

Looking for the God Who Was Always There



Irada Flood, with Pastor Rowell Puedivan, was baptized on February 17, 2024. Below is the testimony she shared with the Madison Community Seventh-day Adventist Church.

I am from Kazakhstan, a former Soviet republic. I would like to share my journey to God.

During the time of Soviet rule, practicing Christianity or Islam was prohibited, and in some years it was even the death penalty for those caught praying. The Soviet system replaced a faith in God with a belief in a communistic totalitarianism and dictatorship. My parents were atheists and followed the communist ideology “God doesn’t exist.” However, when the Soviet Union dissolved and I asked my Mom if she believed in God, she told me that she believed in God immediately when she saw me right after I was born in 1976. While she was holding me, she prayed for the first time.

People in the Soviet Union were hiding their beliefs until the late 1970s and early 1980s when practicing faith was decriminalized. From my childhood, I remember some kids started bringing bread or colored eggs to school on Easter and sharing them with other kids and saying: “Christ is risen!” I also began to see Orthodox priests or imams on the streets of my home city sometimes.

In the last years of the Soviet Union and after its dissolution, more literature about Christianity and Islam became available. I had weekly subscriptions to kids’ magazines and newspapers in which I read about a monthly subscription to a series of Bible studies for kids and teenagers. I decided to request the series of 12 brochures with pictures and texts. The first brochure started with Genesis, and the last two brochures were about Jesus Christ with the last chapter telling about new hope. It was my first time learning about Jesus Christ.

My family leaned towards Islam and identified themselves as Muslims. So did I. I read the Koran to grasp the concepts, but I didn’t agree with some principles as it contradicted my values. As a medical doctor, I always believed in the value of human life no matter what. I believed that I was not the one who would decide

on human life. I believed that, with God’s blessing, I should use all I had to save patients without judging who they were and what they believed. I just couldn’t accept killing people based on their beliefs. So, I never completed reading the Koran, and I stepped away from Islam.

For many years after that, I was nobody: neither Christian, neither Muslim, neither Atheist, but I continued looking for a God or direction to find God. I was looking for something that didn’t involve prayer to idols, for a God who loves me the way I am, who doesn’t need me to go through rituals and foreign language prayers to talk with, who forgives me for my sins, one who is always here for me and protects me. At the same time, I had the feeling that I didn’t deserve God’s love and forgiveness because I was a sinner or because I didn’t follow rituals.

A few years ago, I met Dan when we worked together at the Department of Health Services in Madison. He organized a series of weekly spiritual discussions where we openly talked about different topics and discussed a section of the Bible that touched on the topic. Sometimes, I would be skeptical about answers the Bible had, sometimes I would skip the discussions, and other times I felt lost, had a foggy brain, or no interest.

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From the President's Desk

Run the Race!

Children have a lot of energy and love to run around all day. If you live in an apartment with kids above you, you may have noticed the noise caused by their constant movement.

I am not a big fan of running, especially longer distances. I've never wanted to run a marathon or even a half-marathon. I remember a few instances when I had to run, such as escaping a pack of dogs, catching public transportation, or participating in school or military races.

The main thing holding me back from improving my running performance and my physical endurance is how I breathe. Although my muscles have enough energy, my breathing becomes labored, making me want to stop. I've been studying the importance of proper breathing techniques to tackle this issue. By improving the oxygen flow to my muscles, I'll create the energy I need to keep going.

Running requires very little equipment compared to other athletic disciplines. However, to be successful, one must possess certain qualities before, during, and after the athletic event. These traits include commitment, focus, motivation, resilience, self-discipline, confidence, and humility.

The Bible frequently uses sports metaphors, including running, to illustrate our existence on earth:

“Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.” 1 Cor. 9:24-25

“Therefore...let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set

before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:1-2

The above verses present the Christian race as a lifelong commitment to following Jesus' example of endurance and suffering. Jesus did everything needed to run His race, even through shame and death, to fulfill God's will for His earthly and heavenly ministry. All the challenges He faced did not matter. The ultimate goal, the prize, was the joy of seeing all of us part of God's kingdom.

They also show that we are not alone in our race. We are already equipped with everything we need to fulfill our mission. Our physical, emotional, or spiritual stamina is not the key. Instead, Jesus empowers us through the Holy Spirit to stay consistent with God's call for us.

Therefore, we are called to run our race with Jesus' standard as our ultimate goal. We are not supposed to compete with one another, but rather encourage each other. Christian living is not a sporadic stroll, jog, or sprint. It is a constant determination to remove all obstacles, learn to breathe correctly and develop spiritual muscles to reflect Jesus' character for both now and eternity.

From this perspective, the Apostle Paul, referring to his experience, encourages us to have the attitude of a winner: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.” 2 Timothy 4:7-8.

Titus Naftanaila
Wisconsin Conference President

President's Sabbath Schedule

May

- 4 Madison Hispanic
- 11 Shawano
- 18 Hispanic Brotherhood Day
- 25 Durand

June

- 1 Superior
- 8 Almond
- 15 Camp Meeting
- 22 Camp Meeting

July

- 13 Ashland
- 20 Green Bay Bike Ride
- 27 Hispanic Camp Meeting

August

- 17 Lakeland
- 24 AdventHealth Mission Conference

To request speaking appointments contact Titus Naftanaila at: titusn@wi.adventist.org

Camp Meeting 2024: Run the Race



Elden Ramirez
Exec. Secretary
Lake Union

Opening
Weekend



Shawn Boonstra
Speaker/Director
Voice of Prophecy

Closing
Weekend



Richie Halversen
Dir. of Church Growth
& Revitalization
Southern Union
Evenings and
2:30pm M-Th



Titus Naftanaila
President
WI Conference

Sunday Evening



Craig Carr
Ministerial Director
Mid-America Union

9:30 am



**Dr. César &
Carolann DeLeón**
Family Ministries
Directors NAD

11:00 am M-Th



Amanda Anguish
Licensed Marriage &
Family Therapist
Beautiful Minds
Medical
4:00 pm



Jennifer Woods
Legal Council and
PARL Director
Lake Union

Sunday 4:00 pm



Lesa Budd
Prayer Ministries
Coordinator
WI Conference

7:00 am Prayer



Annett Campbell
Musician

First Weekend

Scan the QR Code
for programming
during
camp meeting



Yin Schaff
Health Ministries
Coordinator
WI Conference

11:00 am Friday

~~ Items To Note ~~

- We are aiming to finish the evening programming by 8:45pm.
- Church Revitalization Seminar M-Th @ 2:30. Elders and Church Board members are encouraged to attend.
- Leadership Forum Sunday @ 2pm. All church leaders are encouraged to attend.
- Check-out time is 10am on Sunday, June 23.

- The Camp Store is now located in the East end of the Bookstore building.
- The new Medical Building is under construction and the main structure should be in place by camp meeting.
- Adventist Community Services (ACS) Project: Collecting School Supplies for the Westfield Schools. Watch for needs list.

- Hallelujah Hustle 5K Run/Walk, Sunday, June 16.
- All Night Prayer Vigil, Wednesday.
- Ordination Service for Pastor Carlton Mouzon of the Lena District.
- Photography Class with Pastor Scott Manly.
- Daily Activities at the ACS Cabin and Little Red School House.

Cover Story Continued

However, Dan continued to show me the beauty of faith in God and a love of Jesus.

Last year, a group of my friends were talking about the Universe and our beliefs. When I said that I was looking for God or direction, Asel Burnett (a member of the Waukesha Church) talked about the Seventh-day Adventist denomination, and I became interested in it. Later Asel offered to start Bible studies with Pastor Myoung Kwon. It changed everything I knew about God! I began learning that God *was* always with me, *is* always with me and *will* always be with me!

I soon met Pastor Rowell Puedivan and the nice people in the Madison Community Church. I feel like I am opening a door to something new and unknown with a warm and positive sensation that I cannot explain or rationalize. I am learning about God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, and I think that journey might never end. And honestly, I want that journey to be life-long and to have God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit guide me in my life.

Sue Martin
Madison Community Church

New Pastor for Richland Center



We are happy to share that Jim Parish, has accepted the call to be the new pastor for the Richland Center District. Jim has been serving in the Wisconsin Conference since 2016 as manager at The LightHouse Thrift Store. He is currently finishing his BA in Theology through Andrews University.

Above everything else Jim loves his time with God and teaching others about what his Savior has done for him in his life. His daily goal is to be a true Disciple Maker and teach others how to do the same.

For full article visit:
<https://wi.adventist.org/news-events/>

**Hallelujah Hustle 5K
Run/Walk, June 16!
Register Today:
[https:// hallelujahhustle.com](https://hallelujahhustle.com)**

Bob Stauffer Retires After 50 Years



After over 50 years in pastoral ministry, Pastor Bob Stauffer is officially retiring. He and his wife Alma, a teacher, have faithfully served God side by side in many places.

In sharing reflections on his years in ministry, Pastor Stauffer says, “The high points of my ministry have been helping people who think they can never be good enough to be saved to experience the same thing that the thief on the cross experienced when he heard Jesus say, ‘You will be with me in paradise.’”

Writing these words makes me want to go back and do it all again. My wife and I feel exceedingly grateful to all the dear people in Wisconsin for allowing us, for more than 20 years, to be a part of this wonderful Wisconsin Adventist family.”

For full article visit:
<https://wi.adventist.org/news-events/>

Wakonda: Building Our Future Update

The building permit for the new medical building is now in hand and work on the foundation has begun. Through your faithful support we have almost reached our fundraising goal!

Total given for Medical Building:
Nearly \$65,000 toward doubling the original gift of \$100,000.

Total given for overall Building Our Future project: \$404,904.

Materials are being purchased to finish the medical building, so the final \$35,000 is needed now to ensure we have all needed materials for this project.

Please prayerfully consider what you can give to help finish this project.

Together, with God’s blessing, we can Build Our Future!

We’ve almost reached our goal!!



Thank you!

Kenosha Dedicates New Church Building



On Sabbath, January 6, members of the Kenosha Company gathered for a special celebration – the dedication of their new church building! The congregation had a long journey in finding this building, but they have definitely seen God’s hand in the process.

The congregation was eager to begin ministry in their new location and lay pastor, George Andrews held his first evangelistic series there shortly after the building was purchased.

The dedication service was a time of celebration for the members, many of whom shared their excitement for their new church sanctuary.

Camp Meeting Beginner & Kindergarten Divisions Need Helpers!

Call for information.

Beginners: Kristin Drewieck
(908) 217-1528

Kindergarten: Tammy Elmer
(608) 868-9750

Milwaukee Central 80th Anniversary



On Sabbath, April 13, 2024, the Milwaukee Central Seventh-day Adventist Church celebrated their 80th Anniversary with special guest speaker Dwight Nelson. Well over 200 were in attendance as several historical stories from the last 80 years were presented.

Conference president, Titus Naftanaila led Sabbath School and local principal, Jacie Reagan shared an update on the school. Paul and Kathy Freeman, long time members, were honored for their years of service.

Pastor Nelson’s sermon fit perfectly with the theme for the Sabbath, “Welcome Home,” as we looked to reconnect with those who used to attend and our neighbors who do not.

As we took the opportunity to celebrate the work of the Lord, we also add our prayer to that of the apostle John in Revelation 22:20, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus!”

Bill Dudgeon III
Pastor of the Milwaukee Central Church

Egger New Manager for LightHouse



We are happy to share that Robert Egger has accepted the call to serve as the manager for The LightHouse Thrift Store located on the campus of Wisconsin Academy.

The Egger family has been members of the Hudson Seventh-day Adventist Church since 2007, when they moved to Wisconsin. Robert says, “I’m ready to move forward with the LightHouse Thrift store to try to grow the store and the influence on the community and the Wisconsin Conference. I believe God has called me to this position and I am stepping out in faith that this is where God wants me and my family.”

Wakonda Work Bee May 12-16

Be part of the group that helps prepare our beautiful camp for camp meeting and the summer season!

Call for Info:
Elgin Ziesmer: 920-737-0500
Becky Ziesmer: 920-737-0679

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

	2024 <small>(13 wks)</small>	2023 <small>(13 wks)</small>	% Change
March Tithe Income:	\$757,517	\$631,027	20 %
YTD Tithe Income:	\$2,151,292	\$1,834,011	17 %
March WI Budget:	\$24,947	\$20,965	19 %
YTD Wisconsin Budget:	\$74,952	\$64,126	17 %

Janitors Needed During Camp Meeting

For Women’s Bathhouses

Contact Caden Minett
(608) 451-1318
-or- Amir Gulzar
(262) 339-8816



WISCONSIN ACADEMY



Over spring break, twenty-three students along with Wisconsin Academy (WA) staff, family, and alumni had the amazing privilege of tracing the course of the Protestant Reformation through six European countries! Highlights of the 11-day trip included singing in the catacombs of Rome, visiting the Colosseum, worshipping in an Alpine cave where the Waldensians hid in times of persecution, tracing the last steps of John Huss in Constance where he was burned at the stake, exploring Wartburg castle where Martin Luther

hid, seeing the church where he nailed the 95 theses to the door, and reflecting in the Bethlehem chapel in Prague where John Huss preached the Bible in the language of the people.

These experiences were especially meaningful for the juniors and seniors who had recently finished reading the first thirteen chapters of Ellen White's classic "The Great Controversy" as part of a year-long coordinating class at WA on the Reformation. "The most meaningful part of the trip for me," said senior Elijah Boershinger, "was visiting the catacombs, and singing and praising God in the Waldensian cave, where many people were burned alive singing and praising God."

Junior Ziporah Rittenhouse said, "To be stepping in the places where faithful Christians gave their lives to God, by spreading the gospel even if it meant death has made a stronger impact on me than just reading about it. I have been awed to learn about the stories and history that I didn't know about before. My heart desires to have the boldness and faith that the martyrs did and has made me want to strengthen my faith."

Faith-building experiences like these are part of Wisconsin Academy's mission to develop leaders today who will walk with Jesus into eternity.

If you would like updates on future study trips visit <https://wisacad.org/home/future-study-trips/>





The class of 2024 is counting down the days to graduation. There is much excitement and anticipation on campus as the date is quickly approaching. We wish them many blessings and for God to lead them as they take the next steps in their journeys.

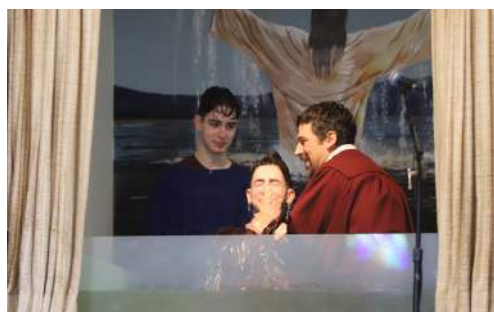
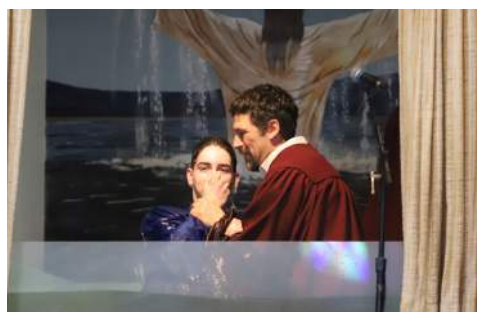


Wisconsin Academy hosted Music Fest April 4-6. There was a great turn-out with 65 students traveling from all over the state to attend. While on campus, they were able to get a taste of dorm life and participate in campus activities. It was a blessing to see the stage full of young people singing praises to God.



This next year marks the 125th anniversary for Secondary education, and the 75th anniversary for Wisconsin Academy. Plans are already in the making to celebrate these milestones. We will share updates as they come available.

SPECIAL EVENTS



God is working in the lives of our students. We have had 3 baptisms this year, and have 8 students doing Bible studies to be baptized as well. It's a mighty sight to see these young people publicly declare their love for Christ and dedicating their lives to follow Him. Pictured are sophomores Luke and Jack Crary, and junior Elizabeth Rios Sanchez.

Our mission:

Developing leaders today who will walk with Jesus into eternity.

www.wisacad.org

Wisconsin Conference of
Seventh-day Adventists
PO Box 100
Fall River WI 53932

Return Service Requested

Calendar of Events

May

- 9 Pastor's Meetings
- 10-12 Pathfinder Fair
- 10-12 Volunteer Lay Pastor Training
- 12-16 Wakonda Work Bee
- 14 Board of Education
- 18 Hispanic Brotherhood Day
- 22 Executive Committee
- 24-26 WI Academy Graduation
- 27 Office Closed
- 30 Teacher In-Service

June

- 2-9 Summer Camp Staff Training
- 11-14 Camp Pitch
- 14-22 Camp Meeting
- 23-28 Cub/Blind Camp
- 24-25 Office Closed
- 30 Tween Camp

July

- 1-5 Tween Camp
- 7-12 Teen Camp
- 14-21 Family Camp
- 21-28 Hispanic Family Camp
- 30 Board of Education

August

- 5-11 International Pathfinder Camporee
- 20 Executive Committee

**SUMMER CAMP
REGISTRATION IS OPEN!**

<https://www.wakonda.org/camp>

Rice Lake to Host Health Immersion Prog.



The Rice Lake Seventh-day Adventist Church is planning to conduct a Health Immersion Program and Training

in October, 2024. It will be under the direction of Dr. John Kelly, lifestyle medicine physician and Founder of American College of Lifestyle Medicine.

Start a new healthy you through lifestyle changes and overcome disease! Watch for registration details.

For more information visit: <https://wi.adventist.org/health-ministries/rice-lake/>

Patricia Antoine-Norton Passes Away



We are saddened to share news of the unexpected passing of Patricia Antoine-Norton, Women's Ministries

Coordinator for the Wisconsin Conference since 2018. Pat talked about Jesus wherever she went and her messages to the women of Wisconsin were always filled with scripture and encouraging messages of faith and hope. We are inspired by her dedicated service and await the glorious resurrection when she will meet her Lord and Savior, Jesus!

A memorial service was held on April 14 at the Racine Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Wendell Springer Passes Away



It is with sadness that we share the passing of Wendell Springer of Lebanon Ohio. Wendell died peacefully on

Monday, November 27, 2023 after an extended battle with Alzheimers disease. He was surrounded by his wife, Jollet, and their children.

Wendell served as a pastor in multiple Wisconsin churches from 1986-2004. During his ministry he exemplified dedication to God, and compassion for people.

A memorial service was held in his honor on Sunday, April 21, 2024 at the Oxford Seventh-day Adventist Church.



Pastor Justin Spady was recently voted into the role of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL) Coordinator

for the Wisconsin Conference. Pastor Spady says he is "honored to follow my predecessors in serving our church here in Wisconsin in this capacity."

<https://www.adventistliberty.org/what-is-parl>

EDITOR

Laurella Case
lcas@wi.adventist.org
920.484.6555 x 319