. Without knowing what was being played on Strong Tower Radio however, I wasn't able to tell. So I went back to my car, turned the radio on low volume, and left the door open so I could hear the pickup's radio. It was a match! The speaker was at that moment talking about the characteristics of God's remnant church! After a few moments however, I didn't hear the sound of the radio in the pickup truck anymore.

I quickly pulled out a "Why I Go to Church on Saturday" *GLOW* tract, walked over to the driver's side of the pickup, and waved at the woman sitting inside. I introduced myself and asked her how she had come to listen to Strong Tower Radio. She explained that as a custodian of the rest area, she regularly finds Strong Tower Radio cards and *GLOW* tracts laying around. Instead of throwing them away, she collects and hands them to people she meets! She would have liked to play Strong Tower Radio through the rest area sound system, but since she wasn't allowed to, she listened to it in her pickup truck instead.

I handed her the *GLOW* tract on the Sabbath. She shared with me that, though she currently has to work seven days a week, she has had conversations with her friends about the Sabbath being Saturday and not Sunday. Before leaving, I gave her my business card, wrote down her contact information, and prayed with her.

As I returned to my car, it struck me that three things came together to make a difference in this woman's life. First, someone has been leaving *GLOW* tracts and Strong Tower Radio cards in the rest area on a regular basis. Second, the woman has been listening to the messages, music, and stories on Strong Tower Radio. Third, the Holy Spirit impressed me to stop at that rest area, made me aware that this woman might be listening to Strong Tower Radio, and put it on my heart to go and talk with her.

Why did these three things come together at that rest area, on that day, at that moment? The woman has been thinking about switching churches, and is about to make a choice as to which church she will attend. God's timing is perfect, isn't it? When we do our small part in distributing literature, support ministries like Strong Tower Radio, and become willing to talk to complete strangers, God works to bring people one step closer to His remnant church, one step closer to heaven!

