



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

Michigan Memo

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Letting Air Out to Let Truth In

— Jennifer Messing

Member of the Port Sanilac Church

My son and I were on our way home on the expressway. My daughter and her husband were ahead of us, going to another appointment. As we were driving down the highway, I heard a loud noise and our van started shaking! I pulled over to the side of the road and realized we had a blown tire. I, nor my 14 year old son, did not know how to change a tire. So I called my husband to instruct us on this. We had also called our son-in-law to come help us! Both my son-in-law and son changed the tire and we were on our way.

As I was driving slow to get off into the nearest exit, I heard a loud clicking sound and our van was rocking a bit. I pulled into the nearest gas station, telling my son, “I don’t know where we are or what that noise is, but let’s pray!” So we prayed for God to guide us as to where to go to get this tire fixed and to get us there safely!

When I went into the gas station, my son looked at the tire and discovered the lugnuts were loose. We certainly would have been in danger if that tire came off! He tightened the lugnuts and I searched for the nearest place to get a new tire. After many tries, I came up with a tire store about nine miles away. As we headed down the road at about 20 miles per hour, the tire was not wiggling anymore.

When we got there, there was a room full of people. I had remembered what Elder Jay Gallimore had said about using his GLOW tracts, handing them out to a room full of people. I was inspired by the Holy Spirit to hand this particular lady a GLOW tract. I asked her if I could share this awesome piece of truth with her. She had said yes and that she had never seen anything like that before. I told her it had God’s word, explaining the “Giving Light to Our World” phrase. She said, “I just moved here from Hope, Michigan and I am looking for a church. I watch that TCT [Tri-State Christian Television] a lot and am trying to find out where to go!”

I then remembered Pastor Richard Bullock telling me that he was doing an “Ask the Pastor” program on that same channel! I said, “If you want the Bible being taught in *truth*, please check out the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Midland!” And I furthermore told her to look for Bullock on TCT and the answers he was to give. She said that she absolutely would! I knew that day why I had the blown tire and why the Lord led us there! My thoughts were, “Wow, He went through all of this to show His path to His child in that tire store.” I love serving Him and look for opportunities to do so! Praise God! He is so awesome! I praise Him for that experience. God is so good!



Guest Editorial

Biblical Stewardship: A State of "Mine" or a State of "Mind?"

— Joel Nephew

Stewardship and Planned Giving/Trust Services Director

I remember as a small child my father and mother sitting us boys down and looking over the mission projects listed in the Quiet Hour magazine. Dad would mention how much money we as a family could give for that month and then we would talk over the different options and decide what we would give to. Sometimes it was bicycles for preachers in faraway lands or picture rolls for missionary teachers. This happened on a regular basis and it helped to formulate in my mind what it meant to be a steward of God's blessings - not just the tithes, but the rest also.

In a day and age when things seem to be all turned around and upside down, when worldly influences appear to have crept into the realm of Christian stewardship. When things like, car payments, maxed out credit cards, school loans and the accumulation of stuff – the bigger barn syndrome, have become the norm, I think the question we need to ask ourselves and then resolve is this: is Biblical stewardship a state of “mine” or a state of “mind?”

Let me explain. Just as Satan has devised counterfeits for all the other truths of God, he has also made a counterfeit for stewardship. And sadly it appears that for some of us, the false has become the true.

This false and worldly stewardship, mentioned in 1 John 2:16, stems from the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. They lead us to believe that what I am and what I have is most important. This is the state of “mine.” In short, *selfishness*. Now, we come at this naturally. Just watch children with their toys and watch adults when an unexpected opportunity to help an “undeserving” person comes their way. Yes, we all have struggled with this issue of “mine.” It shows itself not only when returning an honest tithe and offerings, but also in the way we treat our spouse, our children, co-workers, neighbors, and fellow church members. Call it what you will, selfishness, self-absorption, self-centeredness, covetousness - it all ends in the same place: unhappiness. This state of “mine” is defined in the bumper sticker I saw recently, which says “He who dies with the most toys wins.” Nothing could be further from the truth!

Now, what do I mean when I say a state of “mind?”

Well, you could take this a couple of ways. One is that by God's grace I change my thinking about stewardship and thus my actions will change as well. When we acknowledge that all I have is not mine but His, then selfishness has no soil in which to take root. We must come to think, believe, and understand that “*All things are God's, not only by creation, but by redemption. All the blessings of this life and of the life to come are delivered to us stamped with the cross of Calvary.*” (Christ Object Lessons, p.

362) and, “*The bread we eat is the purchase of His broken body. The water we drink is bought by His spilled blood. Never one, saint or sinner, eats his daily food, but he is nourished by the body and the blood of Christ. The cross of Calvary is stamped on every loaf. It is reflected in every water*

spring.” (Desire of Ages, p.660) As David says in 1 Chronicles 29:14 (KJV), “*for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.*” When come to understand this and to think in this vein, it will radically change our stewardship and thus drastically change the way we live our lives.

The second way of thinking about this state of “mind” is obedience. I need to move from a state of “mine” (covetousness and selfishness) to a state of “mind” (selfless obedience).

Malachi 3:8-12 raises the question, “*Will a man rob God?*” and goes on to say that we rob God by not returning tithes and offerings and not returning all the tithes to His designated place – the storehouse, the Church.

God is calling us as His professed followers to exercise stewardship that is a state of “mind” – faithful, loving, cheerful obedience. And that is obedience to His Word, His command, not to my selfish desires.

As we read appeals to live a life of selfless obedience in the Scriptures and the Spirit of Prophecy, we see it exhibited perfectly at the Cross. As we see Christ Jesus willingly, selflessly, lovingly laying down His life – give all for me, an undeserving sinner, it compels the human heart to move from a state of “mine” to the state of “mind.” No clearer picture can be painted; no better story written. Philippians 2:5-8 (KJV) says it so well,

“Just as Satan has devised counterfeits for all the other truths of God he has also made a counterfeit for stewardship.”

“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.” (emphasis supplied)

There are some who think, “I don’t agree with what the ‘storehouse’ is doing, how they are spending, and what they are teaching. So I will direct ‘my’ money to someone else who I’ve heard is doing a good work.”

Friends, the church has always had issues. It doesn’t matter at what point you look in history, there have always been mistakes made because imperfect humans like you and I have always been involved. Because so-and-so is the pastor, conference president, or stewardship director, does not change the command of God. He simply says, *“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse.”* Thus we need to move, by the power of the Spirit, from a state of “mine” to a state of “mind.”

As I study the Gospels, I find what Jesus did say and what He did not say to be thought provoking. I think of the experience of the widow at the temple found in Mark 12:41-44 and Luke 21:1-4. We see her giving what appears to be a small offering, but Jesus points out that she gave more than all the others because she gave, not out of her abundance, but out of her poverty.

Was the church at Jesus’ time corrupt? Indeed it was! Among other things, the leadership was stealing from the poor, and even

plotting to kill the Messiah. Did you notice that Jesus didn’t pull her aside and direct her to give her offering to Judas? He doesn’t point out to His disciples how foolish this woman was or how she will be judged unfaithful because she gave her offering to a church with problems. No. He commends her for her faithful, selfless obedience, and for exhibiting that state of “mind.” Let us always remember that God will deal righteously and justly with those who deal unfaithfully with the Church’s resources. Let us just make sure we are among the faithful.

So my brothers and sisters, when it comes to Biblical stewardship, will you remain in a state of “mine,” acting as though what has been placed in your hands to manage is yours to do “whatever” with? Or will you, by the grace of the Living God, move to a state of “mind?” The decision is yours, but let me remind you that Jesus is coming again soon, and when He comes, He is coming for faithful stewards.

May God help us all to be faith-filled Christians and thus be found ready to meet Him with no regrets when He comes in the clouds of glory.

“If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.”
Colossians 3:1-4 (KJV)



Illustration by Jacob Gibbs

Nature Nugget

— Gordon Atkins
Camp Au Sable Nature Director

The fall colors of Michigan are famous! The green chlorophyll in the leaves will become toxic to the tree if it remains and the temperatures get too cold. So the leaves break down the green-colored chlorophyll, leaving the yellow and orange-colored carotene pigments, which have been hidden all summer.

The red pigment of maple leaves is caused by anthocyanin. This red pigment is added in the fall at about the time the green chlorophyll disappears. While the colors are beautiful, one can’t help but wonder why so much energy is used to make all that red pigment which will last for only a couple of weeks and then be of no use when the leaves fall off?



for the anthocyanin. Red repels aphids! Seeing their favorite tree turn red makes them jump off and find some other leaf to eat! So once a year the anthocyanin acts as an insect repellent.

Secondly, when the leaves fall off, the anthocyanin is absorbed in the soil around the base of the tree and acts as an herbicide.

Other trees are less likely to sprout, grow, and compete with the mature tree! The third reason for anthocyanin is that it can help the tree trap the sun’s energy when the chlorophyll is gone, thus extending the growing season a bit longer.

God often does things that may seem strange to us, but He always has a purpose for what He does. He acts on our behalf; each act for a functional purpose. But He also adds beauty to the work He does.

Scientists have now discovered at least three possible purposes

Enjoy the fall colors and be reminded that He is in control!



Prepare Plant Cultivate Harvest Preserve

Total Number of Churches that have reported GLOW: 117 out of 192 Churches

Total Number of Churches that have reported over 1,000 GLOW: 44 Churches

Total Number of Churches that have reported over 5,000 GLOW: 5 Churches

Total GLOW reported (Goal after 6 months = 583,333): 169,788

Total Number of Churches that reported lay-given Bible studies: 87 out of 192 churches

Total Number of Churches that have reported over 10 lay-given Bible studies: 17 Total

Total Bible Studies reported (Goal => 1,500): 544

While we may not have achieved our goals yet, we are off to a good start toward our One Million GLOW Challenge and Bible Study Reformation goals! Many testimonies are coming in of wonderful experiences and first-time efforts being made by church members to plant seeds of truth with GLOW tracts and cultivate spiritual interests with Bible studies. May the Lord continue to bless your efforts! Look forward to our next Bible Study Reformation update!

By the Pools of Water

As I was swimming in the pool, an older gentleman came in and was doing laps. I was just relaxing, but I felt that I needed to talk to him. I didn't know what to start the conversation with, so I waited for the right moment. As we were both in the tub, I just asked him why he was here and where he was from. This led to a long conversation about his father, his hometown sports as well as my previous hometown sports.

In the midst of the conversation, he mentioned that he had cancer. After the talk on sports, I decided to ask more about the cancer. He went on to tell me that he got treatment for mesothelioma over the past year and is just getting back to work. He told me miracle stories of doctors doing wonderful work during surgery and how they said that most, if not all, of the cancer is gone. He finished with how much this has changed his life as well as his outlook on life.

I then told him that God has blessed him and conveyed a story of my father-in-law who survived a crash. I told him that he had a change in his outlook and couldn't stop thinking about how God had saved him. I then felt that I needed to give him some reading material, so I had my brother go to our room and grab some GLOW. I gave him two GLOW tracts as well as a *Happiness Digest* book. He readily accepted them and said that he had heard of Seventh-day Adventists, but was interested to know more. Praise the Lord for this great opportunity to witness for Him!

— *Ethan Booms*
Member of the Saginaw Church

Our family was at a motel enjoying spring break. We were in a pool swimming when a lady asked me where I was from. I told her and she told me she was from Higgins Lake! We had a great conversation about her life and mine. She shared with me that her son was a minister and her husband had passed away a few years back. She shared how she had a son that was not spiritual at all and needed the Lord because he had left the church.

I also shared my experience of having struggles with a son. She said that she couldn't even mention the Lord's name to him. He told her not to talk to him about anything religious! When I was listening to this lady, my heart broke because I knew her struggle. I could feel her pain and I believe she knew that!

I shared with her that I was told before when I was searching for advice regarding my son, that if I really believed that he would not make it to heaven, then to make every time I'm with him now as if it were heaven - to enjoy the time with them! She said thank you and that she really needed that, believing God had brought us together! We shared how a relationship with Jesus was the utmost important thing on this earth!

As we were leaving, my son-in-law had gone up to the room to get some GLOW tracts and put them on the table for me to give her one. I pulled out the tract that said "Why I go to Church on Saturday." I asked if I may share this GLOW tract with her. She looked at it and said, "You are Seventh-day Adventist, aren't you?" I said, "Yes, I am!" She said with her voice was shaking, "My aunt and uncle are Seventh-day Adventists!" She took the GLOW tracts and started reading it. We hugged and parted. Praise God for these events!

— *Jennifer Messing*
Member of the Port Sanilac Church

From Defeat to Deliverance

— Trina Hart
Member of the Hillsdale Church

I was in a deep, dark black hole, trying to hide my shame from everyone. But I couldn't hide it from myself, or God. I was bingeing on comfort foods such as sugar, fat, and salt. I wallowed in my own misery as I was steadily gaining more and more weight. I already avoided the mirrors, so what did it matter? I just didn't care anymore. I was miserable from head to toe. I was so tired all of the time. My whole body hurt. I was getting migraine headaches and many different medical ailments that were rapidly getting worse. And worse than that was the emotional defeat and hopelessness that I felt.

I had wondered if there was any hope for me. Could my life be different? Could God help me? So I started to pray. After all, that's what Christians do. And God answered. That's how it works, right?

I started praying that God would give me the desire to get healthy and the desire to exercise, because I didn't have the desire for either of those things. I then got a used stationary bike, bought fruits and vegetables, and started slowly cutting sugar out of my diet.

I had to pray *so* much, asking God to take away the cravings for sugar, fats, and salt. Not only did I have a food addiction, but a big part of it was a powerful sugar addiction as well. So as I was fighting these addictions with God by my side, my relationship with Him grew. Instead of turning to food for comfort, I began praying, which developed my ability to fight for renewal in every area of my life: spiritual, physical, mental, social, and emotional.

Prayer continues to be the most important part of this lifestyle change for me. I have learned that this is not a one-time decision. There are good days and bad days. There are struggles and there are victories. But I have learned not to go by feelings, but by what God's Word says.

"True science and inspiration are in perfect harmony."
(*Testimonies to the Church*, Vol. 4, p. 584) So it seems fitting that Dr. John Ratey says in the *User's Guide to the Brain*, page 36, "Changing your pattern of thinking also changes the brain's structure... [During abnormal behavior] the neurons get stuck in a rut of abnormal patterns of activity, becoming under active or overactive or just nonperforming, it being either too easy or

too hard for them to fire. A person who forcibly changes his behavior can break the deadlock by requiring neurons to change connections to enact the new behavior. Changing the brain's firing patterns through repeated thought and action is also what is responsible for the initiation of self-choice, freedom, will, and discipline... We always have the ability to remodel our brains."

At first I really had to force myself to get up and exercise. I had to keep praying for that desire. In other words, I had to force my brain to change. God has answered my prayers abundantly over time.

Temperance is God giving you the power to do your part. God gave me the power to get healthier, to get exercise-minded, and to lose 108 pounds so far.

"Delight yourself also in the Lord and He shall give you the desires of your heart." (Psalms 37:4) *God's desire is always for your best interest. Don't you want your desires to coincide with God's desires? I know I do!*



Sabbath Song

*The Sabbath day is a day of peace,
when all our labor can finally cease.
From Friday eve to Saturday night,
let the whole day be a great delight,
a day designed to renew
my relationship with you.
"I have given you this gift of rest
that our relationship will be blessed!"*

*The Sabbath is the Creator's sign;
it's His alone and it is divine.
The Word of God compels me to say
that the seventh day is Saturday.
Why does the world have no clue?
Sunday simply will not do,
for You have given us Your best.
To honor the Sabbath is Your test
of our faithfulness to You alone.
Breaking the Sabbath, You won't condone.*

Pastor E. J. Wolf

Literature Ministries Report

General Stats:

70 young people
250,000 doors knocked on
Host Cities:
- Ann Arbor
- Battle Creek
- Wyoming

Book Stats:

Books: 47,351
The Great Controversies: 5,351

Financial Stats:

Money Raised: \$368,819.84
Money for Education:
\$239,732.90

iShare Conference

[vimeo.com/136472824]

Dates: July 31 - August 1
Location: Indiana Academy
Attendees: 200
Speakers Included:
- Don Livesay (Lake Union)
- Larry Carter (Pacific Union)
- Michael Tuazon (Pacific Union)
- Judith Miranda (California)
- Mark Howard
(Michigan Conference)
- Ben Martin
(Michigan Conference)
- Taurus Montgomery
(Michigan Conference)

The 2015 summer was a blessed one full of amazing testimonies!



Take the Book!

— Helen Johnston

Magabook student, Andrews Academy, Member of the Berrien Springs Village Church

This summer I went canvassing with a group stationed in Battle Creek. Towards the end of the ten-week program, I was on a street when I had forgotten to pray before I started. So I then prayed for the rest of the people on the street specifically for me to know which books they needed and to give me the right words to convince them that they needed them. After I finished praying, I somehow knew that when I knocked on the next door, a man would answer and that I had to give him a *The Great Controversy*.

I went up to the door and knocked. Sure enough, a middle-aged man answered. I think God tells us things many times, but we don't believe them and try to make sense of it ourselves instead of accepting that God has a plan for us. And that's what I did. I have a very vivid imagination, so I thought I must have imagined it would be a man because I had heard of so many amazing things from other people about divine appointments and such.

So I just dismissed it and started my canvass with my favorite ice-breaker, *Habits that Heal*, which is based on the *Ministry of Healing* by Ellen White. He was an overweight guy and seemed not to be too interested in healthy living. So we joked around for a bit about new diets that don't work and New Year's resolutions that can never be realized.

I had usually liked to share *Peace Above the Storm*, but this time I had just automatically showed him *The Great Controversy*. I didn't mean to, and I almost started the canvass for *Peace Above the*

Storm because I thought that's what I was holding out. So there I was, completely confused holding the wrong book out to this man and not knowing what to say.

What's worse was that he didn't take the book from my hand. Putting the book in the people's hands is essential to get them interested because they feel like they already have it. But this man seemed very interested in the book, so I just kept my hand out and canvassed him with the religious aspect of *The Great Controversy*. After I was finished and he still hadn't taken the book, I made a gesture with my arm for him to take the book and asked him with a huge smile if he had a religious background.

I was hoping that he would automatically take the book while he told me what church he went to. But he didn't. Instead he said he was an elder in the Lutheran Church and was working on trying to get the kids in his church to be more interested in evangelism. I gave him a big smile and told him to go door-to-door like I was. Then I showed him the receipt paper with the conference number and the list of all the books, saying if he wanted really good books about the Bible for door-to-door work, he could call the number and get a bunch for his church. I tucked the receipt in *The Great Controversy* and handed them both to him.

At this, he chuckled and said that I was doing a great job of being persistent, but if he took the book, he would feel obliged to pay for it and he didn't have the cash. So he pulled the receipt out and said he



would definitely call and get the books and donate toward my scholarship too. I had told him before that we accepted cash, checks, and credit. So I reminded him that he could still give me a check or use his credit card. By now, my arms were getting tired from holding out *The Great Controversy* toward him. He said he didn't have a checkbook and he didn't give out his credit card number, but if he did have cash he would get the book and even put it in the church library.

I felt that his church really needed the book, and in the back of my head, I remembered my prayer and that feeling God had given me that a man would answer the door. I needed to give him *The Great Controversy*. So I just told him to go inside and get all the change he could and I would wait outside for him. He chuckled again and said it wouldn't be enough. Because I was so persistent, he would give me the change as a donation, but he wouldn't take the book. As he was searching his house for change, I was praying that he would just take the book anyway.

In a few minutes, he came back out with a small Mason jar full of change. I looked at it and said it would probably be enough for the book and that besides God would get other people to give extra donations to make up for the book. He still refused even though he said he wanted it. I wasn't sure what to do, so I decided that if he wouldn't take it then, I would leave it on his car in the driveway.

But I believe God made me fumble with the jar of coins because I dropped it and the coins spilled all over the welcome mat. As I was stooping to pick up the coins I said, "Please help me hold this book while I pick them up," and I shoved the book at him. He was startled because of the spilled coins and took *The Great Controversy* by reflex!

Quickly, I finished picking up the coins and then started to walk away saying, "God bless you, sir!" I got halfway down his walk when he realized he still had the book, and he yelled

at me to come back and get it. I just waved, smiled, and said, "Just keep it and promise me you'll read it!" He just stared at me and then said, "Fine, you win. I promise I'll read it, and God bless you too!" I stopped and prayed on the sidewalk to thank God for what He had done through me to help get a *The Great Controversy* and possibly more Ellen White books into the Lutheran Church.

If that were the only divine appointment that day, it would have been an amazing day. But God doesn't stop with just amazing. When God gives us blessings, He does not hold back. My day wasn't over yet. We still had a couple of hours left. My leader took me to territory with more expensive houses and people who could afford to buy more books. I like the expensive

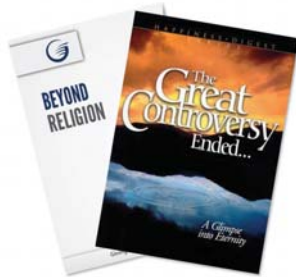
neighborhoods because it's a real challenge to get the people that have so much to understand that they need more. And they usually are really busy, so I have to talk really fast and befriend them in less than a minute.

In this neighborhood I knocked on the door of a family I knew to be Christian because I saw a stick figure family on their car and a Christian bumper sticker. I planned to canvass them on the health book and then transition to the *Man of Peace*,

which is based on the *Desire of Ages*. A tall, blond lady answered and I began my canvass with, "Hi, my name is..." But before I could even tell her my name, she butted in, "It's Helen, right?"

I was shocked. I was sure I had never seen her before in my life, so how could she have known my name? It must have shown on my face because she smiled, showed me a check for \$20 and explained, "I am a Seventh-day Adventist too and this morning as I was praying during my devotions and I just knew somehow that a young girl named Helen would come to my door today. I was to give her \$20 because she had given a *The Great Controversy* to a Lutheran man and needed money to make up for it."

Isn't God amazing?



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

Nov 2-6

Grayling, Houghton Lake, Mio
Pastor Bela Kobor
Grayling Elementary - Ben Zork
Community Service -
Houghton Lake - Richard Musket
Mio - Linda Roberts

Nov 9-13

Detroit Northwest, Cherry Hill
Pastor Steve Conway

Nov 16-20

Saginaw, St. Charles
Pastor Ben Garcia
Community Service
Saginaw - Van Collins
St. Charles - March Kushion

Nov 30-Dec 4

Marshall, Urbandale
Pastor Ryan Counsell
Bible Workers -
Marshall - Jerry Finneman
Urbandale - Joshua Rietman
Community Service - Marilyn Anderson

Dec 7-11

Ann Arbor, Plymouth
Pastor Christian Hodet
Ann Arbor Adventist School -
Sally Smith, Principal/Teacher
Community Service - Karen Marsh

Dec 13-17

Buchanan, Chikaming
Pastor Bryan Choi

A Son Becomes a Brother

—Joy Hyde

Communication Leader for the Metropolitan Church

One thing Johnny Ginnetti and his father Lou have in common is love for the game of golf. Almost weekly, they get together for a round or two on the links, weather permitting. Since they played so often, Johnny was aware that his dad needed a new driver. So naturally Johnny told Lou that for his birthday, he would get him the driver of his choice. Lou thanked Johnny for the offer, but declined. Instead Lou, a member of the New Beginnings Seventh-day Adventist Church in Brighton told Johnny, “All I want for my birthday is for you to go to a Bible prophecy seminar.”

Johnny thought that was a pretty easy thing to do for his dad and agreed to go. There were several locations in the suburban-Detroit area hosting such an event at the end of September 2014. Johnny decided on the site closest to his place of business. That was the Metropolitan Church in Plymouth.



Johnny was in for a surprise. When he agreed to grant his dad’s birthday wish, he thought it was a one night occurrence. When he got to the church on opening night, he realized there were meetings four nights a week for four weeks. Now he wondered how he could get out of this commitment. Besides he’s a busy business owner. He did not have time for this on top of his already packed schedule.

That was until he heard the words of truth spoken from the pulpit that first night. He was enthralled with what he heard. He attended all the meetings but one. Johnny says, “I made up for that one absence when I came on a night that the meeting had been cancelled.” Behind the scenes of Johnny’s meeting attendance was Lou and Johnny’s mother, Melu, praying that Johnny’s heart would be open to the Holy Spirit’s prompting and to accept Biblical truth.

Not only did Johnny attend the prophecy seminar, but he also attended the follow-up Daniel Seminar through the month of November and began regularly attending Sabbath morning services. On December 20, 2014, after attending yet more meetings on baptismal preparation, Johnny made his public declaration of his acceptance of the Word of God and was baptized. Lou was just beaming. After the baptism, Lou said to Johnny, “You were my son.

Now you are my brother.” Now, not only do they love the game of golf, but more importantly Lou and Johnny share a love for their Lord, Jesus.

The Women’s Ministries department of the Grand Rapids Central Adventist Church organized for care packages to be delivered to six youth that were away from home working this summer. The boxes consisted of edibles, toothbrush, toothpaste, lip balm, Scripture cards, pen/paper, home-made cookies, a book, and a card full of signatures from their church family. The youth are important to our church family! We wanted them to know their home church was thinking of them and praying for them while away for the summer.

The youth who received a care package were Omar and Austin Gomez, Mariaelena Hayes, Heather Orosco, Jennifer Rienstra, and Nathan Umali, who were working at Camp AuSable, and Adam Vivian at Great Lakes Adventist Academy.

God bless all youth who worked this summer! Know that your church family is praying for you.



—Candice Vinton

Member of the Grand Rapids Central Church

Is It Worth It?

— Sarah Canada

Vacation Bible School Leader for the Belleville Church

Another summer draws to a close, and Vacation Bible School (VBS) leaders everywhere breathe a sigh of relief. The backdrops have been removed, scratches on the walls touched up, crafts sent home with the children, and the incredible volunteers have been thanked. As we busily type in all the names and addresses from the registration forms, we wonder, “Is it worth it?”



We, at the Belleville Adventist Church, would have to loudly proclaim, “Yes! It’s worth the effort!”

It’s been amazing

to see how God blessed our VBS program this year. To begin with, we are a church with only five children in membership. Many may wonder why we would choose to spend all those hours in preparation for so few. We do a VBS program because we love those five kids, and we want them to have a personal relationship with Jesus. We also know that if we are faithful to do our part, God will be faithful to complete His part. A little church doesn’t have to mean an inactive church. It just means there’s opportunity to grow. Therefore on July 13-18, the church opened its doors to our children and the children of our community for “God’s Gym: Kids Fit for the Lord” Vacation Bible School. Then the Lord sent the children: 116 of them!

Many church members worked to ensure that every inch of our church was covered in decorations. A giant health club backdrop was our main feature. Fruits, vegetables, spoon chandeliers, and soccer balls could be seen hanging from the ceiling. Posters on healthy living were displayed, a smoothie bar was set out, and play structures were lovingly created for both our entrances, in order to draw the attention of those driving by.

Lots of planning went into this year’s program. After selecting a healthy living theme, we looked at the original program, and then decided to make creative additions that fit our church standards and budget. First, we planned a VBS store with small items from local dollar stores. VBS dollars were given away for attendance, participation, and bringing a friend. We have found in previous years, that VBS dollars really motivate our kids to invite their family and neighbors. In fact, close to half of the children who attended our program were non-Adventist friends and neighbors of our kids. We’ve also added Dress-Up Days for additional fun. The kids loved dressing like chefs, athletes, and their favorite foods.

The opening program has always been one of my favorite parts of VBS. I love meeting each child that comes through our doors and welcoming them by name. I spend extra time selecting songs the kids will love and remember for years to come. The main program provides extra time for reinforcing the Bible lessons, Scripture, and stories being taught throughout the week.

Each rotation must also be designed to incorporate creative ideas that grab the children’s attention. That’s the reason why we incorporate more doctrine into the Bible stories and make them interactive. It’s why we add additional food items to the daily snacks. It’s especially evident when our Game Leader drags out every tunnel, pool noodle, parachute, cone, ball, net, and hula hoop she can find. These stations should help familiarize our visiting children with the Adventist church. They can learn our doctrines at the Bible Station. They experience our health message at the Health and Snack Stations. They remember the Bible stories because of the crafts we’ve selected, and they have an incredible time playing games they won’t soon forget.

In my experience, I have found that Vacation Bible School leaves a lasting impression on our children. It’s also a perfect opportunity to witness to our neighbors and friends about our love for Jesus. For the past several years, my two girls and I have faithfully invited our neighbors to these programs. This year we truly witnessed God blessing our efforts. We are currently studying the Bible once a week with eight kids from down the street. Now we are enjoying memorizing Scripture, listening to Bible stories, and singing VBS songs all year long. We also



plan to stay in contact with this group of over 100 children by continuing to invite them to our Saturday morning Sabbath School classes, notifying them of upcoming children’s ministry events, and sending Guide magazine and other church materials to their homes.

So today as I drove home from a local playground with my kids and two of their new VBS friends, they’re in the backseat singing one of this year’s favorite songs, “I Have a Maker.” I smile and think, “It was definitely worth it!”



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Transitions in Mission



Michael Reynolds joins the Information Technology department at the conference office. Originally from Georgia, he graduated from Southern Adventist University in computer systems and has interned at the Kentucky-Tennessee and Southern Union Conferences. Michael enjoys photography, videography, and all computer operating systems.



Alexander Rybachek will be pastoring the Alma, Riverdale, and Lakeview churches. Born in former Soviet Moldova, he grew up in Siberia. Having graduated both the Zaoksky and Andrews Theological Seminaries, Alex pastored for three years in southern Russia. He and his wife Olena, a teacher at Great Lakes Adventist Academy, have two young girls.



A nursing and business graduate of Loma Linda University, Steven Silva's focus turned to ministry after attending Mission College of Evangelism. He accepted a Bible work call to Guam while supporting himself as a nurse. In seven years, he ministered also as Bible teacher, pastor, clinic chaplain, and youth director. He is married to Mia and they have just been blessed with their first daughter Gianna. He pastors the East Lansing University Church as David Shin has taken a call to the Alaska Conference.



Jonathan Walter is a theology graduate from Bogenhofen Seminary in Austria. Having served as a missionary, he has also been involved with GYC Europe, CAMPUS, R3, and shareHim. Jonathan volunteered last year on the pastoral staff of the East Lansing University Church. He is happily married to Amanda. Jonathan is the assistant pastor for the Lansing Church.

Leeroy Hernandez will be the new assistant pastor of Grand Rapids Central Church.

Mark Howard and Daniel Jean-Francois will add the Edmore Church to their pastoral responsibilities.

Michael Szykowski will pastor the Alpena and Onaway churches.

Michigan Men of Faith

2015 Theme:	Called to Influence
Registered Attendance:	445
AM / PM Seminars:	14
Sabbath Offering:	\$6,784.39
	[donated to the Lansing Radio Project]
Combined Meals:	407

Under the spiritual lens of the *Great Controversy*, men around the world are under attack, whether they be young or old, married or single, of every nation, tribe, tongue, and people. For this reason, at least in Michigan, men from all churches are called to convene to rally together on one Sabbath as an unified troop of Christ's disciples. Mark all your calendars for 2016's Michigan Men of Faith to be inspired under the theme of "Called to Initiate" at Great Lakes Adventist Academy on Sabbath, September 24!

Follow Me Home

*Our grievous sins on Christ were laid.
At last, atonement has been made.
In clouds of glory, we shall see
a mighty throng shout jubilee.
No need to wait just one more day.
The King of kings is on His way.
The angels blast the trumpet sound.
In Christ alone, new life is found.
Behold, the dead in Christ shall rise!
We all will meet him in the skies!
The Lamb of God in victory
has finally come for you and me.
I long to hear Him say, "Well done!
Follow Me home! The battles won!"*

Pastor E. J. Wolf



November

- 10-12 New In Ministry -
Camp Au Sable
- 13-15 Marriage Retreat -
Crystal Mountain
- 18 Camp Meeting Directors -
Conference Room
- 20-22 Personal Ministries -
Camp Au Sable
- 25-27 Thanksgiving Holiday -
Office Closed
- 26 Thanksgiving Day

December

- 6 Lay Advisory
- 6 Women's Ministry Board
- 8 MI Conference Executive
Committee - Conf. Rm.
- 23-25 Christmas Holiday -
Office Closed
- 25 Christmas Day
- 30-31 GYC - Louisville
- 30-31 New Year's Holiday -
Office Closed

January

- 1 New Year's Day - Office Closed
- 1-4 New Year's Day Holiday -
Office Closed
- 1-3 GYC - Louisville
- 15-17 Teen Snow Outing -
Camp Au Sable
- 15-18 Martin Luther King Holiday -
Office Closed
- 19 MI Conference Executive
Committee - Conf. Rm.
- 20 Camp Meeting Directors -
Conference Room

Beloved and Precious

— Wonoh Lee

Pastor of the Battle Creek Korean Company

from making such a public decision.

Nevertheless, she attended every Bible study for Friday vespers at the church. Just recently, she realized the truth as it is in Jesus when she formally studied the 28 Fundamental Adventist Beliefs in the last several months. Thanks to the Holy Spirit and Scriptural truth, she decided to be baptized into the remnant church as a public Seventh-day Adventist.

Nestled in the historic part of Battle Creek lies an Korean Adventist company who worships on Sabbath in a former bank building. On August 15, the Battle Creek Korean Company had a high-spirited baptismal ceremony on the banks of Eagle Lake at Fort Custer State Park. Two precious souls were dedicated to the Lord. The entire church celebrated their new family members in Christ.

One soul was Sister Kyung Ai Park, who had attended the Battle Creek Seventh-day Adventist Korean Company for several years, but had not been baptized. She yearned to be an Adventist for she had loved the Adventist message, the health message, and the Adventists themselves. However, because of her South Korean relatives being so deeply involved in Sunday-keeping Protestant denominations and also because of her sister-in-law being a minister of the Full Gospel Church, she refrained



The other new family member is Kevin, the son of the pastor of the company. He wanted to be baptized after graduating elementary school, but his family

thought it best to wait a little before baptism. Kevin attended the Bible studies every Friday night also and the Christ-centered truth of the Adventist church convicted his heart. Now, not only the son of a pastor, he became the son of the Heavenly Father. Please remember these two precious souls and pray for them as the beloved children of God.