

# Inside ASI



The official publication of Adventist-laymen's Services & Industries.

Fall 2008

Revisiting the  
2008 Tampa  
ASI Convention

Focus on Adventist Education:

## Educating for Eternity

Re-Education    Cleanse Me...    God Given Purpose    From Pew Christian to Passionate Christian





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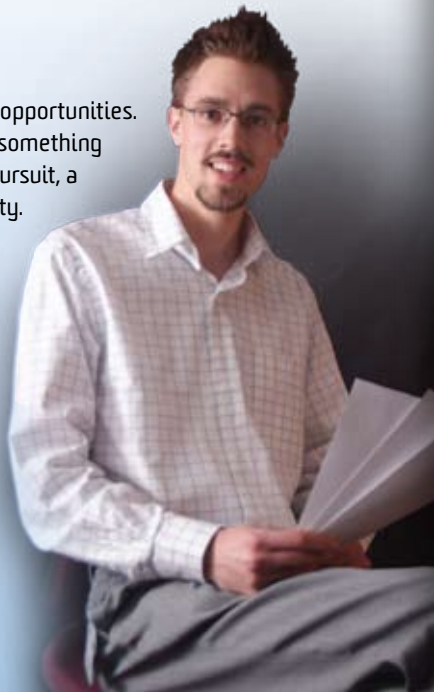
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## Editor's Note:

A good education is priceless, enabling a world of opportunities. There's often a misconception that education is something for younger people. In reality education is a lifelong pursuit, a continual effort to improve one's knowledge and ability.

And there is no better education than that found at the feet of Jesus. Time spent in the Word, in prayer, in Christian service, brings us to a higher plane, a place where our sin-weakened minds are remade by the infinite purity and love of Christ. "He will be the sure foundation for your times, a rich store of salvation and wisdom and knowledge, the fear of the Lord is the key to this treasure" (Isaiah 33:5).

*SH* *RA*  
—Steve Hamstra



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## Officer's Outlook

# No Work More Important

BY CHESTER CLARK, III

In June of 1904 E. A. Sutherland and Percy T. Magan sat dejectedly on a pile of rubble at the old Nelson Farm near Nashville, Tennessee. In fact they wept.

Ellen White had persistently counseled them to buy the farm and start a school there for underprivileged people in the South. A school where young men and women could both work and study while receiving a practical training that would enable them to be self-sustaining missionaries wherever they went.

While Sutherland and Magan didn't see it that June day, Madison College—as the school became known—eventually thrived. And Madison graduates in turn started so many successful self-supporting institutions in the South that it captured the attention of prominent leaders of the day. Including Dr. Philip P. Claxton, Commissioner of Education under three United States Presidents. “These smaller schools alone would justify all the cost of the school at Madison,” remarked Dr. Claxton.

The numerous “units” of Madison, as they were called, also captured the attention of Seventh-day Adventist Church leaders. Thus in 1947 the Association of Self-Supporting Institutions, or ASI, was formed to provide an official link between the denomination and the lay-operated educational and health institutions.

A closer look at key Madison principles provides insight into why its model was duplicated successfully so many times, and it sheds light on the continued success of ASI and its membership more than half a century later.

**Principle #1: Self-Support** While donations helped initiate and even sustain the work of Madison and its units, for the most part they were self-supporting. They were not dependent on the church or other donors for ongoing operations. Through industries and businesses these hard-working lay members found ways to sustain their outreach and ministry.

Students were taught by example that each person should be doing his or her part to advance the work of the gospel—even if it was not their professional

vocation. No philosophy is more central to ASI members than that.

**Principle #2: Seeking Simplicity** Early ASI organizations were certainly not known for extravagance or lifestyles of ease. Industry, economy, and frugality were necessary for survival. Every resource was carefully utilized to accomplish the heavenly mission. Today's ASI members exhibit this characteristic as well.

**Principle #3: Study of the Scriptures** Luther once observed, “Every institution in which men are not unceasingly occupied with the word of God must become corrupt.” The goal at Madison was to apply biblical principles as a guide for daily living. I'm struck, as I walk through the exhibits at ASI Convention, at the focus of our members on studying, living, and sharing the Word of God.

**Principle #4: Self-Sacrificing Service** Madison graduates didn't strike off into the hill country of Tennessee or Alabama and start schools or sanitariums with the intention of getting rich. They went to help those with serious needs. This is also a prominent characteristic of ASI members—they live not to be ministered unto, but to minister. They come to ASI not looking for what they can get, but what they can give. They have learned that life is best lived when it's lived for others.

One can hardly estimate the influence of the school Sutherland and Magan built on the old Nelson Farm. The principles guiding them then still inspire ASI members today, including the many self-supporting schools operating in the spirit of Madison. Perhaps this far-reaching impact moved Ellen White to write, in *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, “There is no work more important than the education of our youth.”



**Chester Clark, III** is ASI general vice president. He is also an instructor and evangelism coordinator at Ouachita Hills Academy and College in Amity, Arkansas.

# The Re-Education of a Secular Jew

BY CLIFFORD GOLDSTEIN

In 1979 I had a powerful experience with the Lord, who revealed to me that Jesus was His Son and that He died for my sins. While that's revelatory for just about anyone, for a secular Jew who most of his life didn't even believe in God, it was a life-changing experience for sure.

By accepting Jesus, and by accepting the Adventist message, which I did with a passion, I had a whole new view of the world, of reality, of humanity, of life and death and just about everything else. Indeed, the entire intellectual foundation upon which I had been raised was completely shattered. By accepting this message, and these truths, I pretty much had to accept that almost all I had been raised on, taught, and believed was, in fact, wrong.

Of course it's one thing to have it all torn down, but what was going to come in its place?

Not long after I became an Adventist, I found myself a student at Wildwood Missionary Institute in Wildwood, Georgia—a long and proud member of ASI. The plan was, or so it seemed at that time, for me to train to be a medical missionary. I would use my training to witness to the Jews.

For almost two years I was a student there, and I had an amazing new education. I went from being totally in the world with all its attendant lifestyle issues, to Wildwood, where I was given a whole new view of what life is, how to live, how to take care of my health and how to help others do the same. For a guy who grew up eating ham sandwiches and lobster, it was quite a change, for sure.

But I am forever grateful for what I learned there about lifestyle and diet for a number of reasons.

First, though it became clear after I left that the Lord wasn't leading me in the direction of medical

missionary work, what I learned there has been helpful in my witness to others. It truly is amazing how open folks can be if you can help them out with some of their own immediate medical needs. Though I have long forgotten many details from Dr. Bernell Baldwin's advanced physiology class, I still remember enough to talk intelligently with someone about health issues. Indeed, I learned things there I will take with me for the rest of my life.

Which leads to the second point. I was at Wildwood in the early 1980s, when I was in my mid-twenties. I'm now in my early fifties. And one thing I have discovered is the older I get, the more and more I want to follow the basic health regime I learned at Wildwood. Again, I forgot most of the details about biochemistry and I could barely tell you the difference between cellulose and serotonin, but I learned enough to know how to how to take care of my health.

The beauty of the education I got there was the simplicity—sure, you could get into all the deep medical stuff, and we did. But when push comes to shove, I know that alcohol and tobacco are bad for you, even if I can't explain the precise way that alcohol wreaks havoc on the liver or how tobacco smoke messes up the arteries.

I don't need to either, do I? What I need to know, and what I learned at Wildwood, was to stay away from them.

Yes, I firmly believe in education, but it needs to be the right kind of education. And for matters of health and lifestyle, I certainly got it at Wildwood—an education that will impact me for eternity.



**Clifford Goldstein** is editor of the *Adult Bible Study Guide*.







# Building Successful Strategic Partnerships

BY ROBERT WALLACE

**C**hristian entrepreneurs will play an ever-increasing role in building the Kingdom of God. Why? The logic of such an argument is based on the premise that the more successful our businesses are, the more revenue and profit they generate. The more profit generated, the larger the base from which tithes and offerings are released. The more capital God's faithful possess,

the faster we can build the Kingdom, thus accelerating Christ's second coming. The most expedient way to grow these businesses is through strategic partnerships and business alliances.

## The Strategic Partnership Model

Through the researched model explained in my book, "Strategic Partnerships: An Entrepreneur's Guide to Joint Ventures and Alliances", I help entrepreneurs to master the art of strategic partnering. The twelve-step model works as follows:

**Build a foundation of trust.** Quality, not quantity is the rule to go by when creating a strategic partnership. Although many tasks can be completed when two companies form an alliance, very little of real substance or positive value can be created unless the people within the organizations share a bond of trust and mutual respect.

**Look for hidden opportunities.** Opportunity gaps—or vacuums—develop in markets due to uncertainty, chaos, inconsistencies, timing, and lags or leads in market developments. Capitalizing on these op-

portunities in the market often requires adding new capabilities to a company, and the quickest way to do this may be through strategic partnering.



**Maximize client pain IQ.** Successful business development managers realize the first thing they must do when opening a new account or expanding an existing one is to understand where the client is feeling the most "pain." Taking time to alleviate the client's "pain points" enables the budding strategic partners to quickly

hone in on where to expend their resources in order to give their clients the greatest value.

**Know thy self.** The entrepreneur should give his or her own organization a thorough analysis to determine whether or not they have the capabilities needed to fulfill their part in the proposed joint venture.

**Know thy partner.** Just as it's important to know your own organization thoroughly before entering into a joint venture, you also need to know all about the organization you're considering as a partner.

**Perform 360review.** In today's world there is an abundance of public and private information on individuals and companies. You will be amazed by the plethora of information received by simply searching for an individual and/or his or her company on Google. Sources of information may be government agencies, competitors, internal staff, or strategic stakeholders.

**Know how to embrace the boulder.** Whenever small businesses attempt to team with large corporations, they risk being crushed or taken over by the larger company. This risk can be minimized if the smaller company becomes a student of the larger and finds

The most expedient way to grow these businesses is through strategic partnerships and business alliances.

a niche that makes the small business necessary and essential to the overall success of both entities.

**Determine the alpha project.** No matter how much businesses talk at each other about strategic partnerships, the fact is quite simple: nothing happens until something happens. Even if the initial project is small, it must be well defined.

**Maintain independence.** Unless you are planning to completely integrate your organization with the other company, you must maintain a certain level of independence from your partner so that your company can continue to grow and prosper beyond the joint venture's end point.

**Know how to embrace the porcupine.** How do you embrace a porcupine? Very carefully. Companies—like people—have distinct nuances and idiosyncrasies, which can sometimes make them very difficult to work with. The first step in embracing the porcupine is to develop an atmosphere of mutual nurture and respect.

**Understand the legal options.** Strategic partnerships come in many legal forms. While much of this can be left to lawyers, there are legal issues that should be understood before you sign on the dotted line.

**Understand all potential transition strategies.** Business—like life—goes through cycles. All relationships go through some form of transition. The relationship will not and cannot remain the same.

The twelve-step strategic partnership model outlined above is proven and effective. Put these steps into practice, and be on your way to a successful partnership, the profits of which we can use to further the Lord's work.



**Robert Wallace** is an internationally known author, entrepreneur, speaker, and owner of BITHGROUP Technologies, Inc. and Entreat Learning Systems, LLC; located in Baltimore, Maryland.

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### Organizational Members

#### A World of Difference

##### David Baasch

Wallingford, VT 05773

A World of Difference is a retail store operated by David Baasch, a dentist who supports a number of missions in Africa. Revenue generated by A World of Difference is sent to those missions.

#### CEPHA Cares

##### Masilamony Pauliah

Burtonsville, MD 20861

CEPHA Cares provides medical services for HIV-positive patients and the elderly. They also offer free HIV education for young people.



#### Congo Frontline Missions

##### Keith Mosier

Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo  
Congo Frontline Missions is dedicated to bringing hope and salvation to war-torn Democratic Republic of Congo. They emphasize preaching, teaching and medical missionary work.

#### Creative Growth Ministries

##### Ann Anderson

Dayton, TN 37321

Creative Growth Ministries produces seminars, books, and audio/visual materials—featuring CGM president Bill Liversidge—for use in outreach. Their goal is, “Equipping, empowering and enabling believers to reveal Christ.” Their first product, *Victory in Jesus*, is available both as a book and CD.

#### Dharma Health Research

##### Devadas Moses

##### Spouse: Dharma-Seeli

Loma Linda, CA 92354

Dharma Health Research conducts

clinical research programs, relief operations in India and community outreach programs in their local area.

#### Dickie Properties

##### David Dickie

##### Spouse: Shirley

Dodge Center, MN 55927

Dickie Properties operates rental properties and also manages farms and other real estate.

#### HELP Int'l Outreach

##### Marian Llaguno

Colton, CA 92324

HELP conducts outreach in the areas of health, education, and evangelism to underserved groups in the Philippines. They frequently distribute items such as clothes and school supplies to impoverished Philippine children.

#### Int'l Development Mission Inc

##### David Gonzalez

##### Spouse: Zoe

Apopka, FL 32703

IDM is a ministry for Spanish-speaking children in Latin America. They offer audio/visual materials free of charge along with Bible lessons for children under age 12. Their ultimate goal is to prepare children to accept Christ and guide them to the Adventist church.



#### L.I.G.H.T.

##### James Hartley

Wildwood, GA 30757

LIGHT (Lay Institute of Global Health Training) provides overseas health evangelism training through one- and six-month courses. They also provide assistance for establishing permanent self-supporting ministries.

#### MD-India Business Roundtable Inc

##### Elisha Pulivarti

##### Spouse: Jessie

Largo, MD 20774

MIBRT is a non-profit, public/private partnership operated as a business league in the state of Maryland. Its purpose is to promote business and trade between outfits in Maryland and India.

#### Made Whole Inc

##### Robin Swain

##### Spouse: Mary

Villa Rica, CA 30180

Made Whole conducts Bible and health seminars, distributes literature and other media, and offers health-related coaching and consulting. They are looking forward to learning from the various ASI member ministries.

#### Med-Ped

##### Walter Plasencia

Chicago, IL 60639

Med-Ped is a medical office providing outpatient services specializing in internal medicine and pediatrics.

#### Narrow Gate Media

##### Larry Witzel

Vancouver, WA 98682

Narrow Gate provides marketing and communication solutions and services for local churches.

#### New Health Ministries

##### Gary Anderson

Molalla, OR 97038

New Health aims to reverse or prevent disease through natural remedy workshops. They will soon open a yurt/RV center for health retreats. They also offer seminars on managing charitable giving.

#### Sam's Roofing

##### Samuel Ochoa

##### Spouse: Dina

Tucson, AZ 85757

Sam's Roofing is a high-quality roofing contractor. Sam is also involved in his local church, serving as an elder.

#### Sapian Research & Development

##### Schubert Sapien

##### Spouse: Helen

Fort Worth, TX 76162



Sapian R&D develops surgical root extractors for the dental industry. They want to do what they can to spread the gospel of Jesus.

### **Senior Support Group LLC**

**Linda Johnson**

**Spouse: Bob**

Pickerington, OH 43147

Senior Support Group specializes in estate and retirement income planning. Linda is very involved in her church, doing individual outreach and health ministry.

### **Shepherd's Call Ministry**

**Christian Berdahl**

**Spouse: Coby**

Edgewood, NM 87015

Shepherd's Call creates evangelistic music programs combining the Spirit of Prophecy and spiritual music. There is also preaching of the gospel. Shepherds Call is involved with Christian media production as well.

### **Tasba Raya Adventist Ministries**

**Robert Hirschi**

Cleveland, OH 30528

Tasba Raya is a medical and educational ministry with a mission to the Miskito people of eastern Nicaragua. They are also involved with evangelistic efforts there.

### **The Coaxum Agency**

**Anthony Coaxum**

**Spouse: Brenda**

Charleston, SC 29407

The Coaxum Agency prospects and sells life, health, property and casualty insurance.

### **The Nathans Heritage Group For Orphans**

**Francis Deku**

**Spouse: Rosa**

Dallas, TX 75356

The Nathans Heritage Group is made up of Adventist professionals who are passionate about helping orphans. They assist children in Africa, the Caribbean, and Central America. Orphans assisted by Nathans Heritage receive a primary education and healthcare.



### **Think On These Things Ministries**

**Shawn Wray**

Atlanta, GA 30318

Think On These Things Ministries is a premier resource for helping people in need. The mission of Think On These Things Ministries is to deliver food, medicine, clothing and other necessities to individuals, children and families who lack these essentials due to famine, war, poverty or natural disaster.

### **UPA Vision**

**Ruben Molina**

Kentwood, MI 49548

UPA Vision conducts evangelistic meetings, cooking classes, lay evangelism training and seminars on stewardship, music, worship and more.

### **Youth Connect Cyberspace Ministry**

**Berneva Moulder**

New Market, VA 22844

Youth Connect has a number of online outreach efforts underway. These include Bible studies, health information, advice on dealing with addiction, interactive forums, and so on.

## **Associate Members**

### **Charles Allgaier**

Shrewsbury, PA 17361

Charles has worked with Kenneth Cox Ministries for the past nine years, assisting with audio/visual production work. He also works with the various evangelistic seminars the ministry conducts. Charles joins ASI looking to learn from and support those with a like mind for mission.

### **William Felts**

Hephzibah, GA 30815

William runs Natures Way, a distributor of health products. He also operates a horse-riding academy for children.

### **Lawrence Klutse**

**Spouse: Deena**

Los Angeles, CA 90016

Dr. Lawrence Klutse is a public health caregiver and produces the television evangelistic program "God is Love Ministry". He also does some accounting and non-television evangelism.

### **Ronald Kowalkowski**

**Spouse: Martha**

Montpelier, VT 05601

*Please see the New Member Spotlight on page 10.*

### **Joyce Lowe**

Decatur, GA 30035

Joyce is a graphic designer and enjoys being involved in her local church. She has used her skills to design materials for evangelistic meetings at her church.

### **Ardyce Morgan**

Bridgeport, WV 26330

Ardyce is very involved in her local church, serving as church clerk and helping out wherever needed. She also offers counseling from time to time.

### **Larry Romrell**

**Spouse: Cheryl**

Franktown, CO 80116

Larry is very involved with a number of organizations, often serving as a board member. He also volunteers for Meals on Wheels.

### **Brian Shawl**

Wasilla, AK 99654

Brian works as a life coach, with particular focus on troubled marriages and individuals. He joins ASI looking to network with ministries and mission-minded individuals.

### **April Tracy**

Glasgow, KY 42141

April is director of infection prevention/control at a community hospital. As such she provides training to hospital employees as well as to the community in prevention of infectious diseases.

## ASI Welcomes New Secretary-Treasurer

**ASI** is delighted to introduce our new secretary-treasurer, Ramon Chow. Born in Colombia to Chinese and Polish parents—hence his Spanish and Chinese name—Ramon began his career as assistant treasurer at the Adventist university in Medellin, Colombia. He then served in Costa Rica and Nicaragua before moving to the United States, where he has held leadership positions at La Sierra University, Atlantic Union College, and the Southern New England, Texas and Chesapeake Conferences.

Having attended multiple ASI Conventions as a conference representative, Ramon was always impressed by the commitment and motivation of ASI members. And when asked to consider the secretary-treasurer position, he prayerfully sought the Lord's will. When the offer came, Ramon felt that God had opened this door for a reason. So he accepted the call, and began full-time in mid-September.

"I am humbled," says Ramon, "and I appreciate

the confidence of the leadership of ASI in inviting me to join forces with a multitude of people who willingly give of their time, resources and talents to sharing Christ." He also describes his excitement about ASI's commitment to using technology and wise resource investments to maximize the impact of evangelistic efforts.

Ramon is married to Elizabeth, a registered nurse who currently works in the church ministries department of the Chesapeake Conference. They have no children, but love spending time with their nephews and nieces. An avid Ham Radio hobbyist, Ramon enjoys talking with friends around the world and holds advanced licenses in the US and Colombia.



**Ramon Chow with his wife, Elizabeth.**

### ASI NEWS

#### Laurelbrook School on Trial for Student Labor

For 50 years the Laurelbrook School in Dayton, Tennessee has involved students in meaningful and beneficial labor. This is in keeping with Spirit of Prophecy instruction that students be employed in practical work as a part of their education.

This principle has been challenged by United States Department of Labor, which brought an injunction against Laurelbrook, claiming the school was violating the Fair Labor Standards Act. The trial—held without a jury in the United States District Court in Chattanooga, Tennessee—is currently in recess, and

will begin again in March 2009.

While the case concerns Laurelbrook specifically, the outcome could have serious repercussions for both self-supporting and conference operated Seventh-day Adventist Schools across the United States.

For Laurelbrook the cost of this trial is massive, estimated to be between \$70,000 and \$100,000. If you wish support them in this case, please send donations to the following address:

Laurelbrook School  
Legal Fund  
114 Campus Dr.  
Dayton, TN 37321

Please also remember Laurelbrook in your prayers. For further information, visit the Laurelbrook website, [www.laurelbrook.org](http://www.laurelbrook.org), or call 423-775-3339.





# CLEANSE ME, MOLD ME,

BY DEENA BARTEL-WAGNER

**M**any Christians often believe they are immune to the seduction of the world. It's unthinkable that they could turn away from all they know and believe. But for Ron and Marty Kowalkowski the unthinkable became a reality.

"It was the little openings that the devil was looking for in our lives," says Ron. "Without even realizing what was happening, we drifted from God for 25 years."

Following God's leading Ron and Marty moved from South Lancaster, Massachusetts to Vermont in 1969. There they settled into a busy life of running a thriving printing business and raising three daughters.

"We were heavily involved in church activities, especially with our daughters," says Marty. "We attended campmeetings and were active in the Central Vermont Seventh-day Adventist School." Everything seemed to be running smoothly, and Ron and Marty thought themselves content. But there were serious changes on the horizon.

"We began to join social clubs in the area," recalls Ron. "As a part of being members of the clubs, we began to be invited to parties." The more parties and events they attended, the more the allure of another lifestyle began to attract Ron and Marty.

Eventually, both Marty and Ron began drinking socially. Their lives became consumed with socializing and partying as they continued to run their business. Yet despite their new lifestyle, Ron describes how they never opened their business on Sabbath.

For 25 years they would wander through the world's charms and pleasures, seeking something they didn't find.

Along with the drinking, Ron began to gamble. At first it was just another social outlet, but eventually he became seriously addicted.

After years of this lifestyle, the toll on Ron's health began to mount. "My dad and uncle both died in their 40s, and I was well on my way to following them," says Ron. "I began to have serious health issues but couldn't seem to get things under control."

During a medical exam, Ron was informed he needed an angioplasty because his arteries were ninety-percent blocked. "I had the procedure done, but it wasn't successful," he recalls.

At this point, a cascading series of health problems almost took Ron's life. "I was pretty much an upbeat guy and could face anything," he says. "Then I was faced with one crisis after another."

With his arteries almost totally blocked, Ron also discovered he needed emergency surgery for an obstruction in his intestines. Following the surgery, he became completely septic; and not one doctor wanted to deal with his case. Finally

a second surgery was scheduled, and Ron's body had to endure another crisis.

"The doctors came and told me that during the surgery, Ron's heart stopped," says Marty. "When they resuscitated him, he suffered a stroke. To top it all off, he needed to have a colostomy."

After recovering from the surgeries and eventually having his colostomy reversed, Ron fell into a deep depression. "I couldn't shake it and began drinking even more heavily," he admits. "But somewhere in the back of my mind there was a kernel of thought that began to grow."

Ron remembered hearing that exercise was a good way to overcome depression. "I knew that exercise helped with endorphins and depression," he says. "So I decided that I would work out on a treadmill every day." The exercise worked. Ron began losing weight and feeling better. Over a period of three or four years, people noticed a change in him and would comment on how good he was looking.

Privately, however, Ron was truly at his lowest. "I had come to the point where I thought I'd never be in heaven," says Ron. "I'd tried to give up the alcohol but couldn't, and it seemed that there truly was no hope for me."

Yet while Ron thought there was no hope, God had other plans. One morning, during a visit to their second home in Palm Beach, Florida, Ron felt the urge to pray. So he decided to ask God to take the desire for drinking away from him. "I suddenly heard a voice that said, 'Don't worry about the alcohol,'" says Ron.

Ron and Marty had a regular cocktail hour beginning at 4:30 pm. "I knew something had happened when Ron didn't have a drink," says Marty. "Later Ron said he needed to talk to me. I didn't believe that he was going to make a change. He'd tried it before and always went back to the drinking."

Marty watched him closely for several months. "In the past when Ron would quit drinking, he was unbearable to live with," she recalls. "The withdrawal from the



**Ron and Marty Kowalkowski are thankful for the miracles that God has worked in their lives.**

alcohol took its toll, and I was always relieved when he would start drinking again."

But this time the change was different. Ron even went back to church. And that first Sabbath back was communion Sabbath. "A man named

Clifford washed my feet that morning," says Ron. "In the past when I was active in church, I was always trying to [obey] the rules, but I had never fallen in love with Jesus."

That communion Sabbath was the turning point in Ron's life. He felt something he had never experienced before—Ron knew he'd been truly forgiven.

As soon as Ron made the decision to give his life back to God, the devil began to work on him. "I remember the feelings of inadequacy concerning my marriage and the hold that gambling, alcohol and socializing held on my life," says Ron. "The devil really attacked me by putting doubts in my mind in all of these areas."

Marty continued to drink and party with her friends. She didn't think that Ron's "conversion" was going to last. When six months had passed, she knew he truly had changed. It was then that Marty also committed her life to Christ.

"As I began to witness to others, I had a great fear that a secret that I'd held close would be discovered," says Ron. "It was another area [where] the devil was able to put doubts in my mind—I couldn't read or spell well even though I'd become the president of a multi-million-dollar company."

Ron decided to plead with Jesus for another miracle in his life. "I have to know His Word, and the only way to know it is to read it," says Ron. God answered that plea, and for the last one and a half years Ron has been reading non-stop.

Ron and Marty's desire to tell others about Jesus begins with a simple daily prayer: "Cleanse me, mold me, prepare me. I want to be a witness. Put people in my life that I can witness to today."

And God has been faithful, continually leading them to people who need to know the love of Jesus; the same love that changed Ron and Marty just a short time ago.

---

**Deena Bartel-Wagner** is owner of Verbal Oxygen, a writing and creative services firm based in Spencerport, New York.



# By Knowing Him

2008 ASI Convention inspires lay people, raises record offering

BY STEVE HAMSTRA

**G**od truly blessed the 61st annual ASI Convention, held this year in Tampa, Florida. Themed “By Knowing Him”, the convention emphasized how people motivated by a personal, loving relationship with Jesus Christ can impact the world for eternity.

Beginning Wednesday evening, August 6, and ending Sabbath, August 9, ASI Convention was attended by more than 2,500 people, including 500 young people. Three Angels Broadcasting Network provided live television coverage.

A full schedule included nine main meetings, 20 seminars under five different themes, and complete programs for children and youth.

A highlight at convention each year is the ASI Special Projects Offering, and this year the offering supported 41 projects chosen from approximately 100 submitted to ASI. Every dollar given to the ASI offering will go directly to the designated projects.

A wide variety of undertakings and locations made up the 2008 projects. A large number were construction projects, including a new facility for Better Life Television in southern Oregon, a Gospel Outreach church building in China, and a renovation effort at the VitaSalus lifestyle center in Portugal. There were also evangelism, archaeology, lay outreach, and media projects.

Electrifying the convention, however, was the One-Day Church project. A joint effort between ASI and Maranatha Volunteers International, the One-Day Church will provide cost-effective, well-built churches to “homeless” Adventist congregations around the world. It is a galvanized steel frame and vented roof that can be

easily assembled by four people in just one day. The recipient congregation will be responsible to finish the walls and interior.

A full-size One-Day Church was on display in the exhibit hall at ASI Convention, and a smaller scale model was on stage in the meeting hall.

During the Sabbath morning worship service, an appeal was made for the Special Projects Offering. Included in that appeal was a presentation about the One-Day Church and a dedication of the project by world church President Jan Paulsen and North American Division President Don Schneider.

The response was overwhelming; an offering of \$8,034,672 was pledged, more than quadruple the 2007 offering. “It’s just fantastic,” said a beaming Dwight Hilder-

brandt, then the interim ASI secretary-treasurer. “This year’s offering was about evangelism and building churches, schools, etc. And the people really caught the vision and got behind it.”

During the Friday evening meeting a special



**A record offering of more than \$8 million was pledged at ASI Convention Sabbath Morning.**



**During the Sabbath morning meeting, a special ASI Convention edition of the New Beginnings DVD was distributed.**

presentation was made about Youth for Jesus (YFJ). An ASI-sponsored youth evangelism program, YFJ reaches out to the community where the ASI convention is to be held each year. All told, 52 youth participated along with 19 Bible workers. And from their efforts, 103 people chose to keep the Sabbath, and 94 requested baptism. *A full story about YFJ 2008 is found on page 16.*

YFJ shared the spotlight Friday evening with the ASI Convention children's and youth programs. As previously mentioned, some 500 young people attended the convention, and they enjoyed a full slate of worships, creative crafts, off-site projects, and more. On stage Friday evening the young people sang songs, shared what they'd learned in their programs, and talked about their projects.

Toward the end of the convention, Ron Oxentenko, from Pensacola, Florida shared with ASI how happy he was with what his children had learned in their meetings, the good friends they were making, and all the new songs they were singing. And he wasn't the only parent to comment on the quality of the ASI children's and youth programs.

*Train Them Now*, a project to train and equip lay people worldwide for New Beginnings DVD-based evangelism, has been a major focus for ASI in recent years. And the project received part of this year's convention offering.

Sabbath morning, ASI vice president for evangelism Viorel Catarama, together with Denzil McNeilus and Dwight Hilderbrandt, presented the latest information about Train Them Now. In the eight years since the project began, 19,000 people have been trained; they have in turn held more than 100,000 evangelistic meetings in their communities, resulting in hundreds of thousands of baptisms. In fact, an estimated 135,000 people have been baptized just from DVD-based evangelistic meetings held by young people.

Looking ahead, Train Them Now has ambitious plans, with more than 50 training sessions planned in 40 countries just through the first quarter of 2009.

To emphasize and encourage DVD-based evan-



**A full size One-Day Church was on display in the ASI Convention exhibit hall.**





**The kindergarten class at ASI Convention listens to a story from leader Janet Brandauer.**

gelism, Sabbath morning attendees received a special ASI Convention edition of the New Beginnings DVD, providing them with an attractive, user-friendly means to become evangelists in their communities. “This DVD in the hands of a consecrated lay person is a powerful tool for evangelism here in North America,” said Mark Finley as the DVDs were distributed.

Around the globe ASI organizations are being formed in numerous countries, under the world divisions of the Adventist church. A special focus at convention was placed on these international ASI organizations, and attendees were told of the wonderful work being done by their ASI brothers and sisters around the world.

Examples include a massive evangelism effort by ASI Europe that aims to bring five million people into the Adventist church in 15 years, and a highly effective prison ministry being conducted by ASI Kenya.

Testimonies from ASI members are a part of every ASI Convention, and this year a wide range of active lay people were highlighted. Among them were Manuel and Esther Alva, physicians in Illinois who have launched a church group that meets each Sabbath in their waiting

room, and Volker Schmidt, a businessman from Kentucky who does door-to-door outreach with his granddaughter.

A major goal of ASI convention is to encourage lay people to get involved. Many attendees shared the enthusiasm of April Tracy from Glasgow, Kentucky, who said, “There are so many projects I’d like to help with!” She explained how ASI Convention excited her about missions and motivated her to look for ways to be active in outreach.



**Dr. Bernell Baldwin from Wildwood Lifestyle Center & Hospital presented a seminar on neurological health.**

Asked if she enjoyed the convention, April replied with a big smile, “I called my granddaughter and told her, ‘Next year you’re coming with me.’”

“This is a campmeeting on steroids run by the Swiss,” said Mark Ranzinger from Berrien Springs, Michigan. “It’s just fantastic,” he continued, “the people here want to turn their five talents into 15 talents.”

Then there’s Kyle Tumberg. He and his wife spent their honeymoon at ASI Convention. “And,” he glowed, “I don’t regret it!”

**Steve Hamstra** is the communication director for ASI.



# Changed for Eternity

2008 Youth for Jesus makes a lasting impact

BY STEVE HAMSTRA

**F**rom around the world they came, leaving friends, family, summer jobs—and money—for long days in stifling heat and humidity. But you won't find one who regrets it. Because this wasn't about friends or money, it was about treasures in heaven.

This was a record-breaking year for ASI Youth for Jesus (YFJ). A total of 52 youth participated, along with 19 Bible workers. The young people hailed from 11 different countries and 14 states.

The program began in March when the first Bible workers arrived. Their work in the Tampa community would pave the way for the youth-led evangelistic efforts a few months later.

Five local Seventh-day Adventist churches were host sites for YFJ, including a Spanish-speaking church and a Jewish Adventist congregation. The youth were divided among these sites during the evangelistic campaign.

In July the youth arrived. They spent their days praying together, training for outreach, and going door-to-door offering Bible studies and inviting people to the evangelistic meetings.

And the weather was less than ideal. "We drank a lot of water," laughed Leasa Hodges, ASI vice president for youth evangelism, at the final YFJ meeting in Tampa. "It's hot here!"

Evangelistic meetings were conducted in the evenings. And between the five sites more than 400 non-Adventists attended.

God moved in a powerful way during YFJ, and 94 people requested baptism over the course of the program. There were also 103 decisions to keep the Sabbath.

YFJ culminated with the final evening meeting on Tuesday, August 5 at the Tampa First Seventh-day Adventist Church. That night 22 people were baptized—the remaining 72 will be baptized upon completion of pre-baptismal courses. A large number also received certificates honoring their completion of Bible study programs.

It was a spirit-filled evening, and Mark Finley, who delivered the message that night, said in amazement as he began his sermon, "The future of God's work is in good hands."

But indeed that evening was truly about the wonderful

people who publicly took their stand through baptism. Included were individuals young and old, two mothers and daughters, a husband and wife. They smiled, cried, laughed—relishing their new life in Christ. And the youth who had brought them to Jesus gathered around the baptismal pool, witnessing the beautiful scene, the wonderful result of their work.

Among those baptized that evening were some from outside the Tampa vicinity. Because YFJ doesn't just change the community but the participants as well. Several YFJ youth dedicated their lives to Jesus this summer and were baptized along with those they labored to reach.



**Jim McQuetter told the ASI Convention how thankful he was for the YFJ youth that brought he and his family into the Adventist church.**





**Twenty-two people were baptized during the final Youth for Jesus meeting on August 5 at the Tampa First Adventist Church.**

## Answered prayer

Stories and testimonies abound from YFJ. The theme for this year was prayer, and the youth strove to be in constant communication with Jesus. Hence many of the participants have amazing experiences of answered prayers to share.

"It was Thursday morning. I woke up feeling very bad," says Michal Sevcik, a YFJ participant from the Czech Republic. "I had a headache but thought that eating breakfast would help. But everything I ate came back up after about 10 minutes. I felt terrible—I had a fever, headache; my body was shaking. So I went to my bed, laid down and prayed, 'Dear Lord, if you want me to serve you today, then heal me. If you want me to rest today, I will accept it. Your will be done.'"

Then Michal stepped out in faith. "Continuing in prayer, I said, 'Illness, I command you; leave my body in name of Jesus Christ!' I laid there a moment longer, and then I just stood up and went to the morning worship. I didn't even remember how terrible I'd felt just few minutes before."

Not only was Michal's prayer answered, but that day turned out to be the very best he experienced. As his group did door-to-door outreach, Michal took upon himself an extra street. On that street he met a lady who requested Bible studies, he had literature accepted at multiple houses, then went back and conducted the first Bible study with that very same lady. And she agreed to come to that evening's meeting.

Devin Grady, a 16-year-old from Keene, Texas, was a first-time YFJ participant. "I was hearing testimonies from the other sites," he says. "People were deciding to get baptized and were choosing the Sabbath, and I just didn't have a testimony yet. I kept praying, 'God, give me a sign that I'm supposed to be here. I want a testimony to share.'"

For two weeks nothing happened. "I started to get discouraged and thought that maybe God had a differ-

ent plan for me," says Devin. Toward the end of YFJ, he began to feel he would never have a testimony to share.

"One of the things I did was play piano during the calls," Devin continues. "One night I began the call just playing random chords. After a few minutes I was running out of stuff to play. Then my hands started playing 'Seek Ye First'. I had never practiced or played it before; it was like angels guided my hands. And the speaker's final words during the call were 'Seek Ye First'. Praise God!"

Arielle Pickett, 16, from Chicago, Illinois, also experienced an answer to prayer. "When I gave my first Bible



**Regular training sessions are part of the Youth for Jesus program.**

study I wasn't in a good mood," she says. "So I prayed the whole time I was in that house. Long story short, I didn't think it went very well. I barely said anything—my Bible worker did most of the talking. And the two people we were studying with looked confused."

But as Arielle gave more Bible studies, she felt more comfortable and saw how God could use young people. An elderly woman Arielle and other YFJ youth visited drove that point home, saying over and over again how happy she was that young people had taken an interest in her. As for what Arielle learned: "Don't worry about being afraid or nervous, because God is there all the way."

"And," Arielle adds with a grin, "the two people I gave that first Bible study to—they're getting baptized."

God worked in wonderful ways through this year's YFJ. And He not only touched the people of Tampa, but 52 amazing youth as well. "I have definitely developed a deeper relationship with Jesus through the outreach, helping in the evangelistic meetings, praying, studying and worshiping," says 17-year-old Lincoln Balfour. "I know God is working on in my heart, and He is changing me for eternity."

**Steve Hamstra** is the communication director for ASI.



FLETCHER ACADEMY:

# Educating for Eternity

BY EMILY THOMSEN

**“W**hen you set yourself on fire, people love to come and see you burn,” said early evangelist John Wesley. Approaching its 100th anniversary, Fletcher Academy, Inc., continues to burn for Christ, draw spectators, and point them to the Savior.

Fletcher Academy, Inc., (FAI) sits on approximately 600 acres of farm, field and forest in the mountains of North Carolina between Hendersonville and Asheville. FAI’s rich history dates back to the early 20th century when a member of the Asheville Seventh-day Adventist Church bought the old farm property and, wondering what do with it, contacted Ellen G. White.

“Start a medical clinic,” suggested Mrs. White. Founded in 1910 by Asheville church members under Mrs. White’s guidance, the Mountain Sanitarium and Asheville Agricultural School had a one-room medical clinic and one-room school with just two students. A farm, dairy and lumber mill allowed the organization to be self-sustaining.

From the beginning, students helped with the workload at the farm, mill and sanitarium, allowing them the opportunity to develop skills beyond their academic education, and also sustaining the organiza-



**Fletcher Academy emphasizes a Christian education and high standards.**

tion. Today, FAI continues the tradition of serving the community’s education and health needs while giving students a well-rounded Christian education and emphasizing the importance of work skills.

FAI’s schools include Captain Gilmer School (CGS), teaching Kindergarten through 8th grades, and Fletcher Academy (FA), a co-educational academy with both boarding and day students in grades 9 to 12. Both schools are fully accredited and offer a distinctly Adventist education designed to prepare students for a lifetime of service.

Following Adventist educational principles, both CGS and FA encourage students to think for themselves rather than simply reflect others’ thoughts, and to develop as whole human beings—spiritually, socially and physically as well as mentally.

The schools aim to instill in each student acceptance of the Bible, commitment to the Christian faith and lifestyle, responsible citizenship and healthy living. CGS and FA welcome students of any religious



background to attend.

CGS principal Jeannie Larrabee says she and the nine elementary school teachers have a burden on their hearts for each student to know that God is real and that He loves them. "If anything else, I know that this is God's school," Larrabee says. "He just allows us to help run it!"

She and the CGS staff pray regularly, "Lord, what do you want us to do next on Your campus?" Perhaps it is this attitude that allows the staff to respond quickly to a problem and adjust programming to best meet the needs of the students.

By challenging students to reach their personal best, CGS has gained a long-standing reputation of excellence. CGS students' test scores were significantly higher than the national average four years in a row. And the strong music program at CGS—offering individual lessons as well as choirs, hand chimes, a band and a strings group—emphasizes that music can be a way of pointing people to God.

Shortly after his graduation, one young alumnus told former FA principal Rob Gettys, "I wish I'd had a couple more years to be at Fletcher." FA maintains very high standards, for which they make no apologies. In fact, the school's leaders credit those high standards with their success; surveying parents of new students revealed that the high standards and solid education were the reasons they wanted to send their kids to FA.

One year FA's attendance grew by 88%—and it's not just students who want to be there; CGS principal Larrabee says that whenever FAI announces a job



**Candice Dill, a sophomore, runs the register at Fletcher Valley Natural Foods.**

opening they're flooded with applicants.

In a safe, mentoring environment, FA seeks to instill in its students life skills that will help them be successful after high school—things like being consistent, how to talk to people, and even how to show up for work on time.

FAI's current leaders are following the founders' desire to give students marketable skills that can be used post-graduation, either to fund a college education or to jumpstart a successful career.

But Fletcher comprises more than just schools. In addition to CGS and FA, the FAI umbrella covers myriad businesses, which help fund the education offered in both schools. While it's unusual for a school to be run by a corporation, CEO Tim Tidwell says the business segments of the organization help fund the ministry of education. Additionally, academy students provide much of the employment for these businesses, continuing the tradition of weaving work experience into their education.

One of the business segments of FAI is Fletcher Park Inn (FPI). Fletcher Park Inn is a premier Christian retirement community for independent seniors. FPI offers studio, one- or two-bedroom apartments or villa homes, many of which students built while working for FAI's construction company. Other students work as administrative assistants at the retirement center, front desk workers, custodians, maintenance workers, and kitchen staff.

Another business, the Lelia Patterson Center (LPC), opened in 2003. The LPC is a wellness complex that maintains the Fletcher tradition of serving the community's health needs. The facility includes FA's gym, a health club, aquatics program, and a Conven-



**Freshman Heather White assists residents in the dining hall of Fletcher Park Inn.**



tion and Enrichment Center. Through their exercise programs, health education, and social and recreational events, the LPC provides the community with plenty of family-focused opportunities to pursue a healthy lifestyle. At the LPC, students fill the roles of front desk workers, lifeguards and custodians.



Junior Randy Greve is one of the lifeguards at the Lelia Patterson Center.

Serving the Fletcher and Hendersonville communities for more than 50 years, Fletcher Valley Natural Foods (FVNF) health food store offers fresh produce, vegetarian foods and supplements. In addition to the grocery section, a bistro in the Christian book and media center serves herbal tea, fresh fruit and vegetable juices, pastries, and cookies. FVNF uses student workers to help stock, run the registers and provide customer service.

Since FAI is a larger-than-normal facility, it's not uncommon for 25 to 30 student workers to assist the nine full-time staffers in maintaining the FAI facilities and grounds. In addition, these students help run a landscaping business that also fulfills off-campus contracts.

And if these opportunities weren't enough, students do laundry for two hospitals and several area nursing homes in the industrial laundry service on campus. They also work in the print shop and nursing home located on campus. High school students mentor elementary students at CGS. This year students helped produce an abundant crop of blackberries on the farm and maintained a greenhouse. And, of course, the usual boarding academy workers are needed as well—dormitory workers, readers, office workers and cafeteria staff.

Eventually the Mountain Sanitarium became a separate entity known as Park Ridge Hospital, which remains across the street from FAI. Students work in the hospital's billing and material management departments as well.

"In my opinion, one of our biggest strengths are

all of the work opportunities available to students at Fletcher," says Bill Bass, director of the vocational program. "We have been truly blessed with what the Lord has given us over the years." Bass says area businesses recognize the caliber of FA students.

The manager of a nearby McDonald's recently told Bass

that he puts FA students' applications on the corner of his desk. Oh no, Bass thought. Is it because they don't eat meat or won't work on Sabbath? He learned, however, that the reason FA student applications are set aside is because the manager gives them higher priority than other applicants and typically hires them immediately.

A local Subway owner contacted Mr. Bass for summer workers, saying, "Your students have integrity. Whoever you send me, I'll hire them today." These examples demonstrate FA's success at instilling a good work ethic in its students.

Fletcher Academy used to boast a full-fledged nursing school, and CEO Tidwell states that he would like to assist new Fletcher Academy principal Peter Cousins in his vision to at least bring back the CNA (Certified Nursing Assistant) program. This is in line with Cousins' focused vision to expand the occupational program further by offering students a number of vocational certifications in areas such as computers, electrical maintenance, HVAC, plumbing, auto mechanics, and CNA.

"We want to meet a need that isn't being met anywhere else within Adventism in North America," says Tidwell. "We know God has a lot of exciting things in store for us."

**Emily Thomsen** is a wellness coach, massage therapist and writer living in Collegedale, Tennessee.

## THE STORY OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST SELF-SUPPORTING EDUCATION

# *A God-Given Purpose*

BY BRIAN TRAXLER

**W**hen ASI was founded in 1947, nearly half of its charter organizations were educational institutions or included a school as a part of their program. But how did this self-supporting educational work begin? And what role did Adventist lay people play in church growth in the South—which today has the largest membership and greatest number of schools in the North American Division?<sup>1</sup>

Prior to the Civil War, Sabbatarian Adventists had no denominational work of any kind in the South.<sup>2</sup> By 1865 the General Conference recognized that “a field is now opened in the South for labor among the colored people and should be entered upon according to our ability.”<sup>3</sup>

But the South was shattered and in chaos, and the Reconstruction era only increased racial tensions. These conditions delayed denominational work there for decades. Though the General Conference sent workers during the 1870s and 80s, by 1888 Seventh-day Adventist membership in the entire South “was about 500 white and 50 colored.”<sup>4</sup>

Thus, during the 1890’s stirring testimonies came from the pen of Ellen G. White admonishing Seventh-day Adventists to take up the work of helping the poor in the Southern field.<sup>5</sup> She envisioned Adventist lay families moving into rural southern communities where there was little or no Adventist presence. They were to teach



<< E.A. Sutherland co-founded Madison College and was also first president of ASI.

African Americans and poor whites improved agriculture methods, how to read and write, better health principles and Bible truths.

One of the first to respond to this call was her son, James Edson White. In 1895 Edson began to work among the black people in the Southern States. His *Morning Star* steamboat served as a floating mission and school for Negro people along the Mississippi and Yazoo Rivers.<sup>6</sup>

To aid their expanding operations, Edson and his associates organized the Southern Missionary Society. “By the early years of the twentieth century the society had nearly fifty schools in operation.”<sup>7</sup>

### A DREAM FULFILLED

Then in 1904, on a heaven-chosen plot of land in Madison, Tennessee—near Nashville—the young reform-minded educator Edward Sutherland and his associate Percy Magan, along with their sturdy band of pioneers, started a school.

The Nashville Agricultural and Normal Institute—later named Madison College—was “established to train home and foreign missionary teachers” who were to be self-supporting.<sup>8</sup> Ellen White instructed that their school should “be of an entirely different order from those we have instituted.” They were “not to follow the methods





Ellen White, seated second from left, with Percy Magan and E.A. Sutherland (standing second from left and second from right, respectively) and others at Madison College in 1909.

that have been adopted in our older established schools.”<sup>9</sup>

In this new school at Madison “teachers worked side by side with students in building, farming, and whatever else needed to be done”<sup>10</sup> Students saw firsthand the needs of the rural southern poor and were instructed in their obligation to help these people of the hills.

Ellen White was instrumental in the development of Madison. She helped form the school, wrote a series of special testimonies titled “The Madison School” and was a charter member of the board of trustees—the only college board she ever served on. Mrs. White continued in that capacity until failing health caused her to resign in 1914.

## A SPECTACLE TO THE WORLD

As early as 1908, Mrs. White made the striking prophecy that if the Madison plan were properly expanded and faithfully carried out, “we as a people would be a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men.”<sup>11</sup>

At the time, no one would have thought this possible. But suddenly, in 1938, Madison College captured the spotlight of public acclaim. In a *Reader’s Digest* that year, Eleanor Roosevelt, in her “My Day” column, praised this self-supporting college in which students could work to pay for their education.

This positive opinion was echoed in many other newspapers and magazines at the time. Dr. Philip P. Claxton, former United States Commissioner of Education, praised Madison College as one of the “best

schools in the nation.”<sup>12</sup>

Encouragement to expand this self-supporting work came from Ellen White, who wrote, “Every possible means should be devised to establish schools of the Madison order in various parts of the South.”<sup>13</sup> Many responded to her instruction and ventured out from Madison to start educational, medical and agricultural work in the South and beyond.

The earliest school to be established by students from Madison was the Oak Grove Garden School near Goodlettsville, Tennessee—founded in 1906 by Charles Alden and Braden Mulford. In 1907 Mulford along with Forest West started the Fountain

Head School, which is today Highland Academy. That same year C. Holm established a school at Paradise Ridge, Tennessee, after being offered thirty acres of land if he would start a school on the ridge.<sup>14</sup>

Then in 1908 the Walen and Wallace families bought a farm near Portland, Tennessee and founded the Chestnut Hill Farm Schools. Within four years Chestnut Hill had fifty-six students.

That same year a Madison-modeled school for African American children was established about five miles outside Nashville.<sup>15</sup>

In 1909 T. A. Graves started a school at Lawrenceburg, Tennessee which first met in his woodshed. This school was eventually turned over to the local conference and is today the Bill Egly Seventh-day Adventist School.



James Edson White, son of Ellen White, was a pioneer of the lay outreach movement in the South.



## PHENOMENAL GROWTH

By 1912, E. A. Sutherland could report that there were 28 schools with nearly 1,000 pupils as a result of the educational work at Madison.<sup>16</sup> Over the next decade Madison students started schools in Tennessee, Georgia, Mississippi, Alabama, Kentucky and the Carolinas.

A school was started at Reeves, Georgie on the site that is today Georgia-Cumberland Academy. The Pine Mountain School was begun at Long Island, Alabama. The Flat Rock School was established at Douglasville, Georgia. The Kingsfield School at Franklin, Tennessee, the Swallen School at St. Andrews, Tennessee, and the Cumberland Industrial School at Daylight, Tennessee were among the many self-supporting schools started in the first two decades after Madison began.<sup>17</sup>

Still more schools came onto the scene in subsequent years. Leland and Alice Straw launched the Little Creek School in 1940 at Concord, Tennessee. Pine Forest Academy, originally established by the Alabama-Mississippi Conference, eventually became a self-supporting school. Others from this era included Pewee Valley Junior Academy, Pine Hill Academy, the Wildwood elementary school, Laurelbrook School, Harbert Hills



*The Flat Rock School in Douglasville, Georgia.*

Academy, and many more.

North Carolina in particular saw tremendous growth in self-supporting schools. In 1910 a group near Asheville, North Carolina responded to Ellen White's call for workers in the South. In that year the Brownsbergers and the Spaldings started the Asheville Agricultural School, which is today Fletcher Academy. 18 Workers from Fletcher started the Pisgah Industrial Institute in 1914, known today as Mt. Pisgah Academy.<sup>19</sup> Fletcher also aided in the development of a school at Banner Elk, North Carolina and the Glen Alpine Industrial School near Morganton, North Carolina.

Some of these schools across the South existed for a short time and then, having accomplished their purpose, passed out of existence. Some have been in continuous self-supporting operation to this day and others are now run by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Approximately fifteen schools in existence today are in this latter category. Including Madison Academy, Mount Pisgah Academy, Highland Academy, Pewee Valley Junior Academy, Silver Creek Adventist School, Floral Crest Junior Academy, High County Christian and Meister Memorial SDA School.

The educational example at Madison and Fletcher and the schools that grew out from them have given inspiration for other such institutions across North America: Castle Valley Academy



*Students at the Pisgah Industrial Institute in Chandler, North Carolina.*





*The Kingsfield School in Franklin, Tennessee*

in Utah, which is today DayStar Adventist Academy; Fountainview Academy in British Columbia; Oklahoma Academy; La Vida Mission School in New Mexico; Advent Home Learning Center in Tennessee; the Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia; Weimar Academy in California; Miracle Meadows School in West Virginia; Ouachita Hills Academy and College in Arkansas; Laurelwood Academy in Oregon; and Heritage Academy in Tennessee. Today there are more than 20 schools across North America that are affiliated with ASI.

The General Conference in its 1946 Autumn Council voted to create the Commission on Rural Living for the purpose of providing information and guidance to Adventist families and individuals who chose "whole-some rural environments for their homes as conducive to spiritual life and growth; as a safeguard to the children; as a means of evangelizing the towns, villages, and country regions; as an aid to economic security; and as a means of avoiding labor strife and escaping the impending destruction of the cities."<sup>20</sup>

Dr. E. A. Sutherland was called from Madison College to the General Conference to head this new commission, which in 1947 brought into being the Association of Seventh-day Adventist Self-supporting Institutions, or ASI.<sup>21</sup>

Ellen White's vision of lay people entering rural communities for the purpose of uplifting, educating, and ministering to the spiritual, physical and mental needs of the people had become the curriculum and passion of Madison College and its satellite institutions. Now, through ASI, this effective model was to be spread throughout all of North America.

By following divine counsel and direction concerning proper education, the self-supporting schools connected with ASI are, and will continue to be, centers that lead young people to their Savior, equip them for

service and duty to their fellow man, and provide them with opportunities for evangelism.

Surely "We have an army of youth today who can do much if they are properly directed and encouraged... Let all be so trained that they may rightly represent the truth, giving the reason of the hope that is within them, and honoring God in any branch of the work where they are qualified to labor."<sup>22</sup>

**Brian Traxler** is director of education at the E.A. Sutherland Education Association. He and his wife, Joy, live in Collegedale, Tennessee.

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# How-To

## WISE COUNSEL FOR NON-PROFIT MINISTRIES AND THEIR CONSTITUENTS

Non-profit organizations are a central part of ASI, comprising a major segment of ASI's membership. And the professionals and business people who are ASI members often get involved with non-profits as volunteers, supporters and board members.

Thus it is important for us to understand ways that we can optimize the operation of a non-profit organization. We must best serve our ministries so they can best serve others.

To address this issue, *Inside ASI* recently spoke with two gentlemen well versed in non-profit management.



**HAROLD LANCE** was a trial lawyer for 32 years. He's also a longtime ASI member and former ASI president. After retiring from law, Harold served as president of Outpost Centers International for nine years. He lives in Ukiah, California.



**STAN SMITH** is a business owner living in British Columbia, Canada. He has been actively involved in several supporting ministries, including the development of Fountainview Academy, a 70-student boarding school in BC. He is also ASI vice president for finance.

**ASI:** *Let's start right at the beginning. What is the first step someone should take in establishing a non-profit?*

**HAROLD LANCE:** Fundamentally, the idea to start a non-profit must answer the basics of who, what, why, where, when and how? If the basics can't be answered, than that's where the process should stop.

**STAN SMITH:** As the Bible says, in the multitude of counselors there is wisdom. A decision to start a non-profit organization should be followed by consultation with the appropriate accounting and legal professionals to set up a good structure and establish systems for man-

aging money and administrative functions. And also, seek guidance from those with experience in ministry.

**Articles of incorporation and by-laws can seem a bit tedious and inconsequential. Why are they important?**

**LANCE:** The articles of incorporation are the fundamental document that defines the scope of the ministry. They need to be carefully crafted to define the intended purpose of the organization. For example, is it to be aligned with the Seventh-day Adventist Church? Are its officers and directors to be Adventist Church members? In the event of dissolution where will the assets go? Many poorly drafted corporate documents have resulted in regret when issues arise that were not anticipated.

**Let's focus on those who will lead and direct an organization. What should we consider when selecting a board of directors?**

**LANCE:** Since the ultimate control of the organization is in the board of directors, this becomes the most important decision in the success of the ministry. So ask yourself, do these people have integrity, good judgment, practicality, experience, successful career histories, availability, connections, cooperativeness, freedom from conflicts of interest, generosity?

**SMITH:** Many non-profit organizations look for directors who are potential donors or who may have prominence in important circles, assuming this will assure them more rapid growth in achieving their objectives. While those assumptions may be true, the most important criteria are what Harold just mentioned. An organization whose board members exhibit those characteristics will also achieve healthy growth and support.

**LANCE:** And people with means often have goals that may or not be what the ministry founders had in mind. Money may come with a price.

*And what about selecting leadership, like the president and so forth?*

**SMITH:** Leaders who have the full spectrum of abilities required for the job usually don't exist. What we often see as successful leadership is usually the result of a talented team. Leaders need to be chosen and evaluated on the basis of their ability to bring together a team that can achieve the required results, and also their capacity to influence those around them in a consistent, effective and humble manner.

**LANCE:** More ministries fail due to lack of leadership at the officer level than for any other reason. Of all leaders the president is the most important. The skill of the president to see the larger picture and to inspire others to follow and carry out the vision is critical to success.

*Money is always a chief concern. What are the key factors to an organization's financial stability?*

**SMITH:** One of the most important but often neglected key factors is adequate and realistic planning. Financial instability is frequently the result of a failure to recognize events and circumstances that could have been identified and prevented through a strategic planning process.

The startup of a non-profit organization is usually driven by a vision or conviction. At times this perspective can result in a carelessness or disregard for the principles of business. There may also be the assumption that God will take care of problems that could have been avoided with better planning. However, the laws of business are as much God-given principles as are the laws of health or nature, and obedience to them will bring a blessing.

**LANCE:** The ability to keep income and spending in balance is critical. Timely and accurate records must be available to management—the spenders—who in turn must function under both a budget and defined policies that have to be approved by the board of directors.

If income has failed to keep up with needs, the management team and board must make prioritized budget adjustments. Openly sharing financial information with the officers and board members will assist in enlisting responsible help.

*Directly tied to finances is having active supporters. How does an organization develop a base of such supporters?*

**SMITH:** Tell the story of your ministry often, and with sincerity and conviction. Most of all be transparent and truthful. Financial support comes when individuals identify with the organization's vision and strategy and

believe in its integrity. In addition to promoting your organization widely, find those people who already share your ministry's priorities and vision and build close relationships with them.

**LANCE:** Rarely do the founders of an organization have the resources to carry out their vision. So where does help come from? Others besides the founders must be convinced that the ministry's purposes are worthwhile and achievable. Credibility doesn't just happen; it's earned. It's a daunting task for a ministry to survive long enough to earn respect and support. It's almost like trying to lift yourself by your boot straps. Not easy!

In order for someone to make a decision to help a ministry financially, he or she must know about its activities and be persuaded that it is practical and worthwhile, that leadership is capable and trustworthy. Brochures, articles in journals, personal contacts, interviews—all can catch the attention of potential supporters. Good planning includes good promotion that's appealing and truthful.

*Last question: how should an organization deal with disappointing developments?*

**LANCE:** When disappointments and troubles come, and they will, how a ministry deals with them will be key to survival and continuing support. Too many ministries, when faced with disappointing circumstances, fail to react positively.

Certainly the best way to deal with disappointing developments is to avoid them in the first place. Good managers and board of directors will see most problems before they get out of hand and will deal with them in ways that minimize loss.

It may seem awkward, but when public embarrassments occur, ministries with a plan in place to mitigate damage are more likely to survive without scars. Integrity, good judgment and fairness are the best weapons against bad news.

**SMITH:** We should expect disappointing developments. The greatest people in the Bible had incredibly tough times. It has been said that the brick walls we face in life either prove our dedication, or stop those with inadequate commitment.

Frequently in the work of ministry we put our faith in people, systems and money and not enough in the role of Providence. Remembering evidences of how God has inspired and helped in past times of difficulty encourages us to request and expect his guidance in the present.

*Gentlemen, thank you so much.*



# ASI Abroad

## Inter-American Division

**ASI Dominican Republic** is pleased to announce the opening of their new chapter in the Central Dominican Conference. Many local businessmen as well as Dominican church leaders attended the chapter's opening meeting. Domingo Guzman has been named executive director of the new chapter.

The ninth ASI Inter-American Division convention was also held in the Dominican Republic August 20-23 at the Coral Costa Caribe resort in the city of Juan Dolio. ASI Inter-America is online at [www.asi-interamerica.org](http://www.asi-interamerica.org).

## Europe

**ASI Europe** held its continent-wide convention this summer in Tirgu Mores, Romania. Celebrating the 10th anniversary of ASI Europe, the convention was highlighted by a record combined offering of nearly one million euros, which will support 65 projects.

Angel Duo was elected president of ASI Europe, replacing Audrey Balderstone, who had served as president for the past five years. Continued growth was yet another reason to celebrate at the convention. Currently ASI Europe is comprised of ten chapters, and plans are underway to add five more. The next ASI Europe Convention is scheduled for 2011.

Conectate 2008, a program similar to the NAD ASI Youth for Jesus and sponsored by **ASI Spain**, was held



Seville, Spain was the site for Conectate 2008, a youth evangelism program sponsored by ASI Spain.



ASI Dominican Attendees.

this summer in the Spanish city of Seville. A group of 40 youth participated in Conectate 08, and they were involved in direct outreach to the people of Seville.

Many locals were touched by the genuine care exhibited by the young people, and numerous individuals asked to be baptized. The youth who participated were also blessed with a new vigor and vision for God's work. Participant Raquel Borrego said of Conectate 08, "I have felt that burning sensation from the inside of myself, that makes you feel like shouting to the world 'God loves you'."

**ASI France** also sponsored a youth evangelism program, sending a group of young people to Madagascar where they participated in two ShareHim evangelistic campaigns.

ASI Europe is online at [www.asi-europe.org](http://www.asi-europe.org)

## ASIA

A joint Southern Asia-Pacific and Northern Asia-Pacific Division ASI convention will be held December 4-7 at the Grand Seasons Hotel in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The theme this year is "Chosen to Serve", with featured speakers including David Gates, president of Gospel Ministries International; Donna & Denzil McNeilus, current and past president of ASI, respectively; and Chester Clark III, ASI general vice president.

For registration information, contact Mr. Yew Lip Sin at [asi.klmetro@gmail.com](mailto:asi.klmetro@gmail.com) or by phone at +60 (3) 7984-7795. Registration is available until October 31.

## A New Ray of Sunshine

ASIAN AID COMPLETES CONSTRUCTION OF NEW CHURCH IN INDIA

On February 17 Asian Aid celebrated the dedication of the new church at their Sunshine Orphanage and School in Bangalore, India. After a multitude of unforeseen issues had delayed the project, to dedicate the finished church—complete with sanctuary and extra rooms for Sabbath school and community outreach—was indeed something to relish.

The project was part of the 2006 ASI Convention offering and provided a much-appreciated solution to a very real need. Sunshine's Seventh-day Adventist congregation had previously been meeting in classrooms at the school, a location unsuited to a growing church. The Adventist church nearest Sunshine is 45 minutes away by bus—not far by some standards, but a considerable distance when transporting a busload of kids each week.

So with funds received from ASI, Asian Aid teamed with Maranatha Volunteers International and was ready to begin building. Before construction commenced however, a number of

obstacles arose. One of these was a plan by the local municipal authority to build a highway right in front of the church site. Another issue arose which called into question the design concept of the project.

These difficulties delayed construction considerably, but in July 2007 the new church was finally under-



**The new church at Sunshine Orphanage and School in Bangalore, India.**

way—though torrential monsoon rains resulted in slow progress at first. By February the new church was complete; and what's more, despite all the delays, the project came in on budget. On February 17 the new Sunshine church was dedicated. Bill Tucker and a team from the Quiet Hour joined with Asian Aid and Maranatha in the celebration.

The new building has opened doors to further outreach at Sunshine. Along with the orphanage and school ministries, Sunshine will now conduct a variety of community outreach projects from the church building, including literacy programs and health education.

Ritualistic religious observance is common in India, and having a formal place of worship is of high importance. So having a church home sends a positive message to the local community and also greatly assists newly converted members. Thus simply having a church building of their own has greatly strengthened the Sunshine congregation.

A sincere thank you to everyone who supported this project through the 2006 ASI Convention offering. Your gift is enabling Asian Aid to reach still more souls for Christ. "The church is already a blessing to the school and the orphanage," Sharon Heise of Asian Aid writes. And we know it's only the beginning.



**Beulah Fernandez, director of Sunshine Orphanage, prepares to cut the ribbon at the new church.**



**Some boys from the orphanage at the church dedication.**



## Living Water

WATER SYSTEMS ARE RENOVATED AT LA VIDA MISSION

**N**orthwest New Mexico is an arid desert, with an average annual rainfall of two inches. Access to a reliable water supply in this region is crucial. And many of the Navajo people living in the area do not have running water in their own homes.

Thus one of the services provided by La Vida Mission to the local Navajo is free water access, via the mission's well and water system. More than 70 families make multiple trips to the mission each week to fill large portable water tanks—often the sole supply of water for both the families and their livestock.

It had been apparent for some time that La Vida's water system required both serious repairs and upgrades. The well was old, so too the water tank, and a central pressure and filtration system for the whole campus was badly needed. In fact, water for the houses and cafeteria was delivered by hand after being pumped at another location. And to make matters worse, the well broke down right before last year's ASI convention, leaving the campus without water for several weeks.



**Workmen pump silt out of the well at La Vida Mission.**



**A crew reconditions La Vida's 40-year-old well.**

Part of the 2005 ASI Convention offering went to fund major water system improvements at La Vida Mission. The project is now nearing completion after an array of repairs and additions. Most recently the 40-

year-old well was refurbished and re-cased, and a new well house constructed. A reverse osmosis purification system was also installed.

The project has also included the installation of several pressure pumps and a pressure tank, as well as low-consumption toilets. And many of the dripping, leaky faucets around campus were replaced.

High efficiency hot water tanks were installed in the office/cafeteria building. A showering area in the same building also received renovation. A free hot shower is another service La Vida provides to the Navajo community. Since many locals have no running water at home, a hot shower is not taken for granted.

Numerous other small improvements were made across campus—all part of a larger effort not just to supply water to a campus and community but to open the way to Living Water. La Vida's free services to the Navajo are a unique means of outreach to a very special people. Thank you to everyone who made the water system improvements possible through the ASI Convention offering.

More information about La Vida Mission can be found at [www.LaVidaMission.org](http://www.LaVidaMission.org) or by calling them at 505-786-5539.



Thanks for coming. Bring a friend!

## From Pew Christian to Passionate Christian

BY MICHAEL JAMES TUAZON

I first heard about ASI when a businessman came and spoke at a local church here in Southern California. He shared a testimony from an individual who made a million-dollar pledge, not knowing how he was going to get the money yet having full confidence God would deliver.

The story gripped me because of my passion for finance and my desire to succeed in the business realm. I was moved because it had never occurred to me to live my entire life—including money and time—for the Lord. I thought it was good enough to be a “pew Christian” and that by giving my tithe and offering I was fulfilling my “Christian duty”.

Unfortunately, I did not give my heart to the Lord that day, or even that year. Through hard work, good grades and sheer determination I found myself working for a Fortune 500 company in North Hollywood. I was on the fast track to be a future executive with the company. In addition, I was a member of one of the foremost business fraternities in the country, while serving as vice president of a top internship network.

Though I had accomplished much at a young age and had a promising career, I wasn't happy. No matter what I accomplished, obtained or won, nothing filled the void in my heart.

Through a chain of miraculous events, I gave my heart to the Lord six years ago and pledged myself to unreservedly pursue his leading in my life. Following God has not always been easy. There were times when I received ridicule for standing up for the Sabbath or



my “different diet”. However, the very people who were making fun of my beliefs at work were all laid off when the company went through a financial restructuring.

I am now the Director of Operations for N-Star Development, a builder in Southern California. I've been able to “Share Christ in the Marketplace” through having a Bible study with the president of the company. In fact, when we were struggling financially, the president asked me to lead out in a short devotional reading and prayer.

I have also given my time to the Lord by leading different ministries, including The Josiah Ministry, a 501 (c)(3) non-profit corporation that helps various small-scale ministries—including Audio Verse and the regional Generation of Youth for Christ—accept donations. I also serve as assistant to the president of Generation of Youth for Christ and am director of Finish the Work Ministries, the revival and evangelism arm of the ASI Pacific Union chapter.

For me, ASI has meant so much. It has provided me with a forum to meet, pray and find counsel with other members. People who share the same desire to be lights to this dark world, to use their influence, money, and talents to do all they can to see Jesus Christ.

**Would you like to join ASI? You are warmly invited to be a part of Sharing Christ in the Marketplace. Membership information can be found online at [www.ASIministries.org](http://www.ASIministries.org), or by calling 301-680-6450.**



# WHAT WOULD YOU GIVE TO SEE THEM IN HEAVEN?

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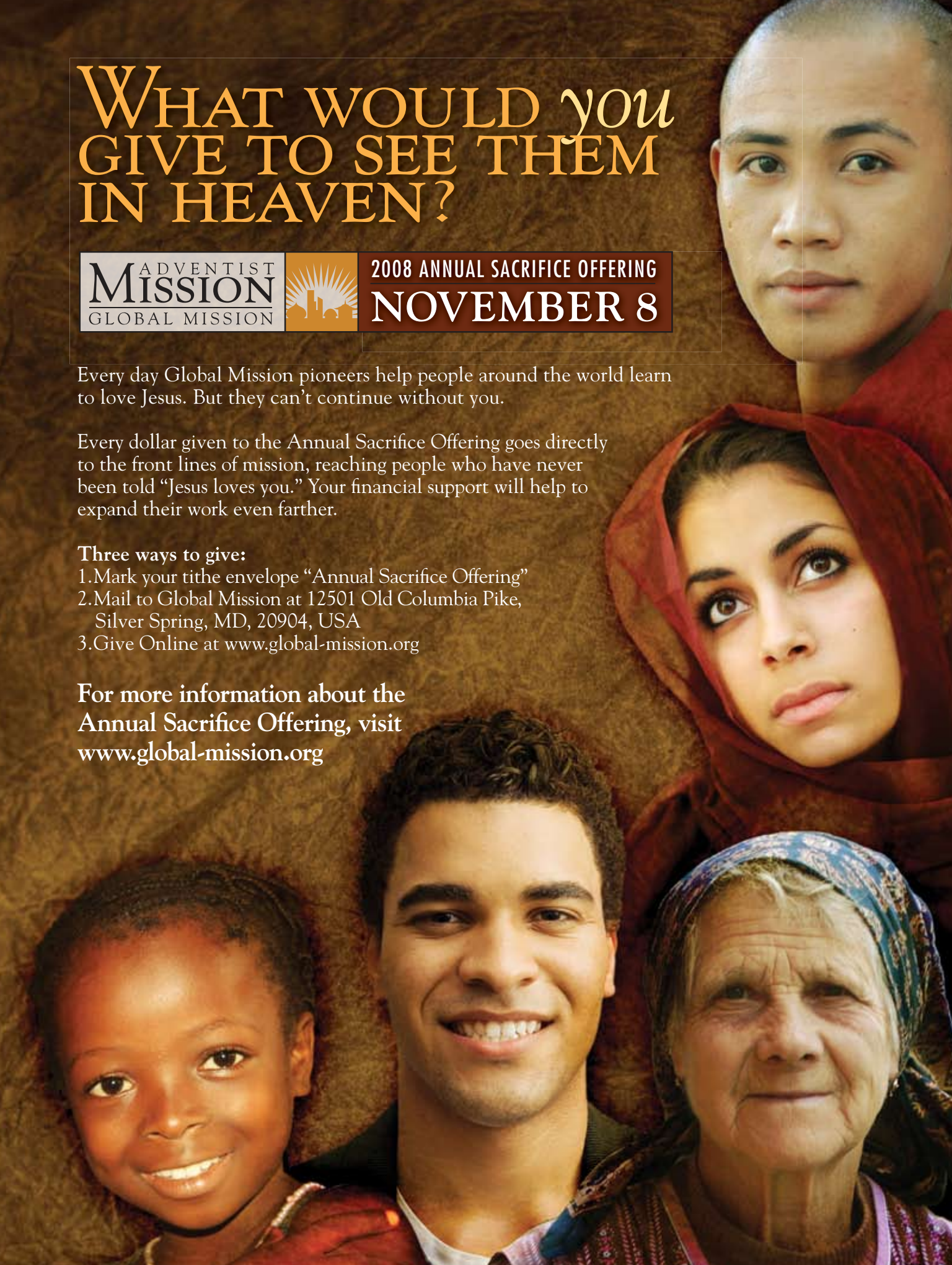
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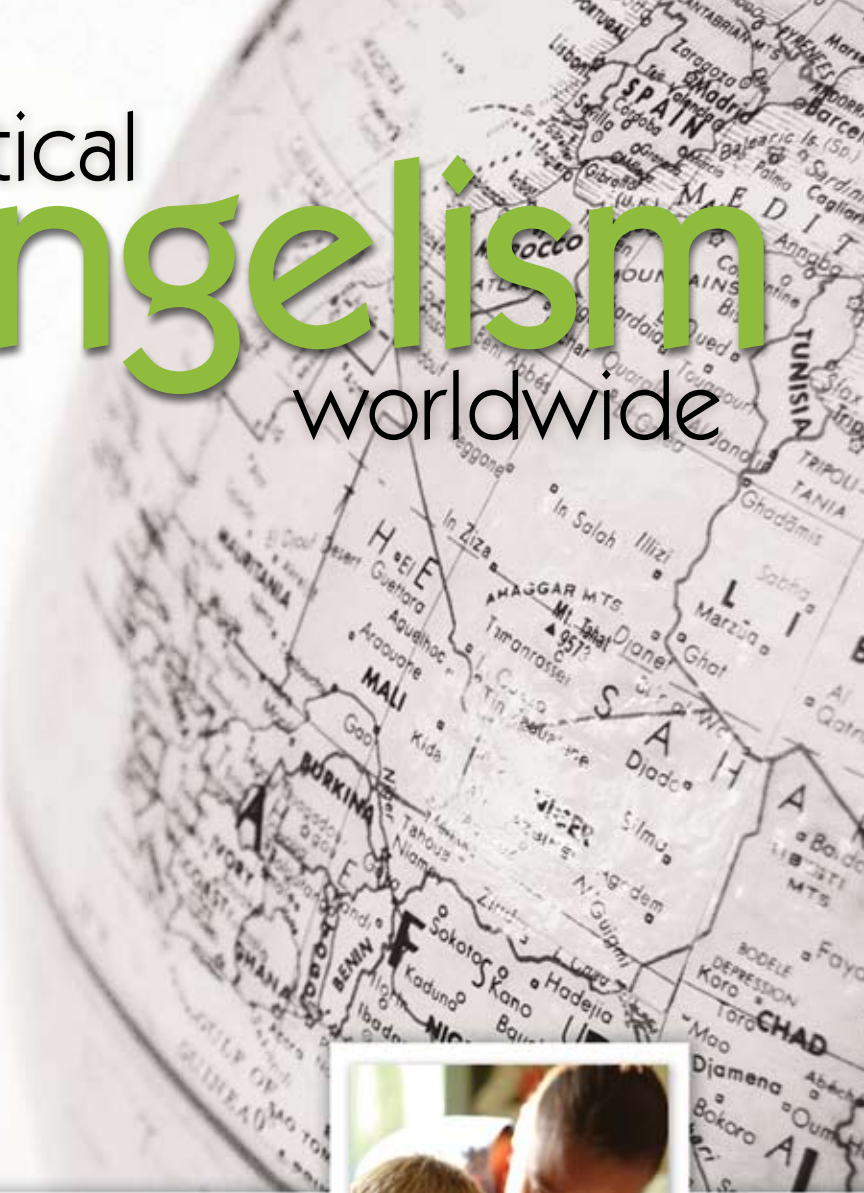




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