



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

Michigan Memo

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Evangelism: Michigan Universities

— *Sikhu Daco*

Assistant Director for Campus Ministries

When was the last time you attended a tent meeting hosted on a secular university campus? Yet there it was – right at the center of Michigan State University’s campus!

“Have you heard of CRAVE?” Before handing out a flyer, or conducting a survey, that was the question asked. In the words of C.S. Lewis, “If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world.” The series of meetings demonstrated how Jesus is the ultimate answer to our deepest cravings.

Though no tent was pitched at the University of Michigan, the series took place concurrent with Michigan State University



Sebastien Braxton

from September 12-16. After surveying the University of Michigan campus, the top five distinct cravings were: the need for meaning, love and relationships, life without fear,

success, and happiness. Sebastien Braxton presented a 20-minute TED-talk style presentation, followed by a pizza break, and concluded with a 20-minute faith-focused approach at the University of Michigan. At Michigan State University, free food, donated by local businesses, preceded a musical concert followed by a gospel presentation by Pastor Steven Conway.



Steven Conway

Hundreds of massages were given in preparation for the series on both campuses. Over 40 students gathered every night at each site, and over 90 students combined, signed up to join small group Bible studies called CRAVE Groups.



Praise God for all that He’s doing on campuses throughout the state of Michigan, and please continue to pray that souls will be won to His kingdom this year!



President's Perceptive Unity, Diversity, and Oneness

— Jay Gallimore
Conference President

One of the last prayers of Jesus before the Cross was that His disciples would be one in Him, even as He and the Father were one (John 17:21).

Yet, the New Testament predicted a great apostasy within Christianity. Revelation shows the great red dragon pursuing the woman, the symbol of the remnant church, who keeps the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. In contrast, the vision reveals another woman called Babylon who is the mother of harlots. This, as we understand, is false Christianity with its many divisions.

So we can reasonably conclude that Jesus and the disciples never believed that the outcome of His ministry would be a united Christianity at large. But He did believe in a united remnant.

This remnant is made up of many different nations and cultures. So it would be natural for broad discussion to take place regarding “unity in diversity” amongst Seventh-day Adventists. But what do we mean by this phrase? How does our definition differ from Babylon’s notion of “unity in diversity”?

Jesus understood oneness on the basis of two things. First, Jesus petitioned the Father to sanctify the disciples through the word of truth. In other words the Spirit of Truth would employ Scripture to mold the church into oneness with Christ and one other.

The second was for Christ to be one with His disciples, just as He was one with the Father. He prayed; “I in them [disciples], and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one” (John 17: 23).

We should note how the mother of harlots, who sleeps with the kings of the earth, unites her daughters. Even though they are all related to each other through the mother, they all have different fathers. While she raised them to hold on to certain

core practices, the rest of their beliefs are as diverse as their spiritual fathers. In contrast, the faithful woman keeps the commandments of God and has the faith of just One—Jesus.

When “unity in diversity” is applied to the disciples of Jesus, it cannot mean diversity regarding the teachings of the Word of God. Here the church must stand united. Take away the unity of doctrine, and you really have no mission. Diversity cannot become an excuse to negate the commandments of God.

Yet, there may be diversity on how the principle is applied. For example, let us take the New Testament command to dress modestly. The clothing in India, Africa, and North America may be very different. Certainly all cultures will have immodest

choices. But the Bible doesn’t demand that all clothing be alike, only that it be modest. So Christians may wear any cultural clothing they like as long as it is modest. Such diversity does not overthrow the principle of modesty, but supports it.

However, to use the expression “unity in diversity” as a means to embrace cultural positions, which are contrary to Scripture, is to promote a delusion called pluralism.

Pluralism, within the church

context, assumes that unity can be maintained by giving credibility and support to different competing beliefs and practices. Babylon has already embraced this, but it is not the oneness for which Jesus prayed.

Today the Seventh-day Adventist Church is faced with this temptation. Will we as a church choose faithfulness to Scripture or concede to cultural norms? The pressure to conform to cultural standards burdens the church in many ways. At the end of the day, should we endorse pluralism for the sake of unity?

The church faced a major issue at its last General Conference (GC) session. After a careful and thoughtful process and with representatives from all over the world, it essentially voted not to allow the ordination of women. The motion asked for a vote

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based on the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy. The vote supported position *one* of the Theology Ordination Study Committee.¹ That position makes it clear that the issue is not about the value or equality of men and women, but about faithfulness to the divine order given in Scripture. Some, of course, disagreed with the vote. That is to be expected. But for the sake of unity in the church, there comes a time for institutions, entities, and their leadership to surrender their opinions and practices.

Sadly, there are some unions and entities that are defying the vote of the GC Session by refusing to bring their practice into harmony with the vote of the world church on this matter. So now the issue is no longer about ordination, but rather the unity of the church.

Ordination to the office of a minister is no small matter to the world church. It is one of the essentials to its organization. It is the responsibility of the GC to define the qualifications for that office on the basis of Scripture. And it is the responsibility of the unions to see that those qualifications have been met.

If every union or conference acted unilaterally and assumed the same authority of the GC in session, unity would be impossible. If a local church, conference, or union decided to act contrary to the church manual or the voted actions of the GC, then it would threaten the unity of the body.

The Annual Council with nearly 315 delegates, is made up of GC officers, union presidents, administrators from our educational institutions, and laity from around the world. It functions as the executive committee for the world church between sessions. It should come as no surprise that they voted on Tuesday, October 11, 2016 to start the process of addressing the issues of noncompliance. The document is designed to cover any noncompliance issue, not just ordination.

Fundamental to religious liberty is the “right of association.” This simply means that everyone has the right to start and maintain their own church with its unique doctrine and teachings. Religious liberty means the individual can voluntarily choose to belong or not to belong. They also have the right to leave and form their own group. But they do not have the right to force their pluralistic ideas on the body unless the group agrees to it.

The action recently voted means that the church leadership, empowered by the Annual Council, has an open door to start

addressing the issue of noncompliance. It will be a patient, redemptive, and longsuffering process. One can only hope and pray that those supporting this opposition will have a change of heart. If not corrected, there are consequences of insubordination to the worldwide body.

The world church is faced with two choices: (1) allow noncompliance to go on, and thereby dismantle the unity and practice of the church; or (2) stand firm on the vote of the GC Session and preserve the integrity and oneness of the church.

Redemptive discipline can be painful and filled with tears! Yet, any organization that cannot or refuses to discipline itself is doomed to failure.

No one wants dissension or animosity. While people’s different convictions in the church may be patiently endured, they cannot be allowed to undermine or disrupt the faith, practice, and teachings of the church. The utilization of shrewdness or political maneuvering to undermine

the collective decision of the church body is unchristian and cannot be accepted. Church discipline, rightly done, is not persecution; but rather, it embodies the pursuit of principled love, not sentimentalism.

Pluralism is the death knell to the theology and mission of the church. During the temptations in the wilderness, Jesus was offered the kingdoms of this world without the pain and suffering of the cross. He refused.

Those proposing a pluralistic path to oneness, instead of disciplinary action, are advancing a delusion. This will not result in the accomplishment of the church’s mission, nor preserve its integrity as the remnant church, or deliver us to our ultimate hope of the Second Coming.

Only the oneness of Jesus can overthrow the seductive temptation of pluralism. Unlike Babylon the path of the faithful remnant church will be painful and bloodstained.

But the good news is that the path of Christ’s oneness and unity ends in glory!

¹ <http://www.adventistreview.org/church-news/theology-of-ordination-position-no.-1>. This was the position supported by the vote of the world church.

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Men of Faith

— Joel Nephew
Men's Ministries Director

On Sabbath, September 24, about 500 men from our wonderful state of Michigan came together for the annual Michigan Men of Faith Convocation at

Great Lakes Adventist Academy. It was a high Sabbath because we were able to partake in a spiritual feast consisting of great music, inspirational teaching, and wonderful fellowship.



and additional messages on allowing the Holy Spirit to provide self-control, and to see God's appointments in our disappointments.

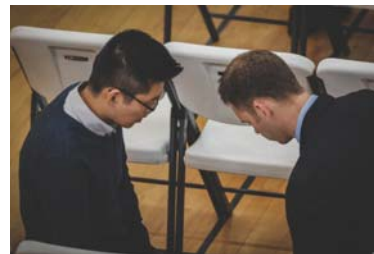
The attendees received additional blessings through the breakout seminars. The presenters included Elders Jay Gallimore, Jim Micheff, Leroy Bruch, and Don Mackintosh. The Lansing Chorale also filled the auditorium with Christ-centered music that stirred our hearts in praise.



Lord willing, our next Michigan Men of Faith will be held on Sabbath, April 29, 2017 at Great Lakes Adventists Academy. We also plan to have a campout in the Northwoods at Camp Au Sable from August 17-20.



Our theme for this year was, "The Whole Man," and throughout the day we learned how Jesus completes us and makes us whole. Elder Don Mackintosh was our keynote speaker, and he encouraged us to take the lead in our homes, churches, and communities. He also preached a powerful sermon on forgiveness,



If you have any questions about Men's Ministries please contact Joel Nephew at 517-316-1524 or Gene Hall at 517-316-1521.

See you next year!

Prayer Focus

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

October 31-November 4

Belgreen, Ionia, Portland
Ionia Elementary - Tamie Hasty, Principal/Teacher
Community Service - Marie Gary

November 7-11

Bunker Hill, Jackson
Pastor Moise Ratsara
Literature Evangelist - Ron Newcomb
Community Service Center - Janet Allen

November 14-18

Lapeer, Orion-Oxford, Otter Lake
Pastor Victor Vaughn
Community Service Center - Joy Breeding

November 21-25 - No Focus due to Thanksgiving

November 28-December 2

New Haven, Port Huron
Pastor Tony Messer

December 4-9

Troy, Troy Korean
Pastors Travis Smith, DeMille O'Connor
Troy Adventist Academy - Carli Sullivan, Principal/
Teacher, Rosemary Avila, Sylvia Suk

December 12-16

Ann Arbor Spanish, Adrian Spanish
Ann Arbor Elementary - Doreen King, Principal/
Teacher
Community Service - Edna Rose

December 19-23

Grand Rapids Korean
Pastor Young Deug Kim

December 26-30

Detroit Korean, Farmington
Pastor Beett Kwon

LIFT 2016

— Diane Barlow
Superintendent of Schools

LIIFT (Lifestyle Improvement for Teens) is a three-day, interactive retreat designed to inspire young people to make positive choices that will benefit their lives, and the lives of others—spiritually, socially and physically. On Sunday, October 2, seventh and eighth grade students (all 186 of them) from 30 Adventist schools across Michigan, along with 53 chaperones, gathered together for the annual LIFT retreat held at Camp Au Sable through Wednesday, October 5.



presented by 15 volunteers that included pastors, teachers, and other professionals. Prior to arriving at camp the students

preselected their first four preferences for each of the three different breakout categories: social, spiritual, and physical. New breakouts this year were Car Care 101 and Creating the Perfect Image.

Furthermore, each afternoon students enjoyed recreation where they could choose from several activities including horseback riding, go-carting, canoeing, walking the

boardwalk around the lake, gaga ball, basketball, shopping at the camp store, or just hanging out with friends. Following supper there was more recreation at the athletic area led by Mrs. Mills from Andrews Academy, who introduced many new fun games.

After a water break, students were ready to settle in for the evening meeting with DeWitt where they were fed spiritually before retiring for the night.



Pastor Curt DeWitt

The theme for this year's retreat was "Jesus Is the Question," presented by Pastor Curt DeWitt. The theme was selected from Mark 8:27, "Who do men say that I am?" DeWitt not only inspired the students, but challenged each of us through his worship talks and personal testimony. At the conclusion of Tuesday's evening meeting, Pastor DeWitt distributed commitment cards. We praise God for the 61 students who indicated

interest in baptism or rebaptism.

In addition to the six worships with DeWitt, the students attended three breakout sessions—Monday and Tuesday—

The consensus of the LIFT attendees was that they had a great time and were blessed spiritually, socially, and physically! The seventh graders are looking forward to LIFT 2017.

Children's Ministries Workshop



During the colorful month of October, a group of 50 gathered at Camp Au Sable for the yearly Children's Ministries Workshop. Linda Gallimore had everyone focusing on training our young to memorize Scripture and prayer promises. Pastor Andy Im shared the divine hour

message, and on Sabbath afternoon all the attendees gathered together in groups to engage in Scripture-based activities they could take back to their churches. Ministry to our young children is an investment that cannot be minimized or forgotten. We certainly appreciate Linda Gallimore for her ministry to our children!



Generation. Youth. Christ.

— *Moise Ratsara*
GYC President

Generation. Youth. Christ. (GYC) is a movement of young people who want to experience Bible-based revival where every attendee is a missionary. Put simply, we want to finish the work in this generation. This goal requires a total surrender to Christ and His Word.

In the book *Prince of Pulpit Orators*, Joseph Wakeley tells the story of George Whitfield, the 18th century evangelist who made it his custom to make an appeal for salvation with the families he resided with during his travels. Once, he stayed in the house of a very wealthy family. The family was so hospitable and kind, but he saw no evidence of vital godliness among them—it seemed they had not fully accepted Christ. Yet Whitfield's lips were sealed to all but common genial courtesies, and he omitted his ordinary custom of speaking to them regarding their salvation.

But when he went upstairs to bed the Spirit of the Lord said to him, "O, man of God, how shalt thou be clear of their blood if thou dost not warn them?" His own feelings would have led him to be silent; and the tempter suggested, "They are so amiable and good; how can you speak to them about sin? Besides, you have preached the gospel today in their hearing; surely that is enough."

There was a struggle in his mind, which he would fain have decided by continuing silent, especially because so much kindness had been received. But God would not let him sleep that night. The voice of conscience said, "This very kindness should appeal to your gratitude not to be silent. It is your duty to speak—to warn them." Early in the morning, before going away, Whitfield took a piece of diamond he found in his room, and wrote on the pane in the window these words: "One thing thou lackest." Without saying a word of what he had done, he thanked his hosts for their hospitality and departed.

As the husband and wife entered the room to tidy up, the sun shone through the window and illuminated those four words. The woman of the house knew that they were words from the Bible, yet did not know where they were found or their meaning. She was angry at first. Speaking to her husband she said, "Whitfield has written on our window. 'One thing thou lackest.' What do we lack? We don't lack anything. If we did we would buy it. What does he mean?"

Later that night the couple pored over the scriptures and after considerable time found the four words in Mark 10:21. "Looking at him, Jesus felt a love for him and said to him, 'One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.'"

Follow Me. The couple wept and wept, and finally gave their hearts to Christ. Four words impressed upon the heart of a man who wanted to do God's will, changed the life of another family forever.

One Thing thou lackest. Just like the Thompsons, there is something that we lack today. How do I know that? Because we are still here as a people, more than a hundred years after the Great Disappointment. We are still writing manual after manual, planning program after program, when what we really need are mission-driven individuals with a passion for lost souls, just like George Whitfield.

I believe we could have finished the work long ago. And I believe, with all of my soul, that we can finish the work in this generation! But there is one thing we lack—an unquenchable

desire to see Jesus come in our generation; a passion to give everything for the One that gave it all for us; and in the words of Jesus at the cross, a "thirst" for souls. After all, Christ did not give us the Great Option but the Great Commission. It is our duty to take this challenge to heart.

At this year's GYC, we will be exploring an important part of the gospel: the judgment

as it relates to the Three Angels' Message and the book of Ecclesiastes. Ecclesiastes 12:13 reads, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." We must all face God, and at this convention we want to learn how to face God with humble confidence. We want to ask the questions that really matter: Why does God judge? Is the judgment something to be feared or can we face it with confidence? Who stands in our behalf? What does Christ's righteousness mean to me? And we want to answer those questions from the Word of God.

I want to personally invite you to come and join us as we study the Bible, pray, and worship together. Our prayer is that we will all be "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15); and that we "may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:17).



Moise Ratsara

Transitions in Mission



Deanna Hutchins is the new Literature Ministries Secretary. She holds a BA in Business from Davenport University and worked at the Eyde Company as a bookkeeper. She and her husband, Brian, have two daughters, Natalie and Sydney. Deanna is excited to now serve our adult and student literature evangelists, as well as the *GLOW* ministry!

David Young serves as the office assistant with the Literature Ministries Department of the Michigan Conference. He previously served in the Egypt/Sudan field as the Literature Ministries Coordinator. He has been involved with literature evangelism for 10 years and is married to Melissa.



- Chris Ames pastors the Central Lake and Gaylord churches. He formerly served the Fenton and South Flint churches.
- Michael Campos will be moving to the Illinois Conference to serve as their new youth director. He pastored the Grand Rapids Maranatha Spanish church. He will be missed.
- Ronald Costa is the pastor of the Adrian and Ann Arbor Spanish churches. Formerly, he pastored the Berrien Springs Spanish church.
- Aron Crews is the Lansing church assistant pastor. Just prior, he served the Houghton, L'Anse, and Marquette churches.
- Nathaniel Gibbs is currently studying at Andrews Theological Seminary after pastoring the Belleville and Adrian churches.
- Taylor Hinkle is the chaplain and Bible teacher for Great Lakes Adventist Academy. Just prior, he served as pastor of the Ithaca and Frost churches.
- Monte Landis is the pastor of the Chesaning, Owosso, St. Johns churches. He previously served the Belgreen, Ionia, and Portland churches.
- Annette Metz recently transitioned from the Literature Ministries Department to work for the Human Resources Department. She holds a BA in General Studies. Annette is married to Kamil Metz, the Literature Ministries Director. They have two children, Rebekah and Micah.
- Jason Sliger pastored the Carp Lake, Cheboygan, and Petoskey churches. He is now serving the Fremont and Muskegon churches.
- Jonathan Walter is the pastor of the Grand Haven and Wright churches. Just prior he served as the assistant pastor of the Lansing church.
- EJ Wolf recently moved from the Boyne City, Central Lake, and Gaylord churches to pastor the Frost and Ithaca churches.

50 Years of Worship

— *Conrad Tarnacki*

Warren Church Communications

On August 27, 2016, the Warren Church celebrated 50 Years of worship at their present location. The day was filled with homecomings, songs and celebration. Pastor Curt DeWitt hosted the return of previous pastors including Paul Larson, David Glenn, Robert Lawson and Leon Brown. Special guests Elders Leroy Bruch and Royce Snyman were also on hand to bring well wishes from the Michigan Conference.



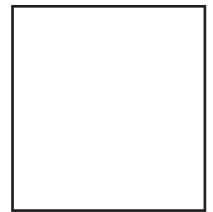
The service was packed with great sermons and wonderful music. A presentation in memory of past members awaiting the Lord's return was shown and brought tears to many eyes. Everyone was given a 12 page commemorative

bulletin, which included a brief history of the development of the Seventh-day Adventist community in the Detroit area along with details of the formation of the Warren Church. Pictures of the construction of the building were also included.

The service was followed by a delicious fellowship luncheon with over 200 people in attendance. Bev Shoemaker, a long time member of Warren, organized the entire event with the support of many members.



The afternoon program was a walk down memory lane. Movies of past events going back to the church construction brought laughter and nostalgia to the congregation. It was a wonderful day with a theme of all looking forward to being together again when the Lord returns.



November

- 1-3 New in Ministry
- 4-6 HI-C Bible Camp -
Camp Au Sable
- 11-13 Personal Ministries Weekend -
Camp Au Sable
- 11-13 Crystal Mountain Marriage
Retreat
- 17 K-12 Board of Education -
Andrews Academy
- 20-27 GLAA Home Leave
- 23-27 Thanksgiving Holiday

December

- 4 Lay Advisory Committee -
Conference Room
- 4 Women's Ministries Board -
White House Conf. Room
- 6 MI Conference Executive
Committee - Conf. Room
- 14-Jan 2 GLAA Home Leave
- 23-26 Office Closed for Christmas
- 28-31 GYC - Houston
- 30-Jan 2 Office Closed New Year's

January

- 8-11 NAD Ministries Convention
- 12-17 LUC President's Retreat
- 13-15 Teen Snow Outing - Camp
Au Sable
- 16 Office Closed - Martin Luther
King Day
- 17 MI Conference Executive
Committee - Conf. Room
- 18 Camp Meeting Directors
- 22-25 Ministerial Retreat - Camp
Au Sable
- 25-29 GLAA Home Leave
- 27-29 Pathfinder Area Coordinators
Retreat - Camp Au Sable

Journey Interrupted

— Jerry Saraun
Berrien Springs Area

Journey Interrupted, an Adventist documentary was premiered at the Village Seventh-day Adventist Church in Berrien Springs. The film attracted people from Michigan, Illinois, and Indiana drawing more than 300 people.

The film is based on the testimonies of four individuals: Danielle Harrison, Wayne Blakely, Michael Carducci, and Pastor Ron Woosely.

The film documents their past experience and struggle with homosexuality and how the love and power of Jesus can transform lives.

The four serve in a ministry called *Coming Out Ministries*, that takes them all over the world where they have the privilege of sharing their testimonies to those struggling with pornography, homosexuality, and sexual addictions.

While watching the film I was convicted. What they were struggling with is difficult to overcome, but they were persistent in their spiritual walk. I think all the viewers were inspired in witnessing God's power at

work in overcoming various sexual sins.

After the film, people were given an opportunity to ask questions; and the audience asked some really tough ones. I believe the people who watched the film came away with the conclusion that no matter how dark your sin is, God has the power to redeem any lost soul.

God offers us His amazing love, grace, and patience that initiates a response. We begin a healing process that would otherwise be impossible. Praise God He doesn't give up on us. Praise God for His agape love, because it's only genuine love that can generate faithfulness. And I praise God that "All things are possible through Christ" (Philippians 4:13).



If you desire more information regarding *Coming Out Ministries*, check out their webpage at: comingoutministries.org. You can also follow them on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/comingoutministries>.