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Michigan Memo

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An Awful Lot

—Curt DeWitt

Pastor of the Warren and Sterling Heights churches

Donna, one of my church members, came to me some weeks ago beaming from ear to ear. She plopped down in a chair in my office and said reservedly, but with noticeable anticipation, “I’ve got a praise to share with you.”

Donna is one of those hardworking church members who gives her time, effort, and often what little money she has to help others including our school and church family. She is married to Rick, a non-attending Seventh-day Adventist at this point. They have been married for a number of years while raising her grandson almost from birth.

“Alright, I’m all ears, tell me!” I responded with a little of my own enthusiasm expecting a typical blessing like “My doctor gave me the clean bill of health!” or “I gave a GLOW tract to someone in Walmart and had a good chat.” Little did I realize how her *praise* would end up impacting my own perspective about the wonderful faithfulness of our loving Father in heaven.

“Well, this past week,” she explained, “Rick won \$300 from a radio station contest. So I called him

at work and told him that he needed to call within the next 10 minutes or else he would lose the money. He did so; later, we went to pick up the money. As he was counting the money, I asked him, ‘You are going to pay tithe on that money, right?’”

He looked at her and then smugly remarked, “No, I’m not paying tithe on this money. It’s obviously not doing you any good. You’re always broke. You are always borrowing from me.”

Donna, always ready for a good healthy banter, took up the challenge. “Alright, I will just have to pray and ask God to bring some blessings on my side of the ledger.” Rick kept meticulous bookkeeping of all incoming bills, expenses, and outgoing payments for groceries and other things.

She continued, “The next day was my birthday and I received a card from my sister which is pretty normal. I was shocked when I opened it and looked inside. For the first time ever, there was a bunch of twenties - \$200 in total!”

A smile began to spread across my face as she continued.



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President's Perspective

The Gospel and the Gender Wars

—Jay Gallimore
Conference President

These words from the Apostle Paul may be some of the most controversial in modern times. “For as the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church...”¹ Today, in the search for equality and justice, gender wars rage. Male and female identities are being demolished, inverted, and confused. We are flooded with the propaganda of confused family models. Yet divorce, porn, perversion, and millions of babies born outside of marriage has produced unspeakable misery, not to speak of the untold numbers of abortions sacrificed on the altars of our lust. Maybe, just maybe, God’s model, given to the human race at Creation, deserves a closer look?

Here is the question that underlies the gender wars: were Adam and Eve created equal? Genesis leaves no uncertainty! Both were created in the image of God. In addition He paid the same price to redeem them both. Creation declares that God loves His daughters just as much as He loves His sons.

Were they created identical? Again Genesis is clear. They were created “male and female” - different, but not contradictory. They are two divisions of the same because when you put them together they become “one flesh”. Each was created unique in the image of God but tailor-made to correspond to the other socially, mentally, and physically. They were created for harmony not disharmony. Their differences were part of the divine order to accomplish the divine purpose.

Eve is indivisibly part and parcel of Adam’s very self. While he is her servant leader, she cannot, by reason of her creation, ever be owned by this man. If Adam is free then she is free because she is “bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh”.² She shares in and with Adam the divine dominion. Yet, both are commissioned within, not out of, their male and female creation. Adam cannot lead without her. She as his “helper”³ cannot hold that dominion independently and separately.

No wonder that Paul tells Christian men to “love their wives just as Christ loves the Church.”⁴ Tragically too often men have traded love for lust. Malachi warned the men of his day not to

treat “the wife of their youth” with treachery.⁵ Had Christian men always treated their wives as Christ treats the Church, what heavenly peace we would have created in the home and the church. Adam was to be Eve’s shield, leader, and counselor. Genesis calls them “the man and his wife”.⁶

Because of his leadership position, the New Testament holds Adam responsible for the fall not Eve. It was through “one man’s (Adam’s) disobedience” that the world fell to Satan.⁷ Eve certainly had a tragic part in it because she was deceived.⁸ But Adam as the primary leader of the world was not deceived. He intentionally sinned.

"Before Jesus comes there will be a revival of primitive godliness. But no great awakening can happen in our churches unless it also happens in our homes!"

So with great cost to Himself, God sends a second Adam, His only begotten Son. As the Son of Man, He came to undo what Adam did. This second Adam would reverse the Fall and redeem the human race. That’s why a woman, even though she was the first to sin, could not fulfill the role of the Messiah. This was

certainly not because she is somehow inferior or has less human rights, but rather because Adam’s leadership function was not in her divine order. His leadership position, not hers, is reflected in the biblical declaration that “in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.”⁹

In the Garden of Eden, Satan had not won the day until he caused Adam to fall. When the magnificent Eve was deceived, she then became Satan’s vehicle but not his final conquest. Only when Adam fell did the world fall into the hands of Satan. On Adam’s divinely ordained leadership rested the destiny of the planet.

Four thousand years later in another garden the second Adam sweated great drops of blood over the destiny of the world. It was Adam’s leadership that Christ wrested back from Satan on the cross. In that victory our salvation, male and female, is assured.

If we can hear above the clash of our gender wars, God has something very important to teach us. Eve was taken from a

rib over Adam's heart, not from his head or his feet. She was to be his superlative associate but not his leader. She was to hold a position of esteem and never ever be crushed beneath his feet. Her destiny was to be in his heart not at his head or at his feet.

Adam was to lead her, but not as one who was an inferior, but as one who was the center of his affections. While she was to respect and esteem him as her head, he was to revere her as his wise and honored co-worker. She was to be treasured, valued, and admired as his associate in the grand task of overseeing and ruling the earth. While Adam was created as the first among two equals, they were still equal.

You see, unlike our sinful world, it was *not* their job that assigned them value. Rather it was the fact that *they were both* God's children! In the faithful performance of their distinct duties, they were to develop a character like their Creator. *Together*, under Adam's headship, they were to populate and *govern* planet earth. This was to be a close, decided, and intimate relationship, filled with beautiful music not conflict.

The divine order also demands that we see Eve as a leader in her own right. Her crucial role as a leader has too often been undervalued and not appreciated. "Leadership is influence, nothing more, nothing less."¹⁰ Eve was given the role of rearing children, not robots, which would create the human race with eternal consequences. That bonding automatically puts her in a powerful leadership position. She would have an influence over the world that Adam could never have. The hand that rocks the cradle shapes the characters of the next generation. That is why she is called the "mother of all living".¹¹

This explains why Paul said "she will be saved in childbearing if she continues in faith, love, and holiness, with self control."¹² He is not talking merely about physical childbirth or about salvation by works. But rather that by being faithful to her unique and splendid leadership role, she will reflect Christ's likeness. The same would hold true for men. Faithfulness to our assignment builds character and results in holiness.

Both Adam and Eve were called to servant leadership. Adam had the primary responsibility to lead, protect and guide with Eve at his side. She had the primary responsibility to shape the next generation with Adam's support and advice. Adam was to love and cherish his wife and she was to respect and support her husband.

In the act of recapturing paradise lost, God reaffirmed the unique leadership roles of both Adam and Eve. It was as the second Adam and as the seed of the woman that Jesus was able to crush the head of the Serpent. Adam could not do Eve's job nor could Eve do Adam's job. Jesus could not be born of an Adam and a second Eve could not recapture Adam's lost position.

We live in a sinful broken world. Our homes may not always reflect Eden's ideal. But even if Jesus finds us as a single parent, in a blended family, or alone, He can make a difference. He

is our Leader! Jesus went to the Cross so that our homes may be little heavens on earth. Trusting the wisdom of the second Adam, who is the seed of the woman, will put selfishness to death and give birth to heavenly peace. Before Jesus comes there will be a revival of primitive godliness. But no great awakening can happen in our churches unless it also happens in our homes!

1. Ephesians 5:23
2. Genesis 2:23
3. Genesis 2:20
4. Ephesians 5:25
5. Malachi 2:13-16
6. Genesis 2:25
7. Romans 5:12
8. 1 Timothy 2:14
9. 1 Corinthians 15:22
10. John Maxwell, *The Twenty One Irrefutable Laws Of Leadership* Nashville, Tennessee, by Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1991) p. 17
11. Genesis 3:20
12. 1 Timothy 2:15

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

Mar 31-Apr 4

Menominee/Wilson

Pastor Tony Ludwig

Community Service - Beverly Postler, Director

Wilson Jr. Academy - Casey Hann, Principal

Emily Gibbs, Darlene Huckabay

Apr 7-11

Detroit Metropolitan/South Lyons

Pastors Jim Howard/Joe Reeves

Bible Worker - Dale Sheridan

Community Service - Paulina Janevski

Metropolitan Jr. Academy - Craig Morgan, Principal

Jeremy Bayer, Marjorie Good, Marcia Moore

Apr 14-18

Berrien Springs Spanish

Pastor Ronald Costa

Apr 21-25

Burlington/Coldwater

Pastor Peter Iwankiw

Literature Evangelist - Julia Bellman, Ishmael Ramos

Community Service Center -

Burlington - Shirley Jefferies, Director

Coldwater - Kay Flower, Director

Woodland Elementary -

Cathy Buell, Principal/Teacher

Apr 28-May 2

Edwardsburg

Pastor Isaias Santos

Christ's Method Alone

—Lori Randall

School Board Chair, Gobles Junior Academy

February 21-23 was a high weekend for teachers, pastors, and lay leaders across the Michigan Conference. Amid icy roads and whiteout conditions, dozens of angel-protected vehicles slowly traveled north to Camp Au Sable, eager for the opportunity to gather together and to learn more on how to show Jesus to the children and families in our Adventist classrooms. Despite the weather, 31 schools were represented with 185 individuals in attendance.

Breakfast began bright and early at 7:00 AM each day. After enjoying fresh pink grapefruit and gooey homemade cinnamon rolls,

our voices joined together in song, welcoming in the day with corporate worship. Don Livesay, Lake Union Conference President, lead in breakout groups and discussion. Larry Blackmer, Vice President of the North American Division (NAD) Department of Education, shared approaches to

marketing our schools and also highlighted the current documentary *Blueprint*. Gary Sudds, Director of the Lake Union Department of Education, focused on partnering together in the mission of reaching children for the Lord and the huge role our schools play in providing safe havens in a world filled with moral compromise. Carol Campbell, Curriculum Director for the NAD, brought us up-to-date on current developments in instruction and assessment along with the integration of faith and learning.



The highlight of the weekend was Dr. Philip Samaan, currently professor in the School of Religion at Southern Adventist

University. Over the course of our time together, he humbly presented to us the theme “Christ’s Method Alone.” Sharing numerous personal illustrations, Samaan brought to life the way our Savior “mingled with men as one who desired their good.”

We were affirmed that working for the Lord is an *exciting* spiritual adventure, that we serve a God with a big heart, and that when we attach ourselves to His Son, great things can be accomplished.

The Desire of Ages p. 362 states, “No other life was ever so crowded with labor and responsibility as was that of Jesus; yet how often He was found in prayer! How constant was His communion with God!”

It’s extremely easy for me to get caught up in the “busy” of life, even if the “busy” focused on doing good. It was so valuable for me to hear again that it’s not only important, but absolutely essential for each one to find ourselves forever falling at the feet of Jesus in earnest prayer. And when we do, look out! We will be energized, empowered, and on fire for saving souls.

Let’s all challenge ourselves to work within our own spheres of influence, praying each morning before we enter that office, classroom, church, or even grocery store, “Lord, I’m offering you my labors today and I want to bring a smile to Your heart.”



2014 Keys of Revelation

— Bob Stewart

Senior Pastor of Grand Rapids Central Church

Revelation '14. KeysofRevelation.com. ASI YFJ. What do all these have to do with West Michigan and the Greater Grand Rapids area? About one year ago,

District 4 pastors found out that ASI (Adventist-Laymen's Services & Industries) was planning to bring their international convention to downtown Grand Rapids. Along with that, ASI typically sponsored around four sites to do YFJ (Youth For Jesus) evangelistic series

just before their convention. With the energy and excitement generated by these ASI events, District 4 pastors have been meeting once a week since November 2013 to pray to see what can be planned when the meetings start on July 7 of this year. Each pastor went back to his respective church(es) to present the news to their congregations and to ask whether they wanted to duplicate what District 12 had done last year in Reach '13 in Detroit.

Coming together again, we began the process of planning for a "District 4 Church Rally" to be held on January 18 at the Rogers Heights Spanish Church, inspiring, informing, and equipping all our members. To date, 16 churches said "yes" to do meetings at the same time, starting July 7. We encouraged each pastor to organize their church(es) to participate in the Ten Days of Prayer program that the North American Division sponsored at the beginning of the year. We also sought to put prayer ministry at the top of the 'to-do list' as we plan and work. This was a great way to start the year.



In the time running up to the rally in our weekly district pastors' meeting, we set in motion different subcommittees' plans, one being to have a massive billboard advertising campaign to start

a month before the meetings in July. Tom Mejeur, temporarily hired by the Conference to assist us, has been instrumental in making contacts with CBS & GR Outdoors sign companies. As four of the churches in the district will be specific YFJ sites, ASI approved to utilize some of their

money to fund all these billboards, benefiting the rest of the district as well.

Another subcommittee developed our website for registration, patterning it after Detroit's successful venture in "Reach '13." We contracted with Son Koral, a new believer baptized from those very meetings, and have been very blessed to have him on our team.

The Rally was a great success. We had a full house at the Rogers Heights Church with around 500 attending. To each attendee, we passed out a bag containing a registration card, a key tag for quick scanning registration, a magnet in the form of a key, and

a bookmark timeline that told when each of the upcoming events would take place in the months leading up to the July 7 start. Each of these items were stamped with the branding logo and graphic for Keys of Revelation.

For an hour and a half, we presented the vision and goal of our "Revelation '14" outreach via multiple speakers. Elder Gallimore challenged us at the end of the rally to get involved and to reach West Michigan for Jesus. At the end of



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"I showed Rick and praised God for His blessing. He immediately said, 'That's not from God. Your sister just had some extra money this time around and sent it.'"

Donna said she started to count out her tithe right away which raised his ire a bit. "What are you doing now?"

"Taking my tithe out." She responded matter-of-factly.

"You don't have to pay tithe on birthday gifts!" he said adamantly.

"Oh, yes I do. I always pay my tithe faithfully on all money God brings me." She calmly replied.

Rick continued. "That \$200 is not from God, I'm telling you! It's just a coincidence. Now if your son starts paying child support, *then* I'll believe!"

I laughed as Donna continued her soon-to-be amazing story.

"Well, Pastor, that same day, one hour later, I got on the computer to check my online banking and was amazed to see an extra \$462. I thought to myself, 'Hmmm, that's strange. I wonder where that extra money came from?' After checking the records, I realized that for the first time ever in 13 years, my son had actually paid his child support!"

At this point, I was flabbergasted to say the least. "Wow, that's just amazing! What a God!" I said grinning from ear to ear. "That deserves a high five!" I said as we slapped our hands together both praising God from whom all blessings flow.

When I returned home, I began calling some family members sharing this incredible story and hearing the same reaction from them. Later that evening after the Sabbath had begun, I received a phone call from Donna.

"You aren't going to believe this, Pastor!" she said with incredulity.

I began to smile and responded, "You aren't serious?"

"Yes, I am! Today I received a call from Social Security and they told me that they had found a mistake in their records and they owed me some money from the past year. Pastor, it was over \$1400!"

"Are you kidding me?" I almost didn't know what to say at this point.

Donna started laughing over the phone. "I am serious!"

After hanging up, I sat in my chair in amazement thinking about God and how wonderful He truly is. I immediately made plans to share this story in my sermon the next day as this news just

had to get out to as many people as possible.

I had read Malachi 3 many times before, but for some reason, it has taken on a whole new meaning in my life.

Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this," says the Lord of Hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it. Mal. 3:10

God had truly opened the windows of heaven for His faithful, tithe-paying servant. Earlier, at the end of our first conversation before the \$1400 came forward, I looked at Donna and said, "God loves you an awful lot. Do you realize how special you are to Him?"

Her heartfelt response shouldn't have surprised me. "God must love Rick an awful lot."

I felt like I was on holy ground sitting at the feet of Jesus as I contemplated her unselfish spirit that desperately wanted her husband to find the peace that comes from knowing Jesus Christ as his personal Lord and Savior. She had recognized that God was blessing her to draw Rick to Himself.

I saw Rick a couple of days later and he was joking around a bit when I asked him about the story. "Rick, what do you think about all this?" He hesitated some, not sure what to say. I continued on, "What happened to you and Donna with all this money and tithing thing is proof that there is a God because only God could make something like this happen." He didn't disagree.

"Aren't you amazed by all this?" I prodded a bit further.

Finally, he humbly shook his head "yes" knowing full well he couldn't deny his feelings.

I have often thought about Donna's story since that day. Each time, I am more determined than ever before to be faithful in returning my tithes and giving love offerings to this most amazing God who died for me. I long for each and every Seventh-day Adventist member the world over, to experience God's faithfulness. As I write this story, my thoughts are carried heavenward. I can almost hear God's voice tenderly speaking to His precious, faithful, tithe-paying daughter along with her humble witness to others-

Those who honor Me I will honor. . . 1 Sam. 2:30

The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness; According to the cleanness of my hands He has recompensed me. Psalm 18:20

Transitions in Mission



Rod and Marcia Boothby are the new camp and office managers, respectively, at Camp Au Sable. Coming from Montana, Rod had worked in construction and guest service management at Wilderness Outfitters. They have two daughters and two granddaughters. The Boothbys enjoy young people, nature, and the outdoors.



Randy and Helen Scherencel are the camp ranger and guest services assistant, respectively, at Camp Au Sable. Originally from Wright, Michigan for 33 years, they previously worked at Good News Farms. With two grown sons, their hobbies include gardening, camping, and dogs.



Rodney Thompson is the pastor of the Tecumseh and Monroe churches. Formerly a nondenominational pastor in Alpena, he and his wife Sabrina became Adventists five years ago during an evangelistic series. Rod was previously in the Navy and National guard.

David Garcia will be the Hispanic Coordinator/ District Superintendent for District 3. He replaces Daniel Scarone who has taken on broader responsibilities in the Ministerial Department.

Ron Knapp will be Bible working with the Detroit Northwest and Cherry Hill Churches after having worked with the Central Lake Church.

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the rally, we were able to have a camera crew ready to interview 18 people about what they had experienced. We are using those interviews each Sabbath following the rally to continue inspiring our congregations.

We have been blessed to begin a relationship with an organization called Alliance for Health (a national entity), whose mission is abbreviated here: "The Alliance for Health is a broad-based community coalition dedicated to the encouragement of optimal health for all residents through high quality health care services at the lowest cost." However, the new president Paul Brand is strongly focused on the need for education in lifestyle issues as the major mover in health and health care problems - a page out of our own book! They hold the keys to enter almost any health care-related entity in West Michigan, public or private. Vicki Griffin, the Michigan Conference Health and Temperance Director, has had the opportunity to present at their meetings and will do a follow-up as well.

A training for the Health Expo in May; *Eight Weeks To Wellness* was held March 7-9 by ASI; lay training was held March 22 - 23 with Emmanuel Institute; and *Fit & Free Seminars* will be on the first and last weekends of June. In addition to these corporate events, all the church(es) have implemented their individual master plans for evangelism as well. There is a great spirit of cooperation among the pastors (and churches) as we meet from week-to-week to continue planning and strategizing. Keep us in your prayers as we go forward in faith to let the Gospel in the Three Angels Messages go to all of West Michigan.

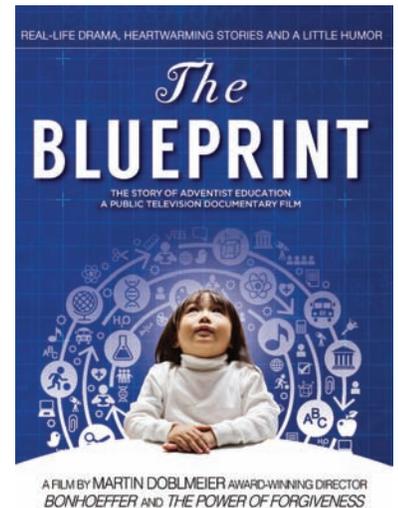
The Blueprint

One of Amazon's best selling documentary films, "The Blueprint: The Story of Adventist Education" will be airing on PBS stations in April 2014. This film is a collection of stories about Seventh-day Adventist teachers and students across America, who tell the story of this education system. Not only a documentary, the film also explains the philosophy of Adventist education where the "wholeness" of each student is emphasized in body, mind, and spirit.

Award-winning producer Martin Doblmeier previously created the documentaries, "The Adventists" about the longer lifespans of Adventists, "The Adventists 2" about the global medical missionary work, and now this film about one of the largest faith-based private school systems in the world.

Whether you view this on public television this month, purchase the DVD from our Adventist Book Center, or hold a community viewing to promote the church and school, every Seventh-day Adventist needs to watch this documentary.

Running time: 60 minutes



April

- 3-6 GYC Board
- 4-6 Women's Ministries Retreat I
Camp Au Sable
- 11-12 Division Pathfinder Bible
Experience - Baltimore
- 11-13 Women's Ministries Retreat II
Camp Au Sable
- 13 Camp Au Sable Long Range/
AUSMIN Committee
- 18-20 LUC ASI Spring Fellowship
- 18-20 Women's Ministries Retreat III
Camp Au Sable
- 25-27 VBS Workshop Camp Au Sable
- 26 West MI Youth Rally
Grand Rapids
- 27 Adventurer Fun Day - GLAA
- 29 MI Conference Executive
Committee - Conference Room
- 30 Camp Meeting Directors

May

- 2-4 Andrews Graduation Weekend
- 4-9 Camp Au Sable Work Week
- 5 LUC Lego Robotics Challenge
- 10 UP District Spring Retreat
- 11 Mother's Day
- 16-18 Pathfinder Fair - Au Sable
Northwoods
- 21 GLAA Finance
- 23-25 Hispanic Camp Meeting -
Camp Au Sable
- 25 Academy Graduations
- 25-30 Certification Week
Camp Au Sable
- 26 Memorial Day - Office Closed
- 27 MI Conference Executive
Committee - Conference Room

What's Happening This Month . . .

Grand Rapids will receive a double-dose of ASI this year *and* a double blessing! The ASI Lake Union Chapter will hold its annual Spring Fellowship, April 18-19, 2014 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel by the



In February 2014, Fifty ASI Lake Union members, friends and family took a mission trip to a Dominican Republic orphanage. Trip highlights will be shared at the ASI Lake Union Spring Fellowship in Grand Rapids, April 18-19.

airport. Themed “*Ultimate Surrender*,” this event is planned to inspire and motivate attendees with creative ways to tell others about Jesus and His soon return.

Speakers, music, seminars, children’s programs, exhibits, and member’s enthusiastic testimonies will pack the weekend with ideas and tools to enhance your Christian witness. A phenomenal slate of presenters include Pastor Rodlie Ortiz, Associate Pastor at Pioneer Memorial Church at Andrews, as the Friday evening speaker; Elder Dan Jackson, President of the North American Division, for Sabbath morning worship service; and our own Lake Union President, Elder Don Livesay, for Sabbath evening vespers.

You also won’t want to miss the Friday afternoon seminars, featuring two outstanding presenters: Mike Hamblin (business) and Scott Griswold (mission). Rich Aguilera, founder of *One Mustard Seed*, will bring a

dynamic presentation for the children/youth programs - one that the kids won’t want to miss! Please join us for this special life-changing event and find out what ASI is all about. For more information or to register, go to www.asilakeunion.org

ASI (Adventist-Laymen’s Services and Industries) is a collaborative organization of Seventh-day Adventist lay persons who own or direct for-profit or not-for-profit organizations. Their goal is to use their gifts and talents in their sphere of influence to fulfill the gospel commission – not only to support, but also to press forward the global mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.