



Reaching Listeners for Christ

Strong Tower Radio (STR) listeners walk into local Seventh-day Adventist churches. Sometimes they visit after listening for six months and sometimes after several years. God's promises "Cast your bread upon the water, and you will find it after many days" and "My word will not return to Me void"

(Ecc. 11:1; Isa. 55:11) continue their fulfillment in STR broadcast areas and now beyond as more people encounter the recently released STR Apple and Android smartphone apps. Three months ago, a STR listener walked into a District 2 church stating, "I've been listening to STR, and I'm coming out of Babylon." They are now studying the Bible with the pastor, who anticipates baptism in the next few weeks.

At a District 4 church, another STR listener walked in and requested baptism. After listening to STR and watching 3ABN TV, they were convicted to move forward in faith and embrace the everlasting gospel! The pastor is now

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reviewing the fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist church with this listener to confirm their understanding of Scripture.

God raised up this ministry to help proclaim the three angels' messages 24/7/365 in Michigan and beyond. For nearly 12 years, many listeners have responded to hearing present truth for the first time. As the Holy Spirit moves upon their hearts, they commit their lives to Jesus and worship Him in spirit and in truth. Glory to God for His work in human hearts!

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Listening to Strong Tower Radio helped lead Joann DuBreuil to baptism.

By Mike Bernard,
Treasurer, Michigan Conference



“Next came the biggest test of Abraham’s life. Would he be willing to sacrifice his own son, the promised seed through which the Messiah would come? Would he trust God, who was calling him to this unthinkable task?”

TITHING AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH: THE CONNECTION

It is now time for the *worship in giving* portion of our service today. The offering today is for local church budget. This morning’s appeal is about a man named Johnny. Johnny recently was placed in a situation where he had to decide between being faithful to the Lord in his giving or spending his money in another way. He decided not to compromise and began to faithfully return his tithe and even sacrificially gave the same amount of tithe in other offerings. He surprisingly received an unexpected check in the mail. The amount of the check was 10% more than what he had just given to the Lord! That allowed Johnny to replenish what he had just given and even pay tithe on it! So give generously today to the Lord. Deacons, please come forward.”

Growing up in the church, I heard many offering appeals that sounded similar to this—encouraging stories of how the Lord blessed someone who decided to faithfully return their tithe or sacrificially give their offerings to His work.

Unfortunately, as a young and selfish person growing up, I began to shape a view that giving was a transaction where I was going to receive an equal or greater material item in return for whatever I gave to the Lord. What a great arrangement! I had nothing to lose! It was like that Christmas gift exchange where everyone else brought a better gift than you, and you were

guaranteed to go home a lot happier than you came. This arrangement with God was going to be just fine as long as He kept up on His end of the bargain.

As time went on and the giving part of my life became more of a formality, I knew there had to be something more. I began to study what the tithe and offering system was all about, and realized how much giving was truly a spiritual issue. Leviticus 27:30 calls it a “holy tithe” and I realized it had to be something more than just a formal exchange. Further in my study, I ran across this quote:

“The gold and the silver are the Lord’s; and He could rain them from heaven if He chose... God planned the system of beneficence, in order that man might become like his Creator, benevolent and unselfish in character, and finally be a partaker with Christ of the eternal, glorious reward” (*Christian Service*, p. 15).

The Lord began to open my eyes to the beautiful fact that giving was really all about the transformation of character that the Lord wanted to provide for me through this system He set up so long ago. He wanted to give me a deeper experience with Him and shape my character more and more like His. He wanted to grow my faith to believe that 90% of my increase would go further than the 100%, should I keep it. He knew that when I acknowledged Him as ruler of all things, and most importantly

my life, I could truly experience the joy He wanted to give me.

As I began looking specifically at the tithing principle, I noticed an important word that really transformed my thinking about tithe. That word was “return.” I remember a saying my father always told me while I was growing up. He said, “Son, always return something you borrowed in better condition than you received it.” He was communicating to me that what I was borrowing was not my property and that I needed to take the utmost care of it. I needed to honor the fact that the lender allowed me to borrow it by using it for what it was intended for and to thank the lender by returning it better than I received it.

Our Heavenly Father has also entrusted us with many things and has asked us to be good stewards of each of them. Psalm 50:10-12 clearly states that the Lord owns the world and everything in it. What freedom I can experience when I am faithful in what God has called me to do as I leave the outcome to Him! When I return to Him all that is His and recognize that all the rest is really His anyway, I can then focus solely on how He would have me be the best steward of what is remaining. With that mindset, I will take care of what the Lord has entrusted me with, but because it is His, He is ultimately responsible for it.

I remember putting this principle in action earlier in my life. We were working in ministry and had very limited income. Our vehicle was several years old with very high mileage. We made a conscious decision to say, "Lord, this is your van. We dedicate it to you and whatever you want us to use it for. Help us to be faithful in using it for your glory and to care for it just as you would have us to." What a relief came over us! God was now responsible for the big picture of that vehicle. While that did not mean we could be reckless with the vehicle or not take care of it, it meant that God was ultimately in control of what happened to that vehicle. All I had to do was to listen to Him on how He wanted me to care for and use it. We ended up having that vehicle way beyond its normal useful life and when it was God's time to get another vehicle, He faithfully provided just what we needed.

In Genesis 14, we see a wonderful example of faithfulness in the life of Abraham. As he returned from his victory in rescuing his nephew Lot, the first thing he did was return his tithe. While Abraham's story is filled with examples of trust in following the Lord, there were other events in his life where he stumbled in his faith.

There were the two times where he lied and told others that Sarah was his sister, and when he took matters into his own hands with Hagar. Those choices of not fully trusting in God had a significant impact on his life and to the world we live in today. Yet even though he made those choices, God continued to provide Abraham with opportunities to choose Him as Lord over *all* his life, which is what God ultimately wants from each of us.

Next came the biggest test of Abraham's life. Would he be willing to sacrifice his own son, the promised seed through which the Messiah would come? Would he trust God, who was calling him to this unthinkable task? Even though he made major mistakes in his life, Abraham had grown so close to the Master that his character had begun to transform. That same man who had failed earlier tests of faith was now willing to sacrifice his most prized possession, his son, trusting fully in the Lord to work out His promised plan.

As I reflect on stories like these and my own personal experience, I praise God for His faithfulness to me. May we take every opportunity to consistently be

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

OCTOBER 4

Kalamazoo Korean
Pastor JinWon Lee

Kalamazoo
Pastor Moise Ratsara

Kalamazoo ACS Center

Kalamazoo Jr Academy

OCTOBER 11

Centreville/Kalamazoo
Countryside

Pastor Mike Szykowski

Covert/Hartford/Pullman
Pastor William Richardson

Hartford Food Pantry

Covert ACS

OCTOBER 18

Allegan/Gobles
Pastor Alex Rybachek

Allegan Food Pantry

Gobles Jr Academy

Gobles Pinedale ACS Center

OCTOBER 25

Otsego/Paw Paw
Pastor Sean Reed

Otsego ACS Center

Paw Paw Food Pantry



faithful in returning to Him what is His and be the best stewards in what He has entrusted to us. By doing so, we are recognizing Him as Lord of all and allowing Him to do the work He so desperately wants to do in shaping our characters after His. "As we heed these calls, by labor and by acts of benevolence, we are assimilated to the image of Him who for our sakes became poor" (*Christian Service*, p. 13).





Manistique Folk Festival

By Amy Austin,
Member, Manistique Church

As a church, we mingled and chatted with our community. We shared literature, friendship, smiles, and Jesus.

The morning of July 10 dawned bright and beautiful on the shores of Lake Michigan in the town of Manistique. The 32nd Annual Folk Festival, a summer highlight in the community, was underway and drew locals and visitors alike to celebrate. Throughout the weekend, hundreds of people enjoyed musical performances, arts and crafts, food, celebrating heroes of the community, and a variety of booths that offered many different products and services.

We set up our church Folk Fest booth the evening before and had giveaways ready to share with the community. Appropriate to the surrounding Great Lakes as well as to the season of Covid-19 we have experienced, the theme of our booth was “Will Your Anchor Hold in the Storms of Life?” We decorated the booth with a nautical theme and played background music and sound effects to fit the tone we wanted to portray. We were ready to mingle and to share hope with our community!

We had a variety of offerings for anyone who stopped by our booth. Many people enjoyed taking the spiritual quiz that focused on making God the anchor of our lives. Going through the quiz with passersby started conversations about the Bible and God. It caused people to think, and a Biblical answer was available for every true/false question.

People appreciated the water we distributed. Each of the 480 bottles of water was wrapped with an encouraging message, meeting guests’ physical as well as spiritual needs. We also provided anchor themed bags for guests to carry things in. We stuffed the bags with *Hope for a Troubled World* by Mark Finley, a Strong Tower Radio bookmark, and a Bible Study Offer card.

Many kids enjoyed stopping by our “Anchor” booth. We handed out nautical balloons as well as notepads with anchors on them. In order to provide something spiritual for the kids, we put together 300 anchor



Each of us needs to plant seeds in our community and in the world around us.

GLOW tract packs. In each 3x5 re-closeable bag, the kids found a lifesaver with a nautical sticker attached to it, *The Boat Rescue* GLOW tract for kids, and a card that reminded them that Jesus is their anchor in the storms of life (available for download at findingjoy4eternity.com). This is the message we hope everyone walked away from our booth with. This is the message our communities need right now.

It was a very successful day. As a church, we mingled and chatted with our community. We shared literature,

friendship, smiles, and Jesus. People who had stopped by the Seventh-day Adventist booth at a previous Folk Fest came by to see what we had available this year. Some people even mentioned that they would like to visit our church sometime. People appreciated the gifts we gave them. Many found courage in the message of hope we displayed.

I recently read a quote by Robert Louis Stevenson that says, “Don’t judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant.” Each of us needs to plant seeds in our community and in the world

around us. When we do this, we can be confident of this verse: *“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord”* (1 Corinthians 15:58). Let’s plant seeds!



“For many years, the gentleman had passed by the church and wanted to come back but didn’t know if he would be accepted.”

Williamston Church Holds Community Vegetarian BBQ Event

On Sunday, August 29, the Disaster Response Mobile Kitchen set up in the parking lot of the Williamston church to serve the community vegetarian hot dogs and burgers! It was such a blessing

to meet and serve the community delicious food. In addition to a great meal, many guests took free books on health and spirituality, while others asked for Bible study materials.

One gentleman had been baptized into the Adventist church as a child. One day his father decided they wouldn’t attend church anymore. For many years, the gentleman had passed by the church and wanted to come back but didn’t know if he would be accepted.

He took a chance and came to the free BBQ event. He discovered that the members were kind and friendly and felt warmly welcomed.

There are many ways to serve and witness to your community. Thank you, Williamston Church, for showing us another great way!

By Chelli Ringstaff,
ACS Director

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(Tithing and Spiritual Growth: The Connection)

Through your faithful support, God has sustained and grown STR from one to 14 radio signals, one TV signal, and internet streaming with applications on multiple platforms. God continues to accomplish great things! As we review the last six months, we see how our heavenly Father has opened doors of growth for STR, but more growth potential beckons in both the upper and lower peninsulas of Michigan.

We urgently need your continued and greater support to position STR for this growth and invite you to prayerfully consider how God would have you respond. Your present and future giving as monthly or quarterly partners will help strengthen STR and sustain this vital ministry that continues to bear fruit to God's glory.

You can leverage the reach of STR by introducing and inviting people to listen. Starting a conversation with a stranger or a friend and leading with a question often proves most effective. Ask them, "What is your favorite radio station?" Follow-up with a question according to their answer. If they indicate a Christian station say, "I like Strong Tower Radio and you might like it, too." If they indicate a secular station, your next leading question might be, "Have you ever listened to Christian radio?" or "What would draw you to listen to a Christian radio station?" At the appropriate time, tell them why you like STR. Sharing a STR promotional card or bookmark effectively accompanies these conversations and launching the STR app on your smartphone provides a listening sample to further exemplify STR's quality programs.

Less direct ways to promote the ministry include obtaining a STR yard sign, decal, or bumper sticker to display. This can be obtained directly from STR or your local church, and if the local church doesn't stock them, ask "why not?" and help purchase some.

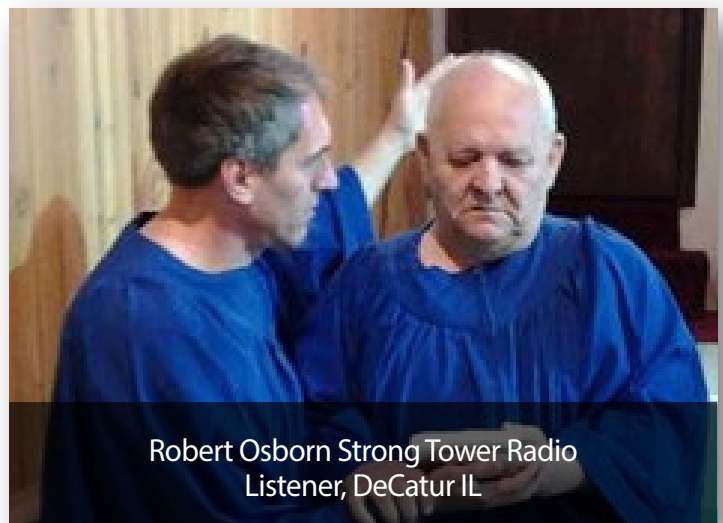
Your local congregation may also become an active promoter of STR through displaying signs or



Stacy's Baptism Northwood Seventh-day Adventist Church



Pastor Jed Jensen Strong Tower Radio Listeners Bob and Renee



Robert Osborn Strong Tower Radio Listener, DeCatur IL

messages on its church marque, through curbside yard signs, and inserting the emailed STR ministry bulletin announcements into weekly church bulletins. Personal ministry leaders who share these announcements on Sabbath mornings also help to alert both members and visitors.

Our ministry greatly values its steadfast relationship with the Michigan Conference at every level and the many opportunities to work together. While STR receives no direct ongoing financial support from the Michigan Conference, we recognize their great contribution to

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(Photographing the Milky Way at Camp)

What a lot of work for one spectacular photo! This reminds me that God puts in a lot of work composing our life experiences so that we can become a masterpiece. But there is another lesson to be learned from this photograph. David shared that it was pitch black outside with no moon. After his eyes adjusted to the darkness, he could just faintly see the Milky Way. He knew approximately where the Milky Way was from an astrophotography app, but he could not see the full image until the photo was taken and it showed up on the LCD screen. This photo relied on the great sensitivity of modern cameras to get the picture under those conditions. It was like “looking through a glass darkly.” We can’t really see how God works unless we step out in faith.

sharing the three angels’ messages in Michigan.

Your support of this ministry through prayers and finances will secure the broadcasts on your local station and grow STR’s signal reach with the everlasting gospel to new territories and listeners. As the Holy Spirit impresses, you may support securely online at STR.fm, by calling 231.468.2087, or via U.S. mail to Strong Tower Radio, P.O. Box 567, Cadillac, MI 49601.

Tom Mejeur,
Strong Tower Radio



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PASTORAL TRANSITIONS



Aron Crews is the new pastor of the Buchanan and Chikaming churches. He previously served as an assistant pastor at the above-mentioned churches and is working to complete his degree at the seminary.



Sean Reed is the new pastor of the Paw Paw and Otsego churches. He served as pastor of the Holland church prior to his new assignment.



Richard Bullock is the new pastor of the Escanaba and Riverside churches. He previously pastored the Unionville, Bad Axe, and Port Sanilac churches.

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MONTHLY CALENDAR

Due to COVID-19, events on the schedule are subject to change.

OCTOBER

- 1-3 TLT Squared – North Woods
- 1-3 PCM Retreat – Camp Sagola
- 3-6 LIFT – Camp Au Sable
- 8-10 Mother-Daughter Retreat
- 8-10 Marriage Retreat – Camp Sagola
- 15-17 Lay Advisory Retreat – Camp Au Sable
- 22-24 ACS Retreat – Camp Au Sable
- 29-31 Sabbath School Workshop – Camp Au Sable

NOVEMBER

- 5-7 Public Hi-C Retreat
- 12-14 Crystal Mountain Marriage Retreat
- 12-14 Personal Ministries – Camp Au Sable
- 14-16 Prayer & Fasting
- 24-25 Office Closed – Thanksgiving
- 30-Dec 2 New in Ministry

DECEMBER

- 3-5 Office Staff Retreat
- 12 Lay Advisory Coordinating Committee
- 24-27 Office Closed – Christmas
- 29-Jan 1 GYC – Houston, TX

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NATURE NUGGET

Photographing the Milky Way at Camp

By Dr. Gordon Atkins,
Camp Au Sable Naturalist

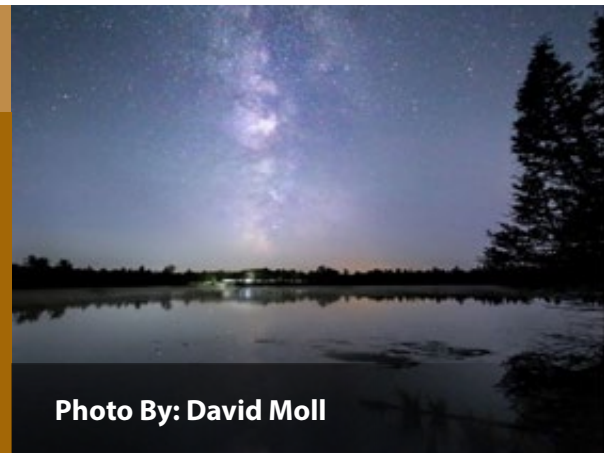


Photo By: David Moll

How do you get such an amazing photo of the Milky Way galaxy? This image was taken a little after midnight on September 14 by David Moll. He turned out most of the Camp AuSable main lodge area lights, then hiked to the north side of the lake, just beyond the 3/4-mile marker on the boardwalk going clockwise. He had a nice view of the main lodge area, some trees and water foreground. He picked a location that placed the Milky Way directly over the main lodge and set up his tripod.

That night was one of those special photography nights: no moon (after about 11:30 PM), clear skies, no wind

for good reflections on the lake, and the time of the year when the galactic center of the Milky Way is visible. The photo was taken with a 15-second exposure. That is about the longest exposure that doesn't give star trails (due to the earth's rotation). He used a 10 mm lens, and cranked the ISO up to 6400 to get good star exposures. He took a second exposure at ISO 800 so the main lodge lights were not blown out, then overlaid the second less-exposed main lodge area of the second photo onto the original photo using Photoshop. This kept the main lodge area from getting totally blown out with light which would have hidden most of the stars.

(continued on page 7)