

EMBRACING CAROLINA WITH THE COMPASSIONATE CALL OF CHRIST

CAROLINA ACTION

ISSUE 4, 2022



Breaking Chains

EVANGELISM ISSUE



A few weeks ago, Carole and I had the wonderful opportunity to travel to Haymarket, Virginia.

Here, Pastor Mark and Teenie Finley have established a center for evangelism known as the Living Hope Retreat Center. Seven other Carolina pastors joined us, along with pastors from the Chesapeake, New Jersey, and Ohio Conferences, for worship, fellowship and equipping. Our goal was to sharpen our skills in leading people to become faithful disciples of Christ and active members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The Carolina pastors who met with Mark Finley included Justin Howard, Enoch Omosa, Ben Rueda, Eric Bates, Mark Kent, Cornelius Kamei, and Ralph Henderson.

Evangelism has four primary stages:

1. The **proclamation** of biblical truths central to our love for Jesus—truths we embrace as an Adventist Church — in a logical and understandable format.



2. The **conviction** of hearts as people are moved by the Holy Spirit to believe what has been proclaimed.
3. Persuasively creating the **desire to respond** to the conviction.
4. The **action of choosing** a life in harmony with biblical truth and a faithful walk with Christ.

I am not even close to having the caliber of evangelistic skills of Dale Pollett, Steve Vail, Mark Finley or John Bradshaw! However, as a pastor in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, I am called and committed to Christ’s commission of soul winning — to go and make

disciples for Him — with the few talents that God has given me. This is why I believe that evangelism and discipleship go hand in hand as the heartbeat of the church.

There are a host of biblical reasons for this conviction. Here are three of them:

- Evangelism is God’s means for saving lost people. Paul was very clear about this in Romans 10:13-15, “For whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on Him in

whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: ‘How beautiful are the feet of

those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things.” NKJV.

- Evangelism brings joy to the heart of God. Jesus reminded us of this in Luke 15:7 when He told his disciples that “There will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance” NKJV.
- Evangelism gives me a reason for living and fulfills the meaning of my existence. The prophet Isaiah spoke of this in Chapter 43, verse 21, “This people I have formed for Myself. They



Continued on page 14.



FROM THE
PRESIDENT’S PEN

INDIVIDUAL Evangelism

One of our Carolina pastors, Bryan Arvelo, said it well when he said, “Evangelism is a lifestyle. It’s a way that we handle ourselves every single day. Evangelism is an opportunity that we have every day to reach other folks.”



Over the past few years, we have been challenged in many ways. We’ve seen death, sorrow, and depression on unprecedented levels, and one of the only stable, steadfast

places we have traditionally turned to for hope — the church — has changed. In these circumstances, it’s easy to find ourselves in an evangelism slump, letting time pass by while we deal with... well, life.

But in these times, there are even more opportunities. The opportunity to reach others in similar circumstances. The opportunity to see the signs of the soon coming of our Lord and feel compassion for the lost. And the opportunity to BE the church these lost souls want to find. This is the individual responsibility of each and every one of us. What an honor and pleasure it is when we know we have answered the call!

Ellen White penned these words in *The Ministry of Healing*: “Everywhere there is a tendency to substitute the work of organizations for individual effort. Human wisdom tends to consolidation, to centralization, to the building up of great churches and institutions. Multitudes leave to institutions and organizations the work of benevolence; they excuse themselves from contact with the world, and their hearts grow cold. They become self-absorbed and unimpressible. Love for God and man dies out of the soul. Christ commits to His followers an individual work, — a work that cannot be done by proxy. Ministry to the sick and the poor, the giving of the gospel to the lost, is not to be left to committees or organized charities. Individual responsibility, individual effort, personal sacrifice, is the requirement of the gospel” page 147.

Those are powerful words. Throughout this issue of *The Carolina Action*, you will read stories of conversion which are the results of someone’s individual efforts to reach lost souls. There are many more stories we could have included. I am continually encouraged and excited to visit our churches, groups, and companies and meet those who are there because someone — perhaps you — gave them an invitation and the Holy Spirit took it from there. I see the gratitude in their faces, and

the relief in their hearts.

So far this year we have had 608 baptisms and professions of faith. Praise God! But here comes the question (and I know you’ve heard it before, but here goes): What if every single one of us in the Carolina Conference was a soul-winner? Not a preacher, or teacher, or evangelist, or writer, or door-to-door Bible worker...but just simply a winner of souls. Through whatever means God places on your heart. It could be one of those ways I just mentioned, but I trust that through prayer and reflection, you will find YOUR way. Because God has called you. And what an honor and pleasure it is when we know we have answered the call!

—Glen Altermatt, *Evangelism Director*



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CONTACT: 2701 East W.T. Harris Blvd. • Mailing Address: P.O. Box 44270, Charlotte, N.C., 28215 • P (704) 596-3200, F (704) 596-5775 • www.carolinasda.org

ADMINISTRATION: President, Leslie Louis: llouis@carolinasda.org • VP for Administration/Executive Secretary, Gary Moyer: gmoyer@carolinasda.org;

Associate, Deborah Hutchinson • VP for Finance, Rick Russell: rrussell@carolinasda.org, Assoc. Norma Sandoval; Undertreasurer, Chad Grundy: cgrundy@carolinasda.org

DEPARTMENT DIRECTORY: Adventist Christian Book Center: Stanley Shireman • Adult Sabbath School/Personal Ministries: David Wright • ASI/Religious Liberty: Leslie Louis • Auditors: Ellen Castro, Carol Marsden • Children’s Ministries: Kathy Russell • Church Planting/Church Revitalization/Global Missions: Ricardo Palacios • Communication: Rebecca Carpenter; Associate, Courtney Herod • Community Services/Disaster Response/Generous Living: David Graham • Disability Ministries: Gary Moyer • Education: Gary Rouse; Associate, Rick Anderson • Evangelism: Glen Altermatt • Evangelist: Steve Vail • Family Ministries: Eric Bates • Health Ministries: Cris Cazarine Dutra • Hispanic Ministries: Ricardo Palacios • Human Resources: Deborah Hutchinson; Associate, JoAlyce Waugh • Information Services: Elias Sandoval • Loss Control: Angela Prieto • Men’s Ministries: Tony LaPorte • Ministerial: Haskell Williams; Associates, Glen Altermatt, Darryl Bentley, Ricardo Palacios • Ministerial Spouses Association: Carole Louis • Prison Ministries: Jim Wetmore • Property Development: Chad Grundy, Rick Russell • Publishing: Lance Morrison • ShareHim: Jeremiah Weeks • Singles Ministry: Eli Rojas, Jr. • Trust Services: Rick Hutchinson • Women’s/Prayer Ministries: Beth Grissom • Youth/Young Adults: Hector Gonzalez

ACTION STAFF: Editor/Layout design: Rebecca Carpenter • Assistant Editor: Courtney Herod communication@carolinasda.org



A Family FOUND

Jessie grew up in Mexico until his family relocated to California when he was nine years old.

Araceli was also born in Mexico, but she was brought to the United States when she was very young. She was raised Catholic in a large family of eight. One day she saw Jesse walking with her cousin and thought he was a good looking boy. She thought, “I wonder who that is.”

They were soon boyfriend and girlfriend, and cared very much for each other. When Araceli learned she was pregnant, she was scared and confused. She wanted to tell her parents, but she was not ready to tell them at that time.

In the 1990s, there was a push by many toward abortions, and Araceli was afraid her family would want her to have one. Then the couple had an argument, and Jesse went away.

Today she says, “I felt relief. And when he came back to see me, I was thinking he came to tell my parents. In my mind I had to figure out a way to make him go away.”

So, Araceli told Jesse she didn’t want to be with him anymore. He answered, “But why? Why would you do that? What about the baby? She said, “This is not your baby. This is my baby.”

After the breakup, Jesse was devastated. “I was truly in love with her and it really hurt,” he shares. Trying

to drown his pain, he started using drugs, alcohol, and cigarettes. His mother sent him back to live with his uncle and grandfather in Mexico. It was there he realized he wanted more from life.

Araceli’s parents found out she was pregnant and asked her to leave home. So Araceli did her best to go to school and support her son while trying to be a good mother.

For 10 years, Jesse didn’t know he had a son. Then one day his brother called and told him. He immediately called Araceli. By that time his son was almost 11 years old.

“I don’t know why,” says Araceli.

“I totally assumed that he had known all these years about my son and he didn’t reach out.”

When she asked Jesse to forgive her for the choices she had made, he showed no resentment. “He said he loved me. He always did. And I just felt like, wow, what kind of love is that?”

Eleven more years passed from that first contact, and their son was ready to graduate from college. The couple still hadn’t seen each other since their breakup. They made plans to meet before the graduation ceremony.

“I remember when I first saw him, I realized that we always loved each other. We just were really young when we first met,” says Araceli. “And I do remember seeing pictures of him and just feeling these butterflies in my heart.”

They began to see more and more of each other and decided at this very early stage of their new relationship that they wanted to have God in the

middle.

The plan was for Jesse to sell everything and move to California, but for some reason they started talking and praying about it and the Lord said, “You guys need to go to Carolina.” Araceli wasn’t sure about leaving the comfort of familiar surroundings, friends and family, but she wanted to follow God’s will.

She began to learn more about Jesse’s religion and found it different and more in-depth than what she had experienced in the Catholic faith.

“I think that the Lord need to bring me here and take me away from my comfort zone so I can be open to see what I don’t have,” shares Araceli. “My family is not my security blanket. The Lord is.”

Araceli and Jesse started going to The Vine church in Apex, N.C. “Every time they walked in, we would do what we always do,” said Pastor Cris Dutra. “You know, very quickly we all became very acquainted and became friends.”

The couple started Bible studies with the pastor. Everything was new for Araceli, and Jesse enjoyed reviewing what he had learned when he was younger. They began walking together with Christ and made the decision to be baptized.

Jesse and Araceli took a long road to rediscovering each other, but this time, they did it with the Lord at their side. With Him, they truly have reunited their family forever.

—Rebecca Carpenter. Photos by Henrique Gomes.



[View video story](#)

Searching...

Julia Porter was searching for God in all the wrong places. She grew up in a Christian home, though her parents divorced when she was young. Her mother was a Free Methodist, and when they moved to Connecticut, her stepfather started taking the family to a Korean Baptist church.

"I call it a culty Baptist church where the women didn't wear pants or makeup," says Julia. The kids weren't allowed to watch TV, listen to the radio or indulge in other forms of entertainment deemed unsuitable.

When Julia was 16, without warning, she was no longer accepted at church. She couldn't be in the Christmas play. She couldn't go outside and play with the kids. It was all taken away.

Fast forward to the age of 30. Julia was married, had a four-year-old son, and had left the church. She felt that something was missing in her life, so she began looking for God. She started reading about religion, and read a lot of religious books, but never opened the Bible.

One day she came across a video about the Temple of Baal, and how the archway — an entry into the temple — had been destroyed. The video said that archeologists wanted to rebuild this archway and premiere it in New York City, but the city refused to have it.

Memories of her past in the church flooded her mind. "All this stuff start-

ed coming back ... like Satan really exists, I thought. And there was God asking me, knocking on my heart."

Julia picked up a Bible and started reading it, realizing how silly it was to be searching for God and never open His Word. Almost immediately she knew she was doing something right, because everybody around her could tell she had started reading the Bible.

"They looked at me like I was crazy. I could have any book in my hand. I could have the 'Satan's bible' in my hand. I could have all the Gnostic religions, Hinduism, all this and they wouldn't even cross their eyes at me. But I pick up the Bible and there was just something there."

Julia started praying for wisdom and discernment. She didn't know how to even find a church. Soon she had lost almost everything. She couldn't find a job, and eventually even lost her home.

She began attending a church, but when the COVID pandemic hit, the church shut their doors. "I was really floored at that time because I thought, why are we shutting the doors on God?"

That's when she came across some videos by Walter Veith about the Spirit of Prophecy. Julia thought, "Spirit of Prophecy. Like what is that?" She learned that he was talking about books written by Ellen White. After reading some of them, she looked up the Adventist Church, and

started attending the congregation in Concord, North Carolina.

Quiet and shy, Julia didn't interact much with others. It wasn't until they reconvened Sabbath school that she came out of her shell.

She loved the open discussion and interaction with the group. "It was like, wow, this church likes to study," she shares. While they taught her, they were encouraging her to study her Bible as well. Julia knew at that point God was taking her through this journey. He had opened her eyes.

"I told Him that all I wanted was the truth," she says.

Julia had never really known what being baptized meant. But she did know that when you're baptized, you publicly commit yourself to God, and she wanted that.

"I just want to work for God," Julia concludes. "It doesn't matter what it is, where He calls me, what I have to do, or what I have to give up. I just want to work for Him."

—Rebecca Carpenter. Photos by Henrique Gomes.



[View video story](#)



† We believe that physical, mental and emotional health promotes effective spiritual growth.
† We believe in encouraging excellence through the leadership.



Where Are They Now?

DAVID AND SIERRA HERNANDEZ



For as long as she could remember, Sierra Hernandez had been searching for Bible truth. She and her husband, David, were especially intrigued by the book of Revelation. One day in 2014, she prayed for God to show her the meaning of the strange words and symbols found there.

Then, three days later they received a flyer in the mail for Revelation Today, a series of meetings held in Charlotte, N.C., by Ron Halvorsen. Shocked, Sierra said, “I didn’t know God answered your prayers by mail.”

Sierra took 28 pages of notes during the sessions. Even though Pastor Harvorsen was quoting right out of the Bible, she wanted to go back and research everything for herself and make sure it was the truth.

“I told my husband, we have got to get baptized. This is just the right place to be.”

Eight years later, it is apparent that God has used Sierra and David in wonderful ways. They joined the Charlotte Sharon Church, and Sierra was soon asked to become the director of women’s ministry. From there, she was asked to become head elder, and now has the opportunity to lead 11 elders, who manage over 45

ministries.

David has also become engaged in ministry. A devoted deacon, David faithfully serves each Sabbath, attending to the needs of the building and the property. He is also a member of the Hearts and Hammers Ministry, attending to the home-needs of Sharon Church members.

David and Sierra are thrilled to be actively working, doing God’s work in every way possible. It’s not always easy when you join a church, especially the Remnant church.

“And Satan knows I’m going to be preaching a message warning people about what he’s doing in the end of time,” says Sierra. “He’s had it out for me and he found lots of opportunities to bring up many challenges.”

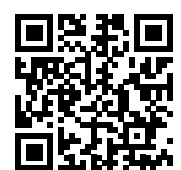
But no matter what challenges come, they surrender them to God and lets God work them out. “Because his plan is always better than mine.”

Sierra and David thank each person who has contributed to evangelism in the Carolina Conference. “There are people like me out there who may have been in church their whole life and have been a Christian their whole life, and yet never heard the truth of this message,” Sierra says.

God is asking us to spread the message. And we do that through evangelism. Not just big sessions and events, but through even the smallest of ways — teaching people how to go out and talk to their friends and others around them — because God does not want that any should be lost.

“[When I first came to the Sharon church] I thought, why isn’t this church full of people who maybe heard this for the first time like me and are excited to share this with others? And that’s why evangelism is so very important,” Sierra concludes. “And I will tell you, if you do not know this message, you will be surprised, blessed and excited to know that it only gets better. Because God is with you through the entire journey and you will grow as a Christian like you’ve never grown before.”

—Rebecca Carpenter. Photos by Henrique Gomes.



View video story

Finding My MISSING PEACE

Robert Cochran's story has been one of running from the Lord. Growing up, he can recall having a wonderful mother and father and a happy home. When he was about 12 years old, his father found Jesus and joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church. That's when life changed.

"As a young man, I can remember we would spend most of the day in church — Sabbath school, afternoon worship, and evening worship," shares Robert. "My father was an excellent teacher. He taught the scriptures to [me], my brother and my sister. He trained us."

But in high school, Robert departed from the things his father taught him, and didn't give the Lord a second thought. He played football in college, and nothing he did was about the Lord.

"There were certain morals that that I had accepted from my father," he says. "I didn't drink. I didn't smoke. I didn't use drugs. You know, I felt that I was a good person. But God was not in my life."

Robert felt that something was missing. Eventually, he found his way back into church. But it wasn't the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He started attending a Methodist church, but again there was something missing. Later, he walked away from that church and entered into business with his son.

One Sunday, Robert found Doug Batchelor on a TV program and realized that this man was saying

the things that he had been taught early in life.

He continued to watch the Amazing Facts program every day, and continued to analyze what Batchelor was teaching. Then, the Salisbury Seventh-day Adventist Church sent Robert an invitation to come see Doug Batchelor. "And I thought," Robert concluded, "Doug Batchelor is going to be here in Salisbury?"

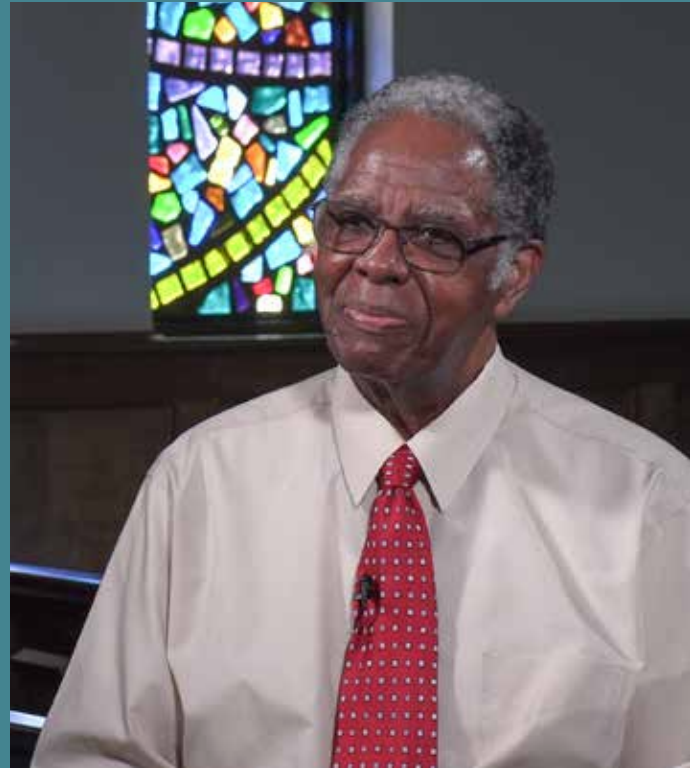
When he arrived, Robert learned it was a live downlink from Charlotte. He felt welcomed by the friendly church and continued to attend the meetings. Although he stopped coming to the church after the series ended, Robert continued to watch Amazing Facts on TV.

About a year later, he received another invitation from the church to an evangelistic outreach program presented by Pastor Scotty Deal. Robert and his wife did not miss a single program.

They decided to start attending on Sabbath. But even after coming to the church and being accepted with such warmth, there was still an empty spot in Robert's heart.

"That spot was finally filled when I decided to be baptized and commit myself to the Holy Spirit and the Word of God," he shares.

Since his baptism, Robert feels



that God is beginning to use him, and is excited about his position as a deacon in the Salisbury church.

"As a member of this church and as a member of the Carolina conference," Robert adds, "I would urge each and every one of you to continue the love that you expressed to me. Express that warmth and love to everyone who enters the church."

—Rebecca Carpenter. Photos by Henrique Gomes.



[View video story](#)

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? *Marilyn Nater*

The year 2014 was a year of change for Marilyn Nater. Not only did she give her life to Christ, but she started a new ministry leading others to accept the new freedom she had gained through salvation.

It started in 1994 when Marilyn saw a billboard for a Revelation seminar in Fayetteville, N.C., She and her mother decided to go. She never forgot about those meetings. Even while listening to other messages at other churches, Marilyn knew she had already heard the truth; nothing else made sense. But it took her 10 years to find her way back to the Adventist church.

For two years, church members Zachary and Kathy McFaden faithfully drove an hour to Marilyn's house to give her Bible studies. They never wavered.

About a week after Marilyn surrendered herself to Christ, she started a Bible study group. At first it was only her daughters and herself, but by the next week they had a bigger group that just kept growing.

Marilyn met with her local pastor, who later came to visit the Bible study. Impressed with how the studies were going, he asked if Marilyn would be willing to present a seminar on how to conduct a Bible study. Her reply was, "But can I do that? I'm not even baptized."

The pastor's response was, "Well, would you like to get baptized?"

"Yeah," Marilyn said. "I think I would."

The pastor told her to share her decision with the study group, and see what happens. She did, and two others decided to be baptized as well. Then, little by little, as weeks went by, one more was added, then another. Nine of them were ready to get baptized on March 29, 2014.

That was eight years ago. And it was only the beginning.

A month after Marilyn's first video testimony, another group was baptized from the Bible study class (which is

still going strong.)

A year later, Marilyn was invited to do a program on the radio, and is now teaching the Three Angels' Messages on several different stations all over the world. In 2019, Marilyn was invited to work as a Bible worker for a small group in Red Spring, N.C. They had three baptisms within the first three months.

Before the COVID pandemic was



intensifying, Marilyn and her fellow members had planned to have an evangelistic series. So, in March of 2020, when other churches had been closed for two weeks, Marilyn had evangelistic series going on

both in Fayetteville and Red Springs. "We never stopped working," she shares.

One of the most exciting things that has happened to Marilyn was when she was invited to plant a church in the city of Shannon, N.C. When they started, they were a small group of only 13 people, including adults, kids, and teenagers. They started Bible studies and hosted a 30-day evange-

listic series. In a few months their numbers had increased to 23, and the group is still growing.

"I have no doubt that pretty soon we're going to become a church," says Marilyn, "a full-grown church for the Lord. If you want to plant something that will last eternally, plant a church."

It took Marilyn almost ten years to get baptized. During that time, the McFadens never gave up. Church

members kept in touch with her. "Please, please, do not get discouraged," says Marilyn. "Keep working. Keep giving your all. Keep going the extra mile. Because, you can be assured that you will have victory in Christ, if you do not give up."

More than 30 baptisms have been the result of those Bible studies given to Marilyn more than 10 years ago. When you open an

apple, you can count the seeds in the apple. But you will never be able to count how many apples will come out of one seed. So do not give up. Keep doing evangelism. Keep being faithful to the Lord, because He will be faithful to you.

"Eight years ago, I said to my Lord, I made my words Isaiah 6:8. I said, 'Here I am, send me,'" Marilyn shares. "And today, eight years later, I still have my first love. And my first love has grown more than what it was eight years ago, because I have seen His hand."

—Rebecca Carpenter. Photos by Henrique Gomes.



View video story

Michael Brown is a young man who was recently baptised at The Vine Adventist Church in Apex, N.C., in part because his love for music deepened his love for Jesus. He says, “Music is something we can’t see. It’s just something we hear and we feel. And the reason we listen to music is so that we can feel something.”

Michael started playing piano in second grade. He didn’t enjoy it at first, but playing in a band for school made it fun.

In high school, he met a young lady named Lexi at a theater conference, and over the years they stayed in touch. About three years later, when she was in town at his university, she asked him, “Hey, you want to come to church with me and my friend?” Michael said, “Yeah, sure, why not?”

The first Sabbath Michael attended, Lexi’s friend Enrique, who was a musician and a worship coordinator at The Vine Church, noticed Michael keeping time with the music. He thought “Hey, this guy might have some musical talent.”

After the service, Enrique found out that Michael played the piano, so he invited him to join the worship team. Michael said, “But I don’t know any Christian songs. I never play Christian music.”

Enrique replied, “Don’t worry about it.” And soon Michael was on stage playing for the people at church.

After coming to church for a few weeks, Cris Dutra, the church pastor, invited him to begin Bible studies. Michael felt the need to learn more about the Bible, so he agreed.

Over the holidays Enrique didn’t hear much from Michael, but he kept in contact, texting him encouraging thoughts and messages. Then one day Michael texted back and said, “Hey, I think I want to join the church.”

Enrique replied, “Brother, you have no idea. You already joined the church.”

Michael was excited. Enrique was

excited. Pastor Cris was excited. Enrique said, “There was so much joy in my heart to know that that Michael was giving his life to God. The morning of his baptism his eyes were



bright, and you could see his happiness with his decision.”

“I was always told to have a relationship with Jesus,” said Michael. “It’s important. But I really just didn’t get what that meant. But the more I got to know the Bible, the more I got to understand that it’s for comfort, knowing that Jesus has our back.”

“For Michael, it was very simple,” Enrique says. “It was not so much about the church as it was about the people and the music and friends and connections. Michael was missing a connection. People are missing connection.”

“So I would definitely use my talent to spread the word about God,” Michael says. “I think the power of music is really something strong and it’s really moving for people. To be able to share that with others and to spread the word of God, that is something that I want to do.”

—Rebecca Carpenter. Photos by Henrique Gomes.



View video story

The Music THAT SAVED ME

Carolina Evangelism

YEAR END REPORT

THE YEAR 2014 was the first time raised over \$1,000,000.00 for evangelism. That has been our goal every year since, and it is not our plan to reduce it till the Lord returns!

KINGDOM GROWTH
— Through August 2022 we have 608 baptisms and POF. That is a gain of 90 over the same period in 2021.

FUNDS RAISED
— by the end of August 2022, \$669,461.39 has been raised for evangelism.

FAITHFUL GIVING — Tithe in the Carolina Conference is still on the rise, despite the pandemic and inflation.

EVERY \$1 COUNTS
— Every evangelism dollar goes to fund churches that commit to sowing and reaping for God's kingdom.

RESULTS YOU CAN MEASURE

- The Southern Union Field School of Evangelism was conducted in the Greater Greensboro/Tri City, NC area in April. Theology students from Southern Adventist University travelled there to conduct the meetings.
- Six children between the ages of 10 and 14 were baptized at the Monroe Church in September because their families and teachers were determined to keep them engaged with Jesus and the church. They were given Bible studies from the Amazing Adventures series each week by Deanette Mills, and a few weeks later they all entered the baptismal waters on the same day. And there was rejoicing in Heaven!
- Ashley Saad was scrolling through social media and came across a video invitation from Pastor Cris Dutra for Bible studies. She called Cris and started studying with her and a few other ladies. Just this month Ashley was baptized. All this from a single video shot on a cell phone! Evangelism doesn't have to be expensive or complicated.



GETTING INVOLVED
141 out of 173 churches and companies held or will be holding some form of evangelism outreach in 2022. The pandemic doesn't stop the Lord's work!



ONLINE GIVING
Online giving is up this year! You can give to Carolina Evangelism at www.carolinadasa.org. Or through the Carolina Conference app!



PRAYING FOR GOD'S MIRACULOUS POWER

We need to raise \$330,539 between now and December 31 to celebrate another \$1,000,000 raised for the work of leading lives to Jesus. Please pray with us that God, through the generous hearts of the over 24,000 members in our Carolina family, will help us reach our goal. We're almost there!



Learning **EVANGELISM**

“Evangelism is a lifestyle. It’s the way we handle ourselves every single day,” says Bryan Arvelo, former student of theology at Southern Adventist University. “People oftentimes think that evangelism is an event — a series of meetings throughout a few weeks. But in reality, evangelism is the opportunity we have every day to reach other folks, whether at the grocery store, at church or wherever we are.”

And evangelism is what the Southern Adventist University Field School, and the young students who participated in it, set out to do. The Field School program involved 15-20 students who traveled to Greensboro, NC, in April of this year to learn and participate in public evangelism. The students were paired up and sent to a church in the area to present an evangelistic series.

“We all study theology, and we’re passionate about the gospel, about sharing Jesus Christ with everybody that we know,” shares Joslen Lache.

The students presented 19 different sermons over about three and a half weeks. During that time they also had the opportunity to take a class.

“Now, this isn’t just any ordinary class. We’re not just doing random projects and homework assignments,” says Arvelo. “But we’re actually learning how to do evangelism better.”

An area-wide event such as this one really connects community members to the church. During the time that we live in — with all the confusion, disasters, and problems — people have questions, and sometimes they don’t know where to look to find answers.

“I think that having an event like this will let them know there is a reason why this is going on,” says Nate Nelson. “And we have the answer.”

The teams of students were trained by Roger Hernandez, ministerial and evangelism director for the Southern Union. He presented the series in Greensboro, then led out in the training classes during the afternoons. The students then traveled in teams to area churches to put into practice what they’d learned.

And people are making decisions. “Now, maybe we’re not seeing hundreds of folks being baptized every weekend,” continues Arvelo, “but we get to see that one person. We get to see those several folks who are deciding to follow Jesus as their Savior.

And that’s why the goal of this event is so important.”

Each student had a different reason for coming to the Field School, but all of them held the goal of showing the love of Christ to people who are confused, searching, and lost in the haze of this sinful world.

“I’d say my goal is to share Jesus, and in the process of sharing Him, I feel like I also am blessed and I grow through the process,” shares Ryan Walker. “So then, as I become a pastor, wherever I might go, I can take this experience with me and do the same.”

Many times we make a pledge or sign a check and place it in the offering plate and pray for those these funds to be used to reach people for the kingdom of God. But you really don’t see what happens next. Sometimes you don’t even know if it’s going to make a difference. You give \$5, \$10, \$15 and think, ‘is this really going to make a difference?’ But what you’re doing is turning money into practical action to reach people with Jesus’ love. And this evangelism Field School is one of those things.

“But ... I believe that ... the only way that we can get evangelism to work is if we not only had the money — because the money is going to be there, God’s going to provide the money — but God cannot make people want to get involved in it,” continues Nelson. “And...of the different people that I’ve talked to, I said, what’s the hardest thing you’ve encountered about evangelism? They’ve all came out with the same thing. It’s not the money. It’s getting the people, our members, involved in wanting to do evangelism. It’s getting our members to come back to our churches, to come out of their shells, to come out of their homes and get involved with it.”

Nelson asks, “Are we ready to fill these churches up? Because the time has come when the Holy Spirit is going to be poured out in its fullness and there’s going to be people preaching and these churches are going to be calling these people out. Are we ready for that?”

“We need to be ready,” concludes Arvelo. “We’ve got to see that God is wanting to work in our hearts. And that’s what evangelism is all about. It’s a reflection of our relationship with Jesus. That’s what evangelism is.”

—Rebecca Carpenter. Photos by Henrique Gomes.



View video story

Forgiving GOD

Olga didn't feel loved. In fact, she almost didn't make it into the world.

When her mother was pregnant with her, her father didn't believe the baby was his and pushed for an abortion. Another man, who became her stepfather, helped raise her from the time she was seven months old.

When Olga was five, her mother and stepfather started going to the Seventh-day Adventist Church where they lived in Puerto Rico and were baptized. The family became active in church activities and Pathfinders. Olga felt peace for the first time, and even dreamed that Jesus was with her.

Then, at the age of nine, her world was shattered. "I almost got raped," she shares, "by the person that was supposed to protect me, a person that was very influential in church, a person that everybody thought of as a very good, Christian-minded person. It was my own stepfather."

Feeling shaken, scared and alone, she became an angry child. Angry at God and the world. By the age of 17, she was living in the United States, had three children, and was trapped in an abusive relationship. When she was 18, she found an opportunity to escape.

Three years later, while living in Massachusetts, Olga met Felix. "He showed me that he loved me a lot," says Olga, "so it was kind of like a different type of relationship." Sadly, he died in a boating accident, and she was once again alone with her children.

About two weeks after Felix died, Olga passed by a botanica, a store where they sell religious figures and have an altar for worship. Inside, there was a woman who reads tarot cards and coffee grounds.

"So, I went in, I drank the coffee, and she put [the cup] on a little electrical stove to get dry." When the woman turned it over, an image of Felix was on the cup. Amazed, Olga thought, "This is true. It's not fake. I thought that was spiritual praise from God."

Weeks and months went by, and Olga set-up a shrine with the religious images and used them in her worship. Then she had a dream where there were people going up and down some stairs. Then a voice came through the clouds like thunder, saying, "Don't you know, that's death." She realized that God was telling her that what she was doing — dabbling in spiritualism — was a sin, and sin is death.

"I woke up. I knelt in front of my bed. I started sobbing and I asked God to forgive me, and I will never do it again," shares Olga. She got up, took all the "saints," and tossed them in the garbage.

Though she continued to search for



God, she was still angry at Him for what He let happen to her. She finally said, "Well, maybe the devil can give me what you are not giving me: peace and money."

On her way to get drugs to sell, a car came from out of nowhere and hit her on the driver's side door. Unconscious, she saw the person from her other dreams coming towards her, reaching to hold her hand.

He said, "Don't worry about anything. I'm Jesus, I'm with you. You're going to be okay. You will leave the hospital walking." When Olga woke up the doctor shared that her pelvis was broken in three parts, and she would be in a wheelchair. She said, "No, Jesus told me that I'm going to leave the

hospital walking." He then shared that they were doing tests and had reason to believe she was bleeding internally. She again told the doctor there was nothing to worry about.

"That day, I left the hospital walking on my own two feet."

Knowing that God was calling to her, Olga began watching television preachers, looking for answers. Joyce Meyer was one of her favorites. One day she was amazed to hear Meyer share how her father — her biological father — began raping her at the age of nine.

Olga was hit with the realization that God had been protecting her all her life! "I've been angry at you all this time. Why?" she cried. "Nothing. How was a nine-year-old tiny kid able to escape?"

"I needed to forgive Him; you know. So, I forgave God. And I know that He forgave me for not forgiving Him all those years."

All the anger, unhappiness and confusion left, and she was finally able to look for God in a positive and open-minded way.

Olga concluded that she had known all along that the doctrine of the Seventh-day Adventist Church was the truth because it goes according to the Bible. So, she began visiting the Triad Fellowship Church in Greensboro, N.C.

"And as soon as I went in, I saw the Holy Spirit in that church," shares Olga. "I started thinking about getting baptized again."

Today, Olga can say with certainty that God was always with her, helping her find Him. He was always there.

"I was the one searching. I was the one looking. I was the one running away. But He brought me to a place now where I have peace. I have faith."

"I feel complete. I feel whole and I feel loved!"

—Rebecca Carpenter. Photos by Henrique Gomes.



View video story

QUINQUENNIAL GOALS

The following goals for the next five years were voted in at the Carolina Conference session in August.

GOAL 1: Develop Measurable Goals for Discipleship

Discipleship is the process of becoming like Jesus by spending time with Him. This ongoing and sustained personal relationship between a follower of Christ and Jesus as our master teacher is the heart of discipleship. It reflects the core message of Jesus in Matthew 28:19-20 (NKJV), “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.

True discipleship requires more than removing that which is sinful from our lives. It must also include adding that which is spiritual, in harmony with Colossians 3:2 (NKJV), “Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.”

Practical Application

The *Discipleship Handbook*, published by the General Conference in 2018, outlines eight spiritual habits that are essential for a disciple of Christ:

- Daily personal prayer
- Daily personal study of the Bible
- Daily morning and evening family worship
- Weekly Sabbath School attendance
- Weekly church attendance
- Weekly prayer meeting or midweek small-group Bible study attendance
- Regular personal witnessing
- Regular involvement in local church ministry

Our Goals

- Encourage and support every Carolina congregation in the reading and small group study of the *Discipleship Handbook*. [2022-2023]
- Encourage our pastors and their leadership teams to identify seasoned members who will serve as Nurturing Companions (NCs) for every new believer for at least one year. [Ongoing]
- Provide pastors and churches with the book *Deep Calling: On Being and Growing Disciples* by Tara J. Vincross as a second resource for training and equipping NCs. [2024]
- Provide pastors and churches with the

book *Schools in Discipleship: A Field Manual* by Don MacLafferty as a third training tool for NCs. [2025]

- Provide pastors and churches with the book *Discipling the New Generations* by Don MacLafferty and Julie MacLafferty as a fourth resource for training NCs. [2026]
- Encourage NCs to make a minimum of one contact per week — in person or by phone — with their designated new believer for at least one year.
- Encourage NCs to regularly pray for and with their designated new believer.
- Encourage all churches to involve every disciple in witnessing and evangelist outreach.

GOAL 2: Engage, Empower, and Enable Young Adults in the Mission of the Church

Conference administration, in partnership with the youth and young adult ministries department, is making a determined effort to connect with and engage our young adult members (ages 18-35). Last year, the four officers of the Conference, along with our young adult director, Hector Gonzalez, began scheduling at least four Young Adult Summits per year in locations across the Carolinas with the goal of listening and gleaning from our young adults the ways they see themselves as a vital force in finishing God’s work, and how the church can better minister to them.

Our Goals

- Continue holding four Young Adult Summit (YAS) meetings every year.
- Encourage our churches to give young adults a seat on our church boards and leadership roles in the church.
- Add young adult pastors to our fields of service who will guide the ministry of Christ’s churches in the Carolinas.
- Add young adults on the executive committee of the conference.
- Hold young adult retreats like Awaken (in 2022) to continue the dialogue, inspire leadership development, and equip young adults for the next step in their journey of personal spiritual revival, worship and outreach.
- Reignite the Project Refresh media ministry as a partnership between the com-

munication department and the youth and young adult department.

www.theprojectrefresh.org

- Focus our ShareHim ministry on utilizing young adults in the proclamation of the gospel, providing international evangelistic opportunities which help them embrace the global outreach of the church and lead them towards domestic evangelism.
- Employ a full-time associate to the youth and young adult ministries department, primarily to:
 1. Plan and implement conference-wide events for young adults.
 2. Attend and support youth department programs.
 3. Implement the Growing Young Initiative in the Carolina Conference.
 4. Advance the public campus ministry program for Adventist students currently attending non-Adventist colleges in our conference.
 5. Attend and develop programming as a result of our Young Adult Summit (YAS) meetings.

Our Hope

These plans will require our earnest prayers, research, focus teams, and a variety of resources. We will see the tide of retention turn when we place a determined emphasis on this holy goal to engage, empower, and enable the young adults of our church.

“The greatest want of the world is the want of young adults who will not be bought or sold, those who in their inmost souls are true and honest, those who do not fear to call sin by its right name, those whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, those who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.” — *Adapted by Elder Leslie Louis from the words of Ellen White in Messages to Young People.*

GOAL 3: Enhance the Ministry of Mount Pisgah Academy to Maintain a Sustainable Enrollment of 125-150 Students.

Mount Pisgah Academy is the boarding high school owned and operated by

Continued on page 14.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN

Continued from page 2.

shall declare my praise” NKJV. Birds were made to fly, fish were made to swim, and we were made to know God and share a knowledge of His love with the people around us.

It is my prayer that in this final quinquennial term of my service as your servant leader, that we as God’s people in Carolina will earnestly plead for and consecrate our hearts to experience the outpouring of the promised power of the Latter Rain.

Hear these words from God’s messenger to His remnant church:

“The great outpouring of the Spirit of God, which lightens the whole

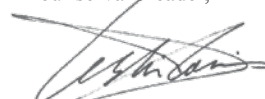
earth with His glory, will not come until we have an enlightened people that know by experience what it means to be laborers together with God.” — Ellen G. White in *The Review and Herald*, July 21, 1896.

As of the end of August, we have added 608 precious hearts this year as new members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North and South Carolina. Will you pray that this year, by God’s grace, we can break our soul-winning goal of 1000, and keep pressing upward till we reach our Heavenly home?

My beloved Carolinians, let’s “Go tell it on the mountain...over

the hill and everywhere!” Let’s go tell it from the Blue Ridge mountains to the pristine shoreline of the Outer Banks. Let’s go tell it from the breathtaking vista of the foothills to the Grand Strand of sandy beaches in the Palmetto State. Let’s go, my dear brothers and sisters, to let our world know that Jesus loves them and He’s coming again as our Rescuer and Redeemer soon and very soon!

Your servant leader,



Leslie Louis
Carolina Conference President

2022-2026

QUINQUENNIAL GOALS

Continued from page 13.

the Carolina Conference. It exists to love, educate, and disciple students for God’s service.

In 2021, the leadership team of the Carolina Conference asked 5 by 5, a research team based in Nashville, T.N., to conduct a market research to guide in key, ongoing decisions for Mount Pisgah Academy (MPA). The goal is to expand the ministry of MPA to its constituent members through an increase in student enrollment, which is currently well below the optimal number of around 150 students.

Based on the in-depth study and recommendations of 5 by 5, the Carolina Conference has partnered with the services of The School Growth Network to provide ongoing review and follow-up. Their annual report will provide the administration of MPA and the Carolina Conference oversight of nine recommended initiatives as expressed below.

Our Goals

- Sharpen the spiritual focus at MPA. Parents clearly value the teaching of Seventh-day Adventist doctrine and practices that are components of our campus. At the same time, there is a desire by parents to see practical, spiritual engagement which impacts the student’s service in local churches.
- Review programs. Some families desire to see the school improve in the area of

fine arts, music and sports.

- Tell the boarding school story in a compelling way for today’s parents and students. Other than cost/ability, a primary choice factor for parents is to monitor habits and shape the values of their adolescent children. Greater effectiveness is needed in communicating how the beautiful serene mountain environment of MPA contributes to spiritual growth and the development of responsibility and independence.
- Continue to build messaging which highlights the caring relationships students will experience at MPA.
- Continue making ongoing improvements, upgrades and repairs to the campus where needed. Current and prospective families notice issues, and it shapes their perceptions for the campus and its facilities.
- Be more proactive and relational in marketing. Building relationships with prospective students and their families is an area where MPA needs to improve, especially as there are other Adventist schools competing for the same students both locally and in the Southern Union Conference.
- Review survey ratings and feedback for academic-related attributes that impact reputation, including quality/subject-area expertise of the faculty. It is

important that MPA offer a solid college-preparatory education to ensure they are delivering the best possible academic experience.

- Engage the alumni to help grow the school through better communication and listening to their feedback. Continue letting alumni know how much we care and how we desire their involvement as partners moving forward.
- Maintain a harmonious relationship within the MPA family and with local schools, allowing all to see that Jesus lives at MPA. It is vital to:
 - Assess and address specific issues that are causing challenges.
 - Develop talking points in how to respond to questions and issues in the right way rather than being reactionary.
 - Strive to focus on the positive and not be drawn into rivalry or any destructive banter, treating others as we would like to be treated.

The primary purpose in focusing on these strategic goals during this quinquennial period of 2022-2026 is to help MPA identify and address the components of an admissions and growth strategy. We pray for God’s direction and blessing as we move forward in faith to continue honoring the foundational theme of our campus: *Jesus Lives at MPA. He Lives Within Our Hearts.*

SEEKING HIS FACE



SPEAKERS john bradshaw
kameron devasher
erhard gallos
carolina pastors

MUSIC ARTIST
charles
haugabrooks

LAKE JUNALUSKA CAMP MEETING
MAY 28-JUNE 3, 2023
www.carolinasda.org

Carolina Obituaries

OWEN, PAULETTE MARIE MYZEL, 63, born September 20, 1959, in Flint, M.I. died April 12, 2022, in Lake Mary, F.L. She was a member of the Fletcher Church in Hendersonville, N.C. Paulette was a graduate of Adelpian Academy and went on to Southern Adventist University where she studied business. She worked in a variety of positions at AdventHealth in Florida over her 40-year career, ending as director of volunteer services. She retired on November 19, 2021. Preceding her in death are her siblings, Kathy and Gene. She is survived by her husband, Randy Owen; and many dear friends.

PUTERBAUGH, LOLITA TOWNSEND, 78, born August 24, 1943, in Banner Elk, N.C., died April 18, 2022. She was a life-long Adventist and a member of the Spartanburg Church, holding many different church positions. Lolita graduated from Fletcher Academy, Madison College, and Rollins College. She retired as director of human resources from Potomac Conference. Lolita was an extraordinary cook and baker. She was known for blessing everyone with her cookies and pound cakes. No one ever left her table hungry or without a take home package. She is survived by her husband of 27 years, Neal Puterbaugh; and one son, Chip Puterbaugh of Asheville, N.C.

YOST, FRANK DONALD (DON), 94, born on June 23, 1927, in Minneapolis, M.N., died June 18, 2022, in Fletcher, N.C. Equipped with an M.A. from American University and a Ph.D. in religious journalism from Syracuse University, he dedicated his life to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. After a pastoral internship, he worked on the *Missionary Volunteer Kit* magazine. In the 1960s, Don

and his wife, Lois, moved with their children to Southern California, where they both taught at Newbury Park Academy. In 1965, after completing classwork for his journalism degree in Syracuse, N.Y., the family moved to Southern Missionary College (now Southern Adventist University) where Don taught until receiving a call to move back to the Washington, D.C. area as a book and magazine editor for the General Conference. In 1970, he was the first editor of *Insight* magazine for youth. When the Archives of the Adventist Church was formally established in 1973, Don became its first director, and continued in that role until his retirement in 1995. After retirement, he served for several years with the Office of Adventist Mission, working with population and church membership statistics in various parts of the world. He remained a student of church doctrines and published a volume on sanctification entitled, *Holiness: The Art of Letting Go*, supported by a website he created and maintained with the help of a few generous colleagues. Don wished for everyone to know the experience and privilege of a continuous walk with God, growing more Christ-like each day. Don was preceded in death by Lois, his loving wife of 63 years; his father, Frank H. Yost, a seminary professor and part of the Religious Liberty department at the General Conference; and his mother, Esther Yost, who also served the GC as secretary to several church leaders. Don is survived by his son Robert (Bob) Yost (Emily); a daughter, Patricia Ritter (Stuart); five grandsons, David Reimche (Jennifer), Jonathan Yost (Jennifer), Michael Reimche, Benjamin Yost, Stephen Reimche (Gwen); and three great-grandsons, Parker, Lincoln and Zachary.

Carolina Conference Calendar

OCTOBER

SU Pathfinder Camporee— 12-16.

Camp Kulaqua, FL.

Hispanic Camp Meeting 2— 20-22.

Nosoca Pines Ranch.

NOVEMBER

Impact Youth Rally— 4-5. MPA.

DECEMBER

MAGABOOK - Winter Student

Program— 11-Jan 19.

Charleston, SC. *Learn more at* www.carolinamagabooks.org.

JANUARY

No events

FEBRUARY

Evangelism Impact— 2-5. Myrtle

Beach, SC. *Learn more at* www.carolinasda.org.

Romance @ the Ranch— 10-12.

Nosoca Pines Ranch.

Hispanic Romance @ the Ranch— 17-19. Nosoca Pines Ranch.

Awaken Young Adult Rally— 24-26.
Nosoca Pines Ranch.

MARCH

Communication Workshop— 5.

Conference Office.

MPA Spring Break— 9-19.

**Adult SS/Community Services/
Personal Ministry Retreat**— 24-
26. Nosoca Pines Ranch.

MORE EVENTS AT WWW.CAROLINASDA.ORG

The Carolina Action

Carolina Conference of
Seventh-day Adventists
PO Box 44270
Charlotte, N.C. 28215-0043

IMPACT

CAROLINA CONFERENCE YOUTH RALLY

November 4-5, 2022 at Mount Pisgah Academy



sermon series brought to you by: Milton Coronado
praise music brought to you by: Engage Ministries

registration is already open! www.pisgah.us/impact