



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

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An Awful Lot

—Joy Hyde

Communications Secretary for the Detroit Metropolitan Church

Joanna Jankowski was seeking more truth in her life, so she responded when an invitation came to attend a “Final Days” prophecy series. The Detroit Metropolitan Church presented this series conducted at the Metropolitan Junior Academy auditorium piloted by Pastor Jim Howard. Joanna attended almost every one of the presentations bringing her son Joseph (Joey) along with her. After the meetings ended, Pastor Jim led Joanna through a series of weekly Bible studies. Joey went through similar studies with Metro’s Associate Pastor Joe Reeves.



Before her baptism on August 3, 2013, Joanna provided her testimony stating, “I have always had a relationship with God. It wasn’t until I came to the Final Days seminar that I realized our relationship was focused mainly around me, my needs, and my wants. Basically, my worldly ways came first. At one of the meetings, Pastor Jim said, ‘You can’t be of the world and of God.’ You can’t be of the world and of God? What does he mean? I’m in the world and I have God. What is he talking about?”

“Well, God heard that thought because over the next few months God taught me what Pastor Jim [had] meant. My life

went through many changes from my job to the type of food I put on the table at mealtime. My mindset went from what I want to what God wants. Baptism is a commitment of me personally to God. He promises to wash away my sins. I promise to the best of my ability always to have His grace and love in my heart, on my mind, [and] in my words and actions, so I can be a good example of Our Father’s love and commitment to us as His children.”

Joey’s thoughts were as follows: “Before I accepted Christ, I played video games all day every day. I have always believed in and loved God. I just never took the time to learn. One day, my mom came home and said that she was going to a Bible study on the final days. Then she started

taking me to church. At one time, Pastor Jim said, “I want to get you [into] a Bible study with Pastor Joe. After we met, he and I did a Bible study on creation. Ever since I became a Christian, I have been studying my Bible a lot more. Now I do worship every night. Psalm 147:11 says, ‘The Lord delights in those who fear Him, who put their hope in His unfailing love.’ That’s how I want to live my life.”

Masthead Photo by Jason Whitaker



Guest Editorial

Traversing Verses

—Justin Kim
Communications Director

It's what relieves pastors at camp meeting, but also what taps out their last energy reserves. It's what snowballed into the Gold Rush, but also what ended Cinderella's ball. It's when bowlers write an X, sailors hoist a flag, and masons do brickwork. It's pleasant when your thoughts do it, but not when your employees do. Pathfinders can do it once for a fire, while lightning never seems to do it twice in the same place. Veterinarians see it as ovine cutaneous myiasis (or sheep flystrike), but governments see it as a military provocation. Disasters, editors, good impressions, and even Moses all have been known to do it.

Though it is one word, *strike*, it has a multiple definitions. Just like how tofu takes on the flavors that it is marinated in, words take on the meaning that surround it, modify it, and connect it. This marinade is called *context*. Depending on which flavors you add, the word can either end up fried in a Chinese garlic sauce or scrambled inside a Southwestern breakfast burrito. By itself, it is a meaningless, tasteless block of coagulated soy milk. However, when marinated in meaningful context, one word launches into a new trajectory of thought.

For example, the sentence, "I like strikes," is inconsequential without further information. It could mean a first attempt/complete knockdown of the pins at a bowling alley. It could also denote the beauty of lightning flashes throughout a storm front. Or, it could possibly refer to Camp Strike, the end of camp meeting, though grammatically it would be awkward, and no pastor would actually say or think this out loud. The point remains that without context, interpretations can run wild.

All of this is given to explain that there is the danger of reading just one verse. Just as one word without its context is unclear, one verse without understanding the ecosystem, environment, marinade, or specifically, the verse before and verse after, is just as unclear. For instance, many innocently in prayer meeting quote and claim Matthew 18:20, "For where two or three are

gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." But the context implies that the verse is about church discipline and redemptive forgiveness.

Another often misunderstood verse is Jeremiah 33:3 used to claim the blessings of God, "Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not." The context is that God allowed war and national disaster to happen to Israel. Though the conclusion of the story was positive in the end, there is no doubt that many would not desire God to answer their prayers personally in the same way today. Rather this verse shows to what extent God is willing to go in the larger picture, of which the human perspective has sure limitations.

Many contemporary Christians incorrectly quote the first verse to invoke the presence of God and the second to claim material blessings on earth. The single verse is taken out of its original marinade and into a different colloquial context, resulting in a fried piece of soy sauce-flavored tofu inside a cilantro-flavored burrito. Whether one enjoys this fusion of contrasting flavors or attributes as an individualized buffet of interpretations, this misunderstanding violates the original author of the dish by denying his/her creativity, intent, design, purpose, meaning, emotion, and ultimate message.

We do this today consistently, though possibly unintentionally, with the Bible and its author, the Holy Spirit. Rather than understand the verse in its context, we impose a myopic meaning and by doing so, we disacknowledge God's creativity, intent, design, purpose, meaning, emotion, and the ultimate message: the Gospel.

To avoid the danger of one verse, one must understand the verse before and the verse after. Then, these verses need to be understood with respect to their verses before and after. In turn, this expands to chapters being understood in their context, entire letters and books in their context, and ultimately the complete Bible in relation to itself. This is one of the greatest contributions of Adventism: the emphasis of the complete,



consistent, continuous, comprehensive, and cross-cultural authority of the complete canon of Scripture. The Bible becomes a massive, solid, interwoven masterpiece of supernatural origin.

As one studies each verse in its context in relation to other parts of Scripture, patterns emerge which are called *doctrines*. Some imagine doctrines to be old, dusty parchments filled with unintelligible, theological language buried in some vault. Rather, doctrines are a thematic pattern found throughout all of Scripture, acknowledged by all the believers of the world church. Just as music scores have repeating motifs of melody, the visual arts have matching color schemes, and the culinary arts have taste profiles that are delicious to the palate, Scripture also has common premises that sensibly flow throughout all of its inspired books. These doctrines help show the patterns of Scripture. Just as art points to the artist's understanding of the world, the Inspired Word points to a transcendent understanding of the world and its need of the Living Word, Jesus Christ.

Only a composite understanding of individual Bible verses coalesces into these beautiful images, or doctrines, of Christ. In former generations, Christ was removed from these doctrines by the over emphasis of human behavior, human performance, external conduct, uniformity instead of unity, and heartless assent to cold ideas. But now, it has become quite fashionable to downgrade and even mock these doctrines, all in the name of exalting Christ and Him alone, to the point of denying doctrines altogether.

What these mockeries do, no matter how well intentioned they may be, by denying doctrines are denying the very descriptions of Jesus all throughout Scripture. Denying doctrines denies the patterns of Christ in books, chapters, verses, and ultimately the words. Simply said, Christ is denied in Scripture when doctrine is downplayed.

At this point, some will lament the dangers of exalting doctrines above Christ. Truly without Jesus, doctrines are not only empty, intellectual exercises, but dangerous. Unarguably, the Seventh-day Adventist Church *without* Jesus Christ could become one of the most precarious, legalistic religions in the world. But *with* Jesus, its doctrines become the most majestic and glorious description of Jesus Christ Himself ever given. No wonder it is to become the Lord's most powerful and primary means to warn, save, and repossess the world, as described in the Three Angels' messages of Revelation 14!

When calibrated with Jesus at the center, each doctrine elucidates the believer's understanding and relationship with God. Rather than just the doctrine of the Sabbath, Jesus emerges as the Lord of Sabbath, the Creator of everything from nothing, and the Recreator of new hearts. Rather than just the doctrine of the state of the dead, Jesus materializes as the Lord of life, Resurrector of the dead, and Giver of personal hope. Rather than just the doctrine of the sanctuary, Jesus shines as the Sacrificial Remover of sin, High Priest Cleaner of all sin, and humanity's greatest Advocate.

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Today, rather than the Bible, Jesus is now seen in every other source from burned images on tortillas to poor, humble leaders from Argentina. Interpreting the Bible now uses culture foremost rather than the Bible itself. The world is creating composite images of jesuses, outside

the words of the Bible. We are told that eventually the world will use the idolatrous spirituality of Babylon, the impartial legality of Medo-Persia, the secular intellectualizing, philosophy of Greece, the impending militaristic power of Rome, combined with global political organizations and supernatural signs and wonders ultimately to deceive the elect.

More than any other time in earth's history, let us seek Jesus in every individual verse of Inspiration. Rather than snickering at the doctrinal revelations of Jesus, let us use our doctrines as helps to see Jesus in every verse. Instead of drinking from others cisterns, let us juice out of each verse as much Living Water as God inspired it with.

Transitions in Mission



Andrew Britton is the new general manager for Good News Farms. Bringing additional experience in greenhouses and farming, he was previously the chief of police in Clifton, Arizona for 14 years. Married to his wife Janet in 2010, they have three daughters.

Crystal Mountain Marriage Retreat

—Laurie Snyman
Assistant to the Ministerial Director

Each year, about 50 couples descend on the beautiful resort called Crystal Mountain. Located in Thompsonville, it is the place where a yearly marriage retreat is planned, sponsored by the Michigan Conference's Family Life Department. Couples from all over the beautiful state enjoy a weekend of spending time together, enjoying the amenities of an attractive resort suite, listening to inspiring speakers, meeting new friends, and eating delicious food. Gail and Jim Micheff, Family Life Director and Executive Secretary of the Conference, respectively, spend hours planning games, gift bags, music, and programming to make the weekend special and romantic for each couple.

Brenda and Tom Mejeur of Grand Rapids have been attending for several years. "We feel it is critical to take time away for our marriage," says Brenda. "Once we came, we decided to make it a yearly thing and we blocked time on our calendars several years ahead, so we would always come back here." Brenda and Tom feel that even though they have been married for 34 years, there are new things to learn and "the seminars refresh our marriage." All the couples I spoke to, often commented like the Mejeurs, we love "the atmosphere" that the Micheffs create as well as the delicious food.

Landon and Abby Smith are one couple that came when they were only a few months into their marriage. Landon was no longer attending church, but his good friends from the Mt. Pleasant SDA Church encouraged them to come. Abby said, "Our friends told us all these positive things about the marriage retreat. We were looking forward to getting away from our children and spending some time together without interruptions." They weren't sure they wanted to come, but decided it could be helpful. Landon says, "I grew up in the Adventist church, but had drifted away. I felt like there were things in my life that weren't right with God and I didn't feel like I was good enough to be in church."

He continued, "I really liked the concept of doing things to strengthen our relationship before we had problems, like preventative maintenance. The retreat gave us a whole new perspective on marriage. It made us realize how much our relationship not only affects us, but affects the well-being of our children as well. We learned how to be good active listeners, the importance of praying with each other, and for each other. We also learned how men's and women's needs are different and how they can be met."

Another principle Landon and Abby liked was the importance of scheduling date nights once a week, to have time to focus on each other. Says Landon, "All the advice has been a huge blessing in our relationship with each other and our children."

As they recommitted to each other, they also decided they needed to recommit to God. Another couple from the retreat agreed to study the Bible with them. "Spending time with godly people, who really care about you and are fun to be with, was a huge eye opener to us." They were inspired by other couples at the retreat "who were truly happy but selfless, and we knew that was due to God working in their lives." "We weren't spending time in prayer everyday and as a result, there was more tension in the home and we were impatient with our children. Based on the studies we learned about and the statistics we knew, we were setting ourselves up for failure if we didn't start including God in our lives."

The couple left their first retreat with a plan to study the Bible with another couple there. They were baptized.

Landon says, "Nothing compares to the peace that we are filled with now from spending time with Jesus everyday. We were lukewarm with the Lord before, claiming to be Christians, when our lifestyle told otherwise. Ever since committing to Him daily and wanting to change, the Lord has been working so many little miracles in our lives. The biggest miracle is the change He is doing in our character. We are kind and loving to each other and meeting each other's needs, but now, we are becoming less selfish. The Lord has opened opportunities to use our talents and we are getting more involved in our church. We look forward to Sabbath. We are better parents when we ask God to help us. The wisdom He has given us on how to parent our children, having patience to teach them good habits and skills, is truly a miracle within itself. Our home has peace and harmony now. We have never been happier, now that we have Jesus in our family."

Abby says, "Landon's mom and others made it known that they had been praying for us often. We will continue to attend the retreats, year after year."

Landon said, "We appreciate the emphasis on how the weekend is designed for us to spend time together and that there isn't pressure to attend every session. We appreciate the effort that is put into the gift bags for date night and treats at our tables. The seating is very comfortable as well during the sessions. The food is always delicious, maybe a little too good! We enjoy the quietness of the resort and the trails to hike, that's when we have the best conversations. We also love how everyone in charge is so friendly and welcoming. You can tell they are sincere and want you to enjoy your time. This ministry is truly a blessing in many ways. We can tell God is working with those who plan the Marriage Retreats."

Take your yearly calendar and mark off the marriage retreat for next November. It will be a plus for your marriage too!

My Pastor and I

— Daniel Rief

Elder and Personal Ministries Leader of the Cheboygan Church

Almost every summer, we are privileged to have a group of magabook canvassers work in our area. Not only do they get literature into the homes of our neighbors, but they also leave us the names and addresses of people who may be interested in classes or Bible studies. As a result of their work last summer, we had a stack of interests that had been generated in our community. My pastor asked if I would be interested in going with him to follow up on these leads. I agreed, and two of us set out on an adventure to find some Bible studies. It has been a real learning experience for me.

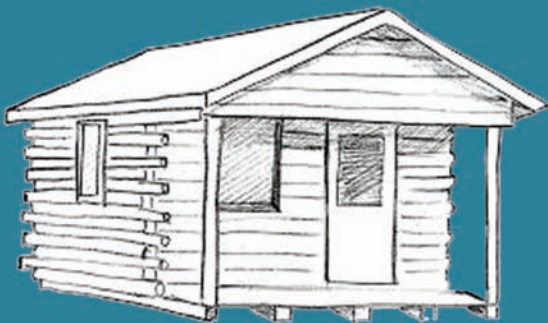
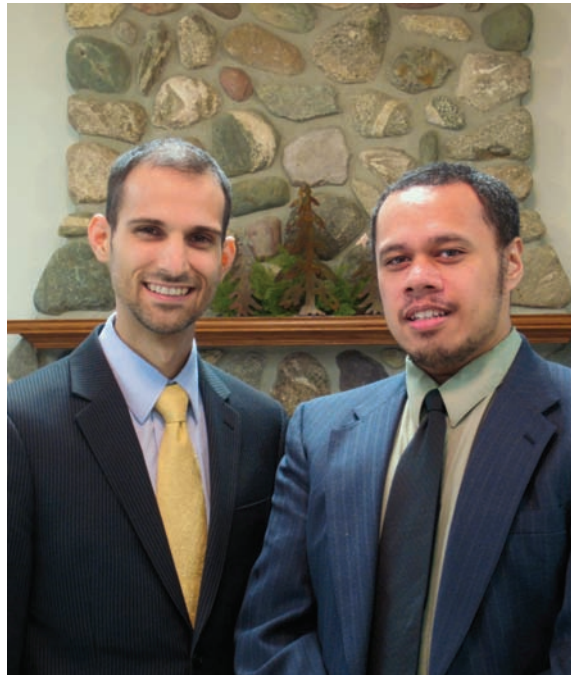
Things were a little slow at first; not many people were home and many we did meet were not interested in having personal Bible studies. Still, we kept knocking on doors and meeting people for several weeks. Even though many of these leads did not result in Bible studies, I still learned a lot just by accompanying my pastor on these visits. I learned how to relate better with people and how by coming close to them, you can win their confidence. Eventually our hard work paid off and God led us to a young mother who was interested in studying the Bible. As we studied the Bible together with her each week, I was able to watch and learn from my pastor how to properly conduct a Bible study.

As a result of that experience, I felt I had the proper tools and knowledge to have my first ever one-on-one Bible study with a non-Adventist friend of mine. There is a good chance that I never would have done that Bible study with my friend had I not received this training from my pastor.

Working alongside my pastor and learning how to reach out to other people has enhanced my spiritual life greatly. My prayer life has deepened; and I now realize more than ever the importance of being connected with the Lord as I study with others, so that He can guide my words and thoughts. Also, my understanding of the Bible has expanded as a result of having to explain it to our Bible study interests. In working with the pastor and getting out into the community, I've learned more about how to do Christ's work than I ever have from any book or sermon. I understand now that connecting with and caring for people is as important to Bible studies as the study itself. There is great value in winning someone's trust.

From one lay person to another, I want to encourage you to get involved. There's nothing quite like getting out into God's field and participating in His work! Seek out your pastor and ask him to take you with him on some of his visits and Bible studies. Let him know that you would like to see how God's work is done. By watching, listening, and asking questions, you will gain a valuable experience in working for souls. I believe it will be well worth your time, even if you need to rearrange your schedule to do it.

One of the pastor's many jobs is to train us to become fellow workers for Christ. Help your pastor do his job by being willing to go out in the field with him, by participating in outreach classes or events held in your church, and by encouraging your fellow members in the same path. Our pastors are one of the best resources we lay people have to help us become soul winners for Christ. Let's use that resource!



Through the Cottage Project campaign, six participants stepped forward to provide the means to build twelve new cottages. A workbee will now be held, pending on weather conditions, on May 13-15 and May 18-20 to construct these buildings in time for camp meeting. Housing and meals will be provided. If you have experience in carpentry or construction, or just have willing, skilled hands, contact Jody Murphy at jmurphy@misa.org or 517-316-1581 to be a part of this special project to expand the blessing of camp meeting.

Using Your Faith

— *Jessie Biddinger*
Camp Au Sable Staff

My turn to guard the blob had just started. It was a pretty typical day at Camp Au Sable's waterfront; the sun was shining and there was a slight breeze. I had noticed an Adventurer camper eyeing the blob tower from the dock before my guard shift started. As I climbed up the ladder, I spotted him on the dock giving it the stare down.

"Hey! You planning on jumping on the blob today?" I yelled down to him. He slowly nodded his head yes, but he didn't move from his spot on the dock. Other kids climbed to the top, sized the tower up, and took their leap of faith onto the long bubble-like blob accompanied by squeals of delight. Kids were jumping off the tower left and right for about 15 solid minutes, and then the traffic slowed down to none at all. With no one to jump off the tower, I looked over the edge to where the boy had been standing. He hadn't really moved.

"Why don't you come and look at it from up here? It looks pretty sweet," I said to him. He looked at it a few more seconds and then said, "OK!" He eagerly made his way over to the ladder before stopping at the bottom. One by one he took his time on those stairs. Every step was calculated. I could tell he might have some trouble getting his thoughts wrapped around actually executing his jump off the tower onto the blob. But there was no one else in line, and I decided he would have my full support! He was going to jump off this tower today!

He reached the top of the ladder and stepped one foot at a time onto the platform. He was white-knuckling the safety rails.

"Come on over here buddy, and we'll take a peek over the edge." Bent over and still gripping the rails with all his might, he crept over to where I was standing, at the edge of the tower overlooking the blob.

"It's not too far down, see?" I lowered my guarding tube by the strap, so I could touch the top of the blob with it, and he was able to see the distance he'd have to cover.

"I really want to jump on the blob, but it's really high." He was hunched over now and his death grip on the rails hadn't wavered. Pretty soon one of the other boys in his cabin came walking up the ladder to the top of the platform. He could tell that his cabin buddy was having a bit of trouble, so he offered to jump off first as a demonstration. Our nervous friend agreed; he

watched his cabin mate leap off the edge and crawl to the end of the blob to await a send-off into the water.

We waited at the edge of the tower for a good 5-10 minutes. He still hadn't moved. I asked him if he wanted to pray about it. And he said, yes! I decided that this could be a good, tangible, spiritual life lesson for him.

"God might want to use the blob as a symbol of your faith in Him. You could maybe pray for extra faith and some courage to help you with the blob," I said to him. He closed his eyes and maneuvered his hands around the rail without letting go, so that he was able to fold his hands to pray. I closed my eyes too, waiting for the prayer to come...but it didn't - at least not out loud. So I peeked one eye open and he was mouthing words that I couldn't hear. I could tell he was pleading with God!

"Amen!" He unfolded his hands, without letting go for a second. *Ok, maybe he'll jump now*, I thought to myself. But still, we waited. I looked at my watch; another 10 minutes.

"Do you feel that courage coming yet?" I asked him. He closed his eyes and let go of the railing with one hand, and he placed it on his forehead. Squinting his eyes closed and feeling his forehead, he finally said, "Umm... no. It's not here yet."

Smiling to myself, I said, "OK, we'll wait a little bit longer for it to come." I could see the struggle on his face as he regripped his hands around the railing. We waited there about another five minutes.

"I think God wants me to use my faith in Him," he said after a while. "I think you're absolutely right," I said. He took his eyes off

of the blob underneath his feet and looked out to the end of the blob where his cabin mate was still patiently waiting for a send-off.

"I'm going to jump!" he yelled out to his friend. I was so excited for him! That courage must have shown up! He inched a little further, so that his toes were hanging off the edge, and he let go with one hand. His eyes were wide and he was breathing heavy. I could tell this was a big thing to him and I started encouraging him. Pretty soon, his counselor saw what was going on. He got out of the water, where he had been swimming with other



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The Warmth of Love

— Peter Iwankiw

Pastor of the Burlington and Coldwater Churches

If you were to visit the Burlington Seventh-day Adventist Church, you would find a very active young woman by the name of Angela Shedd. Comfortable and quite at home as if she had grown up in this church, you would hardly know she was just baptized last year. Despite coming from a mostly secular home, Angela did have a Seventh-day Adventist aunt who encouraged her to join Pathfinders and other social activities at the Coldwater Seventh-day Adventist Church. However, her mom eventually remarried and without much understanding, she was encouraged to be baptized into a local Baptist Church. After attending there for a short while, Angela felt something was missing.



Pictured are Peggy Willow, Pastor Peter Iwankiw and Angela Shedd.

As soon she was able to drive, she drove herself back to the Coldwater Seventh-day Adventist Church. Angela confesses that even though she was drawn to the Adventist Church, she was in and out for some time. A special cousin played a big part in helping her to attend more regularly. Eventually, this cousin moved to Gaylord, Michigan and Angela was invited to go along. As she attended the Gaylord Seventh-day Adventist Church, she recalls the people making her feel so welcome and allowed her to be involved even though she was not a member. She expressed, “That is where I really fell in love with Jesus.”

For one reason or another, Angela was called back home to Tekonsha, MI. After that warm fellowship in Gaylord, she desired to find a similar church near home. This proved to be a challenge as the enemy was finding all sorts of distractions to

fill her time. Through many trials, Angela found herself with a negative outlook on life and struggled to find happiness. She stated, “Time just got away from me and it had been about seven years since I attended church.”

It was at this point that her cousin once again played a big role in her life. He suggested that she attend the Burlington Seventh-day Adventist Church. Angela and her mother, Peggy, attended that church shortly after. “This was the greatest decision.” She explained, “I lacked God in my life for too long and I was

now ready. This church fit me and reminded me of the one up north - a small country church with a big heart. It just felt right. It was like a second family.”

Angela has been very active at Burlington, even before baptism. When asked about what motivates her to be so willing to serve, she explained that she pushes herself out of her comfort zone and this helps in her spiritual growth tremendously. She then added, “With a loving church family and a loving God, I feel like I can always do something to help, to better our relationship, and to grow closer to Him.”

Angela’s experience is a reminder of the early impact we can have on our young people, whether it’s through Pathfinders or social activities. This story also reveals a model of churches who take strangers in as their own and whose natural and primary language is that of charitable and unconditional love.

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campers in his cabin, and stood on the dock across from the tower. He too started encouraging him! The rest of the campers who were swimming realized what was going on. From all over the waterfront, encouraging words were landing on the blob tower.

I asked him if he wanted to pray again, and he nodded yes. He prayed silently again. After he was finished, he looked at me and said, “I really want to do this! But I’m afraid that I won’t do it... will you help me get off this thing?”

Smiling I nodded. While the waterfront was still shouting words of encouragement, he crouched down so that he was sitting on the edge of the tower. “Please nudge me off on the count of five...”

“Why five and not three?” I asked. He said it was because he would need more time. So he started counting! “One... Two... Three... Four...” and just before he got to “five,” I nudged him off... he landed perfectly! Cheers erupted from all around. He crawled onto his knees and with arms extended, he raised his fists in the air!

“I did it, Jessie! I used my faith!” It was such a beautiful moment that it brought me to tears. He began crying tears of joy, and so did I. I knew that God had used this lesson not only to teach this camper a lesson in using his faith, but to teach me one as well. God can strengthen faith anytime, anywhere, with anything. He is willing and ready to listen to my cries for extra faith and courage. And when a sincere prayer like that is raised to Him, He always comes through.

To the Charlotte Ambassador Pathfinder Club

— Cathy Kallioinen
Member of the Charlotte Church

The ice storm of December 22, 2013 left many families with downed trees, debris, and damage to property. The night of the storm was a sleepless one for me. Every time I was about to fall asleep, I would hear another crash and wondered what destruction awaited us at daylight. All night long, I prayed for angels to guard our home. What greeted us in the morning was a shocking scene, beyond anything I could ever have imagined. The angels had kept our home safe, but downed tree limbs and branches were everywhere. Several trees close to the house, pole barn, outbuildings, and trailer were stripped of branches, but every building and the trailer were untouched.

With my husband's help in three days, we had the driveway and road cleared enough to get through so traffic could pass. The plan was to take the rest of the winter and clear one area at a time. Then the snow, ice, and below freezing weather made that plan impossible. With all of the snow, it covered much of the debris. I relaxed, knowing I couldn't do anything till spring. Then my husband started to have health issues that left him struggling and unable to run the chainsaw. By spring it was evident to me that he might be unable to help me with the clean-up at all. I was doing the best I could with small hand saws, trying to clear debris a little at a time on my own.

I was trying to be strong, a faithful witness to my husband, clinging to the Lord, and asking "what am I going to do." God's promises in His Word brought me much needed comfort, texts like:

"Fear not, for I am with you;
Be not dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you,
Yes, I will help you;
I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."
Isaiah 41:10

"But those who wait on the Lord
Shall renew their strength;
They shall mount up with wings like eagles,
They shall run, and not be weary;
They shall walk and not faint." Isaiah 40:31

"Seek His will in all you do and He will show you which path to take." Proverbs 3:6

"Be still, and know that I am God..." Psalms 46:10



The Kallioinens are pictured here with the Pathfinders holding, but never permitted to use, the chainsaws.

"If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking." James 1:5

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9 The Clear Word says "you don't have to do all this alone. The Lord your God is will be with you every step of the way."

I was drawn closer to my heavenly Father, but still unable to get past feeling alone, anxious, and weighted down. Still trying just to take one day at a time, I was concerned about my husband's health. I showed him a strong faith, but felt overwhelmed.

Then on Wednesday, April 2, I got an email, "The pathfinders would like to help you clean up your yard on Sunday morning. Does that work for you? It would be around 9:30 – 10:45." Our amazing Father answered my "what am I going to do," in a way I never even dreamed or thought possible.



On Sunday, April 2 three trucks came down our half-mile two track gravel road. Seven young people, four adults, and three chain saws made quick work of our property. I cannot believe all that you were able to complete in two and a half hours. You were well-organized, followed the direction of your leaders,

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Boyne City has Sister Church in Bobon

— Danelle Sherwood

Communications Secretary for Boyne City Church

When Boyne City Church member Brad Houle visited his girlfriend in Bobon, Philippines, he discovered an Adventist church in need. The faithful worshippers met each week in a church which was open to the elements. Upon his return to the Boyne City Church, Brad described the needs of the Bobon believers. The Boyne City members decided to adopt the Bobon congregation as their sister church and provide them with a better place of worship. Money was raised to provide the materials for windows, walls, and doors. Brad then made another trip to help the local members install the electricity and all the fixtures.

When Brad brought his fiance Lilibeth to the United States, the Boyne City members assisted in making their wedding day a special one and welcomed Lilibeth into the church family. The ties between the two churches grew even stronger.



For the past two years, children's Sabbath School leader Kathy Brower has spearheaded a project to make sure each child in the Bobon congregation received a Christmas present. This year, shortly after the gifts were mailed, the Haiyan typhoon struck the Philippines. Bobon was right in its path and many prayers were offered to God. The Boyne City members were relieved to learn that everyone in Bobon was safe and the church was undamaged. However, their crops had been totally destroyed and they were in desperate need of water and food. The Houles knew that the mountain village would not be reached quickly by aid agencies. Immediately \$1,800 was raised to send emergency

supplies. The donations from Boyne City were used to buy rice and water. Lilibeth's sister was able to bring the supplies within two miles of the village. The church members then walked the distance singing hymns and praising God for the rice and water. They turned their church into a place of service, sharing their blessings with the entire region. They became known as the "Adventists who share their food and water."



With all of the chaos of the storm, it was supposed that the Christmas presents would never find their way into the mountains. However, another blessing was in store for the children of Bobon where the packages arrived safely, giving each child a special gift.

The members in Bobon have continued to witness to the greater area by establishing the Bobon Pantry. The Boyne City Church has experienced the joy that comes from sharing and giving. Currently, Brad and Lilibeth Houle are raising money to provide a fresh water well for the village. God has truly blessed both the Boyne City and Bobon churches through their continued relationship.

"To show a liberal, self-denying spirit for the success of foreign missions is a sure way to advance home missionary work; for the prosperity of the home work depends largely, under God, upon the reflex influence of the evangelical work done in countries afar off. It is in working to supply the necessities of others that we bring our souls into touch with the Source of all power. The Lord has marked every phase of missionary zeal that has been shown by His people in behalf of foreign fields. He designs that in every home, in every church, and at all the centers of the work, a spirit of liberality shall be shown in sending help to foreign fields, where the workers are struggling against great odds to give the light to those who sit in darkness. That which is given to start the work in one field will result in strengthening the work in other places." - Gospel Workers p.465-466, italics added

(Continued from page 8)

worked well together, and still managed to have fun. Wood that could be burned in the wood stove was stacked; the rest was loaded into trailers, truck-hauled to the field, and emptied.

You need to understand what a witness you were that day. My husband saw Christ's "Ambassadors" in action, listening to the prayers before starting and after the work was complete. The hard work, respect for leadership and each other, and

safety awareness did not go unnoticed. What a special blessing you were to my husband and I when you came to our home that beautiful sunny Sunday! You were the hands and feet of God to us at a time when we desperately needed help.

Remember, both my husband and I are looking forward to when the Charlotte Ambassadors Pathfinder Club can return to our home in the fall for a bonfire and some fun.

Reaching the Multitude

— Oscar Montes

Pastor of the Riverdale and Frost Churches

For who has despised the day of small things? For these seven rejoice to see the plum line in the hand of Zerubbabel. They are the eyes of the Lord, which scan to and fro throughout the Earth.” Zech. 4:10, NKJV

God is doing amazing things through the small agents of His grace in the Riverdale and Frost Churches. In past years, God has poured out His grace and His blessings upon the ministries of these churches. Together, these two churches have distributed 60,000 pounds of food with a retail value of \$132,000 reaching eight towns in the surrounding community and ministering to thousands of people. Over an average year, Frost serves 245 families of which 112 families are served monthly.



The most amazing aspect about the Food Pantry

Ministry at both churches is that they continue to be self-sustaining and solvent; and it has opened doors for a multitude of other ministries. Frost is a beehive of activities when it comes to outreach. They currently have a thriving Women’s Ministry which has multiple outreaches to the community and the church; a growing and active Adventurers’ Club which has become an important part of the church in ministering within and outside the church; and a door-to-door ministry which has

blanketed the surrounding communities of Carson City, Crystal, Sheridan, Sidney, Stanton, and McBride. In total, volunteers have knocked on over a 1000 doors. This particular personal outreach, as well as the Food Pantry, has borne the fruit of baptism with people attending the church.

Other evangelistic outreaches include a prison ministry, which has generated 18 baptisms of inmates, many of whom are incorporating into local churches. Currently, there are 32 inmates attending Sabbath service and Tuesday evening studies at the Carson City and St. Louis Correctional Facilities.

Another fruitful event has been our mass mailings, which have saturated over 10,000 homes in our area and have produced on-going Bible studies and interests attending church. Riverdale will be conducting, for the first time

in years, a VBS at the local community center. This church also has a “Homes of Hope” that takes place on Monday evenings where eight non-Adventists attend.

Continue to pray for these ministries for we know that the Word says, “He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful in much.” Luke 16:10

Every Monday morning, the Michigan Conference staff meet together for worship and prayer. Here is the list for the month of May/June. Please join with us as we pray for these ministries.

May 5-9 Hillsdale/Pittsford
Pastor Mike Wise

May 12-16 Adrian/Belleville Liberty
Pastor Nathaniel Gibbs
Bible Worker - Alan Summerfield

May 19-23 Bad Axe/Bay City/Unionville
Pastor Malcolm Mills
Literature Evangelist - Kelley Rodenbo
Community Service Center -
Pat Edsell, Director

May 27-30 Grand Rapids NW Spanish/
Holland Spanish/Pullman Spanish
Pastor Jorge Mata

June 2-6 Owosso/Chesaning
Pastor Ilko Tchakarov
Community Service Center -
Owosso - Nancy Anderson, Director
Chesaning - Ruth Harmon, Director

June 9-13 Delton
Pastor David Tenold

June 24-27 Iron Mountain/Iron River
Pastor Jim Nephew
Pine Mountain Christian School
Emily Graham, Principal/Teacher
Community Service Center -
Christy Larsen, Director

Marion 100 Years

— Bessie Sischo Dunn

Seventh-day Adventists have been worshipping in Marion for over 80 years. When the Smalley family came to Marion in 1903, they were the only Adventists in town until a year later when the Symonds family became residents and Sabbath School began.

In 1907, following a tent effort, church meetings were held above the former Lowry store. Elder George Kitson moved to Marion to serve the 17 members. Then Vera Smalley Uyterschout wrote on the historical sketch she was keeping, "Some died, some moved away, then there were none left but the Englands and me." There were years when there were no church activities, but then Sabbath-keepers began moving into the surrounding areas.

One of these families was that of Donald and Elnora Olds. They started Sabbath meetings again. Mrs. Olds has told of their family marching the 11 miles into town, singing all the way - then marching back home. Others began walking in: Edwin Cook, Sr. from Hartwick Twp., Mrs. Mary Ealy and her children from five miles west of town.

By 1934 there were enough Adventists in the area that Elder Hugh Williams encouraged them to build. A piece of property near the center of town was donated by Marion Clark. This was still the Great Depression, yet by faith and perseverance and by the combined efforts of the members - hauling stone, selling homemade products, all working together, they made the walls rise and the roof go on. Sam Tjalsma, Sr. put the name and date on the stone above the door.

On July 31, 1937, the company of Seventh-day Adventists in Marion established a church under the blessing of the president of the Michigan Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The nucleus of the new organization was composed of William England, Sr., Edwin Cook, Sr., Donald Olds, Sr., W.T. Chester and Harry Ealy.

Four young men and one young woman from the Marion Adventist Church entered Christian service. William England, Jr., was for years a pastor and district leader in Michigan. William VanArsdale is a doctor who gave years of service in North Korea and Taiwan. Murney Lowry and his wife, the former Louise Brown, served many years in South America, and Kevin Dunn, preparing for Christian service, graduated from the denomination's seminary in 1988.

A junior academy was maintained from 1953 to 1958 at First and Lowry streets on land donated by Flora Tjalsma Cromar. Then the Marion church united with other churches to maintain a ten-grade school at Cadillac.

The little schoolhouse in Marion didn't remain empty for long. It became the Dorcus Society. A help organization that had begun in the basement of the stone church under the leadership of LaVell VanArsdale and Mary Ealy. The society's name was changed to Adventist Community Services to cover a larger range of community assistance. This group sponsors health programs, summer camping and provides clothing and bedding.

Goods not in demand locally are packed and shipped to disaster areas.

In 1979 the members of the Marion Adventist Church bought the building and grounds of the vacated church at the corner of Flemming and Main Streets. Dr. Ted Parkhurst bought the little stone church and converted it into his dental offices.

On November 24, 1984, the church celebrated its 50th anniversary. Special recognition was given to Elder Williams, a

pioneer of the faith; to Edwin Cook, Sr., a charter member; to Vera Uyterschout, charter member and the oldest member, and to Mrs. Savilla Lownsbery, a church school teacher for over 40 years and Bible instructor into her 88th year.

Editor's Note: This is a historical sketch submitted by the author's son, Eldon Dunn, when coming upon it by chance. The church this year will be commemorating its 80th year of service. If you have an upcoming commemoration and/or have a historical account of your local church's past, kindly submit your text to be considered for publication.



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May

- 4-9 Camp Au Sable Work Week
- 5 LUC Lego Robotics Challenge
- 10 UP District Spring Retreat
- 11 Mother's Day
- 16-18 Pathfinder Fair - Au Sable Northwoods
- 21 GLAA Finance
- 23-25 Hispanic Camp Meeting - Camp Au Sable
- 25 Academy Graduations
- 25-30 Certification Week
Camp Au Sable
- 26 Memorial Day - Office Closed
- 27 MI Conference Executive Committee - Conference Room

June

- 1 Pathfinder Council - Lansing
- 1-7 Camp Orientation
- 5 MI Conference Board of Ed
- 8-12 Camp Pitch
- 8-25 ABC Lansing Closed
- 8-12 Father/Son Canoe Outpost
- 8-14 Adventurer/Jr. Junior Camp
- 13-21 Camp Meeting - Cedar Lake
- 15-21 Junior Camp
- 22-28 Tween Camp
- 29-July 5 Teen/High School Camp

July

- 3-4 Independence Day Holiday - Office Closed
- 9-13 RAD Outpost/RAD Backpack/
RAD Canoe (Ages 13-16)
- 9-13 Mini Family Camp

*Come One and Come All
Come To One, Come To All*

Learn New Things

Potluck Meal Served

<p>May 19 - Grayling Camp Au Sable 12:00 PM at Deer Lodge</p> <p>May 20 - Lansing Church 5400 W St Joseph Hwy 10 AM at the Service Center</p> <p>May 21 - Berrien Springs 9147 US 31 10 AM at Neighbor To Neighbor</p>	<p>Making Home & Beauty Products With Jane Henrick Presenting</p> <p>How To Prepare For a Disaster With Aaron Brown/Eaton Co Emergency Mgt</p> <p>Witnessing Made Easy Pastor Ron Kelly/ Village Church Pastor</p>
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Adventist Community Services Spring Volunteer Meetings:

Learn New Things

May 19 - Camp Au Sable, Grayling
12:00 PM at Deer Lodge

**How to Make Your Own Home
& Beauty Products From Simple
Ingredients**
Jane Henrick

May 20 - Lansing Adventist Church
10AM at the Community Service Center

How To Prepare For Disasters
Sgt Aaron Brown-Eaton County
Emergency Management

May 21 - Berrien Springs Village Church
10 AM at the Neighbor To Neighbor
Center

How To Make Witnessing Easy
Pastor Ron Kelly