

## The Latter Rain at Camp Wakonda

A lot of prayer has gone into this Summer Camp season at Camp Wakonda. Beginning their third camp season, Youth Director Zack Payne and his wife Allison wanted to see more in the way of a spiritual atmosphere and decisions being made for Christ at camp.

In addition to prayer, a lot of key conversations preceded this summer as well. When visiting Union College, Payne had a chance to visit with one of the Summer Camp staff, Bekah, who said she really would like to see more kids making decisions for baptisms at camp. Payne, too, had been feeling that Summer Camp ministry should feel more like mission work or evangelism, and he told her that he resonated with her idea.

Payne also talked with some seasoned Summer Camp directors who told him what they did to set more of a spiritual tone and how it was yielding more decisions for Christ at camp. Particularly, he remembers talking with Pastor Brandon Westgate about the schedule they have at Glacier View Ranch and how they intentionally set aside times expecting baptisms each week. Payne says, “We decided we wanted to move forward, likewise, in faith to see more decisions like this at camp.”

Finally, during camp meeting, he remembers talking with a friend who said that she had a dream that the Latter Rain was going to be falling soon, or maybe even had begun to fall at this very time.



Campers and staff respond to God's call to commit their lives to Him.

He says, “I thought it sounded exciting, but I didn’t really give it much more thought after that.”

Fast forward to today, Payne is looking back on a summer that has been absolutely blessed. Summer Camp at Camp Wakonda didn’t just survive, it thrived! At Cub Camp, where campers are a little on the young side, Pastor Bill Dudgeon didn’t make calls for baptism but, he asked our campers if they wanted to follow Jesus. They all came forward! At Tween Camp, Pastor Drew Weaver made the call for baptism and thirty three campers made decisions ranging from those wanting to know more about what baptism means to those actually getting baptized at Camp Wakonda before they left the camp. That Friday eight campers were baptized and two staff were re-baptized. At Teen Camp, Pastor Myoung Kwon made the call for baptism

and thirteen more made decisions for baptism, and that Friday five campers and one staff were baptized, and one camper was re-baptized. The final week of camp, Family Camp, Pastor Jonathan Fetrick made the call for baptism and two more staff came forward to be baptized for the first time.

Claire Castleberg, a returning camp staff and part of the team of Summer Camp Directors is one of the staff who made the decision to be baptized. Claire wrote an article about her experience at camp and the following is an excerpt from her writing:

“I have felt closer to God this summer than any summer I’ve been here so far. Thursday night of Tween Camp, I felt compelled to make the choice for baptism. Pastor Drew, my home church

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## President's Sabbath Schedule

### August

5 Hispanic Camp Meeting  
13 Lake Union Officers Mtg.  
25 AdventHealth Mission Conference

### September

2 Sturgeon Bay  
9 Shawano

### October

7 Northern District Sabbath  
14 New London  
21 Raymond  
28 NAD Year-end Meetings

### November

4 Hmong Church

To request speaking appointments contact Titus Naftanaila at: [titusn@wi.adventist.org](mailto:titusn@wi.adventist.org)

## From the President's Desk

# Divine Interruptions

As a pastor, I witness a lot of unpleasant experiences. Loss, abandonment, death, and separation represent significant challenges for anyone not expecting a dramatic change in life. Our lives on Earth are full of disturbances, difficulties, hindrances, and unforeseen events.

Several years ago I was privileged to minister to a 53-year-old woman dying of lung cancer. I would read the Scripture and pray for her and her family. In the last week of her life, she asked her husband and children to forgive her, and in response, they did the same thing. That was a sacred moment for the family and me, as their minister. At her funeral service I presented the visible evidence of her faithfulness to the Lord and her family as an inspiring example for all.

Being born in a communist society, my expectations during that time were related to the nature of my culture. Survival and having religious freedom to express my practical devotion to God were my two primary goals in life. Later I added health, marital satisfaction, and a rewarding ministry. Now, in my mid-fifties, I realize that all my dreams have been fulfilled so far, and while I am aware that I can experience interruptions at any moment, I continue to enjoy God's blessings in my life.

I don't want any significant change that can rock my boat. But the realities of life make me more aware that all the accomplishments we enjoy at this point in life may be temporary, and they are based on God's grace for us and not on our merits.

Our local churches are full of people on different levels of spirituality and walks of life. It is incredible to witness and be part of their experiences when they suffer significant losses and a dramatic crisis.

They are not satisfied with theological or psychological explanations. They struggle to understand the correlations between God's promises to protect and bless and tragic realities.

Referring to the divine interruptions in life, James writes: "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything" James 1:2-4.

Following the same line of thought, Ellen White declares:

*"Trials and obstacles are the Lord's chosen methods of discipline and His appointed conditions of success. He who reads the hearts of men knows their characters better than they know them. He sees that some have powers and susceptibilities which, rightly directed, might be used in the advancement of His work. In His providence, He brings these persons into different positions and varied circumstances that they may discover in their character the defects which have been concealed from their knowledge. He allows them to correct these defects and to fit themselves for His service. Often, He permits the fires of affliction to assail them that they may be purified."* (HDL 9.1)

These disturbances are unanticipated and find us unprepared, but they do not catch God off guard. They are not unplanned, insignificant incidents. These interruptions are God's appointed events for a reason, significantly to change our characters, make us more like Jesus, and prepare us for His Kingdom.

*Titus Naftanaila*

Wisconsin Conference President

## Pastor Tom Michalski Retires



After nearly 21 years in pastoral ministry, Pastor Tom Michalski retired from full-time ministry in January of this year. For

those who know him however, Pastor Michalski has not stopped working! Since his official retirement, he has been heavily involved in the Building Our Future projects at Camp Wakonda being an integral part of the team overseeing the progress on the improvement projects happening there. He has also continued as Camp Meeting Superintendent helping to ensure our camp meeting runs smoothly.

Pastor Michalski served for over 13 years in the Iowa/Missouri Conference before coming to Wisconsin as a pastor in 2015. In addition to pastoring, he served as Conference Evangelist, interim pastor for several congregations as well as Conference Stewardship Coordinator from 2018-2022.

Throughout his ministry, Pastor Michalski focused on evangelism, both clergy and laity and said that his "main work is to help members be involved in soul winning on an individual basis so the local church becomes a center of evangelism."

Pastor Michalski and his wife have three grown children, Joshua, Caleb, and Keziah. In his new found free time he is looking forward to spending more time with his grand kids and being out in nature, enjoying woodworking, gardening, and wilderness canoeing.

We are very thankful for the years of dedicated service that Pastor Michalski as given in Wisconsin. Countless individuals have been led to a relationship with Jesus Christ through the ministry to which he and his wife have dedicated their lives. We wish them all the best as they move into this new phase in life.

Laurella Case  
Communication Coordinator

## Admin. Assistant, Sandy Berg Retires



Sandy Berg, Administrative Assistant for the Education Department, retired on July 1, 2023.

Sandy has worked in the conference Education Department for almost nine years working with the current and former Education Superintendents, Sue Nelson and Linda Rosen.

Sandy says she has enjoyed supporting the superintendents, school staff and students, as well as the conference throughout her time here.

She is looking forward to more travel and seeing how the Lord leads in continuing to serve Him. We pray God's blessing on Sandy as she makes this transition.

## Building Our Future

Through God's blessing much has been accomplished at Camp Wakonda! Out of our original goal of \$850,000, over \$600,000 has come in! Thank you! This has been made possible through your faithfulness.

During camp meeting we received about \$18,000 in offerings toward our camp projects. We also received a generous gift of \$100,000 to help finish the Medical/Store Building with a challenge to double the gift.

After camp meeting a donor stepped up with \$15,000 to start off that challenge.

As of the end of June we have received nearly 25% our goal of doubling the gift!

Thank you for your continued support whether it has been through donations, volunteering or prayer.

Would you prayerfully consider what you can give to help us reach this new challenge?

## LaQuita Anderson Accepts Call

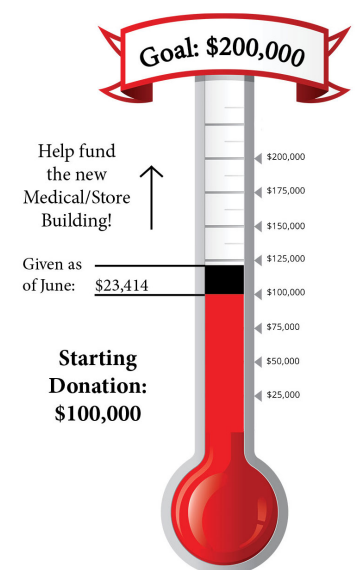


LaQuita Anderson, Associate Treasurer for the Wisconsin Conference, has accepted a call to be the Treasurer

for the Iowa-Missouri Conference. For the past 25 years, LaQuita has served in various positions within the Lake Union Conference including, Great Lakes Adventist Academy, Lake Union Intern – serving Wisconsin Academy, and then transitioning to the Wisconsin Conference in 2015 as Assistant Treasurer. Since 2019, LaQuita has served as Associate Treasurer for the Wisconsin Conference.

"I have really enjoyed serving in Wisconsin," says LaQuita. "I have been blessed to work with one of the finest treasury teams." She especially appreciates the many friendships made in Wisconsin, together with the support received from the Lake Union Conference throughout her tenure.

We are grateful for her many years of dedicated service in Wisconsin and wish her well as she continues to serve the Lord.





Cover Story Continued

pastor, was there for the week, and he was proud of my decision. Because I'm a bit older, and have been through studies before, he and Pastor Zack told me if I wanted to, I could be baptized the next day. I said, 'No... that's too soon.' Fast forward to Teen Camp, and I felt again compelled to come up when Pastor Myoung called for decisions for baptism. I wasn't quite sure until the next morning, when I heard Pastor Drew was coming back, just to baptize my brother. I told Pastor Zack then and there I wanted to be baptized that day. It all worked out perfectly and I was baptized Friday of Teen Camp. It is the best decision I have ever made, and I continue to choose Jesus in my life each day."

It has truly been a blessed summer at Camp Wakonda. Summer Camp is being done evangelistically, and young people are making decisions to follow Jesus, and in many cases to be baptized. Payne says, "It's exciting to have seen the Spirit move this summer, and we can't wait to see what He will do in future summers. Perhaps even my friend was right: maybe this is what the Latter Rain looks like."

Zack Payne, Youth Director  
Laurella Case Communication Coordinator

Dr. Amir Gulzar Begins Role as Exec. Secretary/Treasurer



On July 1, 2023, Dr. Amir Gulzar began his ministry as the Executive Secretary/Treasurer for the Wisconsin Conference. Dr. Gulzar grew up in Pakistan where he attended Seventh-day Adventist institutions of education earning B.B.A. degrees in both Marketing and Accounting from Pakistan Adventist Seminary. He went on to earn his Master of Business Administration degree from Philippine Christian University and his Ph.D. in International Finance from the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies.

Debbie Darnall New Assoc. for Education



We are pleased to welcome Debbie Darnall as the new Associate Superintendent for Education in the Wisconsin Conference. Debbie received her B.A. in Education from Union College and is currently working toward her Master's Degree in Educational Administration through South Dakota State University.

Debbie has been an Adventist teacher, or teaching principal, for 16 years and it has been her personal goal to make learning fun and help students love Jesus.

She says, "I'm very excited to come and help with all the good things that are going on in the Wisconsin Adventist Educational System."

Salazar New Assoc. Pastor for Eau Claire



We are happy to welcome Obed Salazar to the Wisconsin Conference. He began serving as the associate pastor for the Eau Claire district the beginning of June, 2023. Pastor Salazar is a recent graduate from Southern Adventist University and is returning to serve in his home state. Something that most people may not know about him is that, although raised in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, he was actually born in Zacatecas, Mexico.

Pastor Salazar was born and raised in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Although he felt God's calling to pastoral ministry as a boy, it wasn't until the end of his junior year in high school that he decided to surrender his plans to God and accept His calling.

In addition, Dr. Gulzar is a published author having written one book and numerous journal articles. He is fluent in English, French, Urdu and Punjabi.

In 2020, Dr. Gulzar was called to be the Business Manager at the Milwaukee Seventh-day Adventist School, where he served until his recent call to be the Executive Secretary/Treasurer for the conference. The Milwaukee School has been blessed and the conference is grateful for his service there and looks forward to his ministry in this new role.

Dr. Gulzar and his wife, Shabnam, have three children, Nathan who is attending Andrews University and Nathalie and Natasha who are attending Wisconsin Academy.

Bright Smiles & Baptisms



The Racine district was blessed during two back-to-back Sabbaths in April, as they had two pairs of converts baptized in two different churches. All four candidates embarked on long spiritual journeys and encouraged each other.

Vickie and her 96-year-old mother, Anne, were baptized on April 15, 2023.

Edwin and Angelique were baptized on April 22, 2023.

All four new members wore big bright smiles on their baptismal days, and both church families were excited to welcome them into our fellowship. Praise God!

Jeanmark A'Kessler, District Pastor



When Things Looked Bad, God Stepped In



The New London Seventh-Day Adventist Church is celebrating the baptism of Brian McNichols on the day of his birthday, July 8th, 2023.

When going through a very difficult moment in his life, when the world seemed to be falling apart for him, the Lord intervened in his life to rescue him. As he was searching online one day he came across the Amazing Facts ministry and immediately decided to find the church that proclaimed the precious truth that he found there. He got in his car and went to the New London Seventh-day Adventist Church, where he has been attending since October 2022.

Carlos Ancheta, District Pastor

FINANCIAL UPDATE

As treasurer, it is an honor for me to serve in the Wisconsin Conference. First and foremost, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to each one of you who faithfully contribute to the financial health of our churches and conference. Your generous offerings and steadfast commitment enable us to fulfill our mission and ministry, both within our congregations and in outreach to the wider community.

Financial stewardship is more than just managing funds, it is a reflection of our spiritual journey and our dedication to God's work. The Bible teaches us in 1 Peter 4:10, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." Our financial resources are indeed one of those gifts and, as stewards, we have the privilege of putting them to work in ways that honor God and benefit others.

I also want to take this opportunity to encourage each of you to explore the concept of planned giving. This allows us to extend our impact beyond our lifetimes by investing in future generations, continuing the work of God through our churches.

Lastly, I urge all members of our congregations to consider volunteering their time and talents. Your involvement enriches our community, promotes a sense of belonging, and strengthens the foundation of our church, both spiritually and financially.

In closing, I want to express my appreciation for your continued support and prayers. As we journey together, let us remember that our financial resources are a means to achieve God's purpose and bring glory to His name. May we remain united in faith and commitment, trusting in His guidance and grace as we strive to be faithful stewards of all that He has entrusted to us.



Amir Gulzar  
Executive Secretary/Treasurer

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT			
	2023 (21 wks)	2022 (21 wks)	% Change
May Tithe Income:	\$679,613	\$606,063	12.14 %
YTD Tithe Income:	\$3,194,682	\$3,121,155	2.36 %
May WI Budget:	\$24,398	\$28,336	-13.90 %
YTD Wisconsin Budget:	\$108,875	\$124,480	-12.54 %





## Wisconsin Academy Spring Break Reformation Trip “Hear the History, Walk Through Wisdom, Fuel the Faith.”



“Reformation trip for high school students? Isn’t that something only for really large schools or college students?” The same questions crossed my own mind when the opportunity for a student focused Spring Break Reformation trip presented itself. But after hearing the explanation from the tour company, my heart and mind were convinced, and our administration was open if the interest seemed high enough. After much prayer and conversation, we decided to move forward. Feedback was extremely favorable overall. In fact, when first gathering student feedback, I saw a light and energy in their eyes that is rare in mid February.

“You mean we might be able to go to Europe and see where Martin Luther actually pounded the nail in the door Mrs. Lawrence?”  
“Oooh, can we pass out Glow tracts on the trip?”  
“Can we send over cases of the Great Controversy in languages people understand we could share on the bus?”  
“Could we sing in an actual cathedral?”  
“All possibilities,” I replied, “depending on God’s leading and opening doors.”

Those doors continued to open as we continued praying. The Wisconsin Board of Education officially approved our trip, a

presentation was held at camp meeting, and the final details are being worked out. Some questions and concerns have been raised along the way, one regarding whether or not this trip is in fact a “mission” trip. I believe that it is a mission trip, but one geared towards our own Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) youth.

One of the areas Wisconsin Academy (WA) is primarily concerned with is impressing on the hearts and minds of our students the importance of a personal relationship with Christ. That begins with understanding who Christ is and what He has done for us. On a class trip in my second year of teaching at W.A., a presenter asked us to put our heads down on the table and close our eyes. He asked all who were sure of their salvation in Christ to raise their hands - only four out of thirty raised their hands! He then gave a simple presentation of the gospel. That activity greatly impacted my heart and mind.

Could it really be that our own SDA young people don’t really understand the plan of salvation? We send them out door to door, on mission trips, to lead out in church, but how many really understand the promise of Ephesians 2:8-9, “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.” Martin Luther began to see and understand this promise and Ellen White writes that “A trip to Rome, combined with diligent study of the Scriptures, opened Martin Luther’s eyes and helped him see “more clearly than ever before the fallacy of trusting to human works for salvation, and the necessity of constant faith in the merits of Christ.” (GC p.125)

Nothing like first-hand experience drives head knowledge to the heart. That is the purpose and mission of this Reformation trip. Six different countries are on the itinerary. We will visit places like the Waldensian Valley, Church in Wittenberg, site of John Huss’s execution, etc. We also have the opportunity to share a mini concert at the Cathedral of St. Paul. Every day is designed with the mission of connecting the students to their Christian roots and making certain chapters of The Great Controversy come to life. In addition, students will take a prerequisite class co-taught by our History, Bible, and English teachers to introduce them to the places and people of the Reformation whose footsteps we will be re-tracing.

“In reviewing our past history, having traveled over every step of advance to our present standing, I can say, Praise God! As I see what the Lord has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in Christ as leader. We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.” (1915 Life Sketches of EGW, p.196)

Would you like to be involved in this unique “mission” trip? If you are interested in joining, supporting, and/or praying for this trip we’d love to share more. There will even be some extra spots available as we’d like to fill up our own bus. To find out more information and stay up to date go to [www.wisacad.org/home/reformation-tour/](http://www.wisacad.org/home/reformation-tour/)

Danielle Lawrence, English Teacher Wisconsin Academy



**W**isconsin Academy held a 24 hour prayer vigil in May. It was a blessing to see students, staff, and church family collaborate together to make this a reverent event. A special thank you to Lesa Budd, the Prayer Ministries Coordinator for the Wisconsin Conference, for leading out and guiding all through the vigil.



**W**isconsin Academy is excited to announce and welcome Zack Darnall as our new business manager. Zack is an experienced CPA coming from Dodge Center, MN. He is looking forward to working with staff and students. He enjoys disc golf, atv’s, racket ball, and hiking.



**W**e are happy to welcome Louis Scott as the new Assistant Men’s Dean. Louis enjoys the out doors; hiking, backpacking, rock climbing, and caving. He found his passion in youth ministries and teaching, and is excited to be working with students and sharing his love of the outdoors.

## New W.A. Fine Arts Class Offered



Got drama? We do! Good drama that is. This fall Wisconsin Academy will offer a creative ministries class which will train its members to lead and share the gospel in a variety of creative ways. For the last two years a drama club has been happening on campus. Members have really enjoyed using their talents to present the gospel message through songs, skits, and other creative ways at schools and at area churches. A drama club doesn’t offer enough time for students to really take it to the next level. Plans for a class were started last year and are finally coming to fruition. Greg Edge (Bible teacher) and Danielle Lawrence (English teacher) will co-teach the class. The first priority? Coming up with a creative name for the group besides “drama team.”

Sometimes the word “drama” causes uncertainty when people hear it. “Drama” is a word with multiple meanings. Sadly, negative connotations often ring louder than the positive. The Merriam Webster dictionary’s first meaning explains the intention: “a composition in verse or prose intended to portray life or character or to tell a story usually involving conflicts and emotions through action and dialogue...” This kind of “drama” when used for right is a powerful witnessing tool.

One of my favorite summer activities as a child was our church led Vacation Bible School (VBS). My favorite part was a toss up between the skit acted out each morning or creatively told continued story, each afternoon. As a teenager, my VBS role transitioned to telling the story myself one year, and being part of the skits; then in my twenties I began directing. In college at Southwestern Adventist University, I was part of the first “drama” class, and I have continued to see first hand how the gospel shared creatively through and to young people has lasting effects in bringing people to Christ. Not surprising, considering God uses visual representations, scenes and reenactments throughout Scripture to share His message.

“Drama” class will introduce students to sharing Christ through skits, creative storytelling, sign language, puppet ministry, choral readings, and by God’s grace a full-length production. Drama class instills the importance of teamwork, focusing less on the individual, and letting God work through us when we give our gifts and talents to Him. We are dedicated to following the principles of 1st Corinthians 10:31 “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” If your church would like to get on the visiting list for our creative ministries team contact Greg Edge ([greg.edge@wisacad.org](mailto:greg.edge@wisacad.org)) or Danielle Lawrence ([danielle.lawrence@wisacad.org](mailto:danielle.lawrence@wisacad.org)).

Our Mission:

*Developing leaders today who will walk with Jesus into eternity.*

[www.wisacad.org](http://www.wisacad.org)

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Return Service Requested

## Calendar of Events

### August

1	Hispanic Camp Pitch
2-6	Hispanic Camp Meeting
7-10	NAD Teacher's Convention
10-13	Hmong Camp Meeting
25-27	Master Guide Camporee
29	Board of Education

### September

4	Office Closed
6-8	Outdoor Education
8-10	Adventurer Camporee
15-17	Pathfinder Camporee
22-24	Adventist Christian Fellowship Retreat

### October

3	Board of Education
7	Northern District Sabbath
13-15	Lay Pastor Training Weekend
18-20	LIFT Grades 7-10
20-22	Women's Retreat - Wisconsin Dells
20-22	Club Ministries LeaderShop
27-29	JAHWI Youth Retreat

### November

2	Pastor's Meeting
7	Board of Education
8	Executive Committee
22-23	Office Closed

## Women's Ministries Fall Retreat



**Date:** October 20-22, 2023

**Location:** Wintergreen Hotel &  
Conference Center in Wisconsin Dells

**Registration** details available online at:  
<https://wi.adventist.org/womens-retreat/>  
Rate increases after September 15 so  
make sure to register soon!

Contact your local Women's Ministries  
Leader for more information.



**Disaster Response Training Event**  
**September 17, 2023**  
**Portage, WI**  
Contact Alice Garrett  
Phone: 608-345-3883  
Email: [agarrett@wi.adventist.org](mailto:agarrett@wi.adventist.org)

## INTRANSITION

- Teresa Schaetzka is now serving as Associate Treasurer for the conference
- Darlie and Blanche Gagatam accepted the call for him to serve as the VP of Finance at Highland Academy in Tennessee
- Rick Blumenschein has moved to teach in Sonora, California
- Maritza Perez accepted the call to be Head Girls' Dean at Maplewood Academy in Minnesota
- Doug and Joella Show accepted the call to serve at Oklahoma Academy
- Tim Erich is now serving as the principal for Indiana Academy
- Harriet Schneider retired from serving at Wisconsin Academy
- Mike Cho is no longer serving as Assistant Men's Dean at Wisconsin Academy

### EDITOR

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