

KNOWING THE TIME

ROM. 13:11

Michigan Camp Meeting

June 10-18, 2022

www.misda.org



The Temperance Movement Reimagined

In 2017, the state of Michigan legalized the delivery of alcohol by mail. The following year, Michigan voters legalized the recreational use of marijuana. *And then came the pandemic.* Ever since early 2020, alcohol and marijuana use has been skyrocketing. Take marijuana for instance, which saw \$135 million in Michigan sales in December 2021 alone.

For the Vassar church, this issue is literally inescapable, as an abandoned factory near the center of town is being converted into a marijuana commerce park, complete with outdoor shopping, café, private smoking rooms and a cannabis beverage factory. The new venture demonstrates the aggressiveness of the alcohol and marijuana industries. As a church, we felt we had to respond.

As Seventh-day Adventists, we have an incredible history of leadership around the issue of temperance. Ellen White was a known and sought after speaker on temperance issues. And due to her inspired counsels, Adventists had a broad based platform

from which they could address the topic – understanding that the roots of alcoholism can “be traced to the home table” (*Temperance*, p. 156).

This history, while implying a moral obligation to inform others, has provided a tremendous opportunity, and indeed privilege, of educating the world on public health issues. This is especially true in crises that, if left unchecked, would make it impossible for individuals to understand our distinctive message of hope.

To be sure, there are many Christian groups that share our concerns about the recreational use of marijuana. However, effective education on marijuana is hard to find due to the permissive stance of many Christians on alcohol. Adventists may be the only large Christian group well positioned to speak on the inherent dangers of both of these substances.

The development of this large-scale marijuana manufacturing and grow site, in a rural town like Vassar, and right next to rail for quick

“Addictions provide the allure of fun and the seeming promise of a temporary escape from reality; until one wants to stop, but discovers they’re enslaved.”

movement of large quantities, says a lot. Jesus, John and Paul all warned the church that deception would escalate just prior to Christ’s second coming. One way in which this is occurring is in methods of deception that people *ask for and love*. Addictions provide the allure of fun and the seeming promise of a temporary escape from reality; until one wants to stop, but discovers they’re enslaved.

Our need to respond wasn’t self-generated. Rather, God wanted to respond, for He loves people. So, starting with a small committee, we began designing a simple poster, essay and oratorical contest, targeting 7th – 12th graders across our region. The idea quickly developed, gaining church support and several volunteers. Thanks to the quick work of pastors Dick Bullock and Fred Calkins, we

(continued on page 7)

By Justin Ringstaff,
Executive Secretary



“The Lord has raised us up as a prophetic movement to bring to the world a certain and definite message to prepare a people for the second coming of Jesus.”

KNOWING THE TIME

How important is it to know the time? From ancient sundials to the recent atomic clock, knowing the time has been one of the most important essentials to everyday life. There is another clock, however, that should draw our utmost attention. It is the great prophetic clock of Bible prophecy.

In Matthew 16:3, Jesus reproves those who pride themselves in being able to “discern the face of the sky” but fail to discern “the signs of the times.” As Seventh-day Adventists, we have had the profound blessing of knowing the time more clearly than any other people on the face of the earth. By the Lord’s own providential hand, our gaze has been firmly fixed on the prophetic clock to discern the signs of the times. Let us not take such a gift for granted.

I often think of the great sacrifice by our early pioneers as they were drawn out after God to understand the grand truths of Scripture. Days of fasting and prayer; hours pleading with God to send the Holy Spirit for understanding; the precious rays of light carefully gathered and fit together. They counted “knowing the time” as a priceless treasure. It was to them “a light that shines in a dark place.”¹ It was Jesus, the Morning Star rising in their hearts.

How I pray for that to be my renewed experience and yours!

How important is it to know the time? It could be the difference between eternal life and eternal loss. The movements of prophecy are like the chimes of the clock hour. With each sounding we carefully discern its weight in light of eternity.

In fact, Jesus forewarns us to be vigilant, so we don’t miss the time. He says, “But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life and that Day come on you unexpectedly.”² If we are not careful, even we who know the time can lose track of it, and find ourselves caught unaware.

This is a compelling reason to keep the sacred movements of Bible prophecy fresh in our minds. We cannot afford to let their significance fade from our memories. One of the most effective ways to do this is to study them personally and then share them with others.

This is a time for us to be building our confidence in the word of God and the prophetic message He has entrusted to us. We cannot afford to give heavenly things second place in our lives.

The enemy of souls certainly has not forgotten the time, and knows its importance. Revelation reveals that the devil has come with great wrath, “because he knows that he has a short time.”³ The devil is a diligent student of Bible prophecy and knows that there is too little time left to take his ease or slumber. He has work to do before it’s too late.

This is especially significant for us as we have been given our work, too. The Lord has raised us up as a prophetic movement to bring to the world a certain and definite message to prepare a people for the second coming of Jesus.

In this final hour, we are to proclaim the three angels’ messages of Revelation 14. We must never lose

sight of that purpose. This sacred charge calls for the best and most earnest use of our time. And as the prophet of the Lord reminds us: “There is no other work of so great importance. [We] are to allow nothing else to absorb [our] attention”⁴(emphasis supplied).

The devil is seeking to break down our faith in the advent movement. He is trying to break our confidence in the sure word of prophecy. And while the enemy of every soul is marshalling his troops, he is, at the same time, seeking to lull the remnant forces to sleep at their post. The Commander of the heavenly hosts is calling for His remnant army to awake out of sleep and stand steadfast for the last great struggle.

Let us be like the sons of Issachar from David’s men of war “who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do.”⁵ They not only knew the time, but they also knew what to do in light of it.

Dear saints, called by the Lord Himself, it is time for us “to arise and shine for the glory of the Lord is risen upon us.”⁶ Darkness covers this world and

deep darkness those who dwell in it. But as the Lord shines His glory upon us, let us awake and rise to our work that others may also come to the light.⁷

In 1 Corinthians 15:4, we are called to “awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.” This is the heart of the matter. Our continuing to sleep does not only hurt us. There are still those in the prison house of Babylon who do not know the time nor the truth. The servant of the Lord reminds us that, “the love of Christ, revealed to us, makes us debtors to all who know him not. God has given us light, not for ourselves alone, but to shed upon them.”⁸

As we understand the awesome revelations of Jesus Christ, and His love demonstrated toward us, we cannot but sense our responsibility to share Him and His final message with the world.

The Lord knew that we might be prone to drift off to sleep. He knows that though our spirit is often willing our flesh is weak.⁹ “But thanks be to God!

He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”¹⁰ For “in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.”¹¹ In His great love for us, He has made every provision for us to find victory in Him. He has promised that as He overcame, we too can overcome in Him. He sends the Holy Spirit and His ministering angels to shake us and give us that moment of clarity to realize it is high time to wake from our slumber.

It truly is time, and the prophetic clock is about to strike for the last time for “the night is far spent, the day is at hand.”¹² So let us rise up, O church of God, for surely our salvation is nearer than when we first believed!

1 2 Peter 1:19
2 Luke 21:34
3 Revelation 12:10
4 Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol 9, p. 19
5 1 Chronicles 12:32
6 Isaiah 60:1
7 Isaiah 60:2, 3
8 Ellen White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 81
9 Matthew 26:41
10 1 Corinthians 15:57
11 Romans 8:37
12 Romans 13:12

Every Monday morning,

the Michigan Conference staff meets for worship and prayer. Here is the list for the following dates. Please join us as we pray for these churches and ministries.



MARCH 1

Detroit Spanish Cavalry/Detroit Spanish Ebenezer/Pontiac Spanish Co
Pastor Marriano Arrua

MARCH 8

Ann Arbor Spanish/Detroit Shalom Spanish
Pastor Ronald Costa

Wyoming Rogers Heights Spanish
Pastor Darling Ayala

Benton Harbor Spanish/Eau Claire Spanish
Pastor Jorge Diaz

MARCH 15

Elk Rapids Spanish
Pastor Ben Garcia

Battle Creek Spanish/Kalamazoo Spanish
Pastor Jonathan Flores-Ardiles

Battle Creek Spanish Food Pantry

MARCH 22

Berrien Springs Spanish
Pastor Nilton Garcia
Pastor Edgar Luna

Lansing Spanish
Pastor Jermaine Gayle

Grand Rapids Maranatha Spanish
Pastor Carlos Sotomayor

MARCH 29

Grand Rapids Northwest Spanish Co/Holland Spanish/Pearl Spanish
Pastor Jorge Mata

Thirty-Two Years of Trial

—and How It Finally Ended

By Judy Klein



Rod Dunneback (left) with Gilbert Poole.



Photo Credit (both photos): Jason Lounds

Thirty-two years ago, Gilbert Poole Jr. was a very different man. And, if he had been shown his future, he probably would never have believed it.

Poole grew up in the backcountry of North Carolina, where the mountains rest, lazy in their blankets of grass. It was peaceful there, and some might say Poole should have stayed. But the Lord had other plans.

Poole moved to Michigan where he began dating a young woman. He and his girlfriend moved to South Carolina, but their relationship didn't last long and the woman, whom Poole does not name, stormed off to the police station, demanding a ride back to Michigan.

A few days later, the police showed up at Poole's house, telling him he was under arrest for a murder in Pontiac, Michigan. A man had been found stabbed to death near a common jogging trail.

Poole wasn't worried. He didn't murder the man, and he "trusted the system" to prove his innocence. The court appointed Poole a lawyer, but Poole never met the man. "I still haven't seen him," Poole says, laughing, "thirty-three years later!"

When the trial began, Poole was not worried. As time progressed, however, his opinion flipped, and terror grew like a weed, strong, willful and entirely impossible to kill. The prosecution had evidence against him—there had been bite marks found on the victim's body—bite marks which they claimed matched Poole's teeth. "It had no basis in science," Poole says.

To make things worse, Poole's ex-girlfriend testified against him. She claimed that Poole had told her that he committed the murder. Poole went to trial believing he would walk away

"Some people would say that the stars aligned for me, but I have a question for you. Who aligns the stars?"

a free man. Instead, on June 6, 1989, he was sentenced to life in prison for a crime he didn't commit.

Innocence doesn't take life in prison for an answer, and Poole appealed. "It was a long journey," he says. There was lots of paperwork, and a legal agency to be contacted, asking for help. In 2001, twelve years later, he came across Innocence Project with Cooley Law School.

The Innocence Project, according to Poole, examines cases in which DNA may be involved. A blood sample from the victim's shirt didn't match his DNA—nor did it match Poole's!

Fourteen years later, in 2015, the DNA was sent to the Michigan state police. Poole chose them specifically because there would be a less chance of someone tampering with the evidence. Unfortunately, the Michigan State police destroyed the evidence during testing. "That was the reason I wanted it to go to a Federal Lab!" Poole exclaims.

All hope was gone and it seemed there was no way to go but back into the abyss of despair. “Nothing was working,” Poole says. To make things worse, Poole got into trouble at prison—all because of who he spent time with. “I had to reevaluate who I was hanging out with,” he says, but “standing alone in a prison yard wasn’t going to end well.”

Poole turned to what he affectionately calls “Bible thumpers.” Poole had been isolated from any and all ideas of religion because of his upbringing. His father had forced the Jehovah’s Witness religion on him.

Poole started attending the Seventh-day Adventist prison group, led by Rod Dunneback, a Lansing church member. Moise Ratsara, pastor of the Jackson church, explained that during his time in prison, Poole faithfully completed all of the Bible study guides. After a year or so of studying and group attendance, Ratsara says, he “surrendered to Jesus and he got baptized in what almost looked like a bathtub.”

When Poole emerged from the water,

his fellow Adventist prisoners sang a song. Ratsara comments, “It’s like his face completely changed! He was at peace after his baptism.” Ratsara recalls hoping, at that moment, that Poole would someday be freed.

Around this time, Poole discovered there was a new scientific test available. The test could use a partial profile to check for evidence—this new science allowed Poole’s case to be reopened, using the partial profile previously destroyed by the Michigan State Police. The test worked. There was new evidence that excluded Poole. On May 26, 2021, the state attorney general petitioned the court, and Poole was declared innocent.

“Some people would say that the stars aligned for me, but I have a question for you. Who aligns the stars?” Poole says. After thirty-two years in prison for a crime he didn’t commit, he was released. He says, “There are those that say ‘Never give up,’ ‘Keep fighting!’ I disagree. I didn’t keep fighting. I turned the battle over to God.”

As soon as Poole surrendered his life

and his battle to God, things took an upward turn—events in which Poole was released from his thirty-two year battle for the truth. Poole was released, but his struggle is not over. “You can’t leave a battlefield without taking the battle home with you,” Poole says.

In the beginning, Poole was terrified to go to a grocery store. He had never seen a cell phone or a computer. The outside world had changed. “But fear,” Poole says, “is a lack of faith.” Thirty-two years ago, Poole did not know God. Thirty-two years ago, Poole was hopeless and drifting through life with no purpose. The Lord used this experience to bring Poole home.

Phil Mills, who pastors the Lansing church where Poole now regularly attends, comments, “If the Lord hadn’t let him go through this experience, he wouldn’t be a Christian... He will live forever because of it.”

Poole’s story is an appeal to us. When life doesn’t go the way we wish, when it seems as if everything is falling down around our heads, we need to turn the battle over to God and let Him fight for us.

TRANSITIONS IN MINISTRY



Alex Rybacheck is the new pastor of the Niles Westside church. He pastored the Gobles and Allegan churches prior to his new assignment.



Corina Nephew Corina Nephew is the new administrative assistant for the Publishing Department. Corina shares a love for literature evangelism and has served as a colporteur in past years. She looks forward to serving your literature needs.



Dan McGrath is the new pastor of the Metropolitan church in the Detroit area. He previously pastored the Rockford Three Angels and Sparta churches.



Jorge Neketela is the new pastor of the Farmington and Cherry Hill churches. He is also a student studying to complete his Master of Divinity degree from the seminary at Andrews University.



Camp Meeting Speakers

Jim Micheff, Jr.



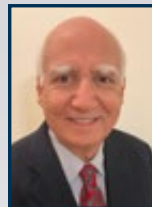
John Bradshaw is the president of *It Is Written*, a media evangelism ministry based in Collegedale, TN. *It Is Written*, programming has been filmed on six continents and has a global audience. He is thankful to work alongside a dedicated team of people committed to sharing the everlasting gospel. He is married to Melissa, and they have two children.



Neil Nedley, MD, MD, is founder and medical director of the Nedley Depression and Anxiety Recovery Programs™. Dr. Nedley is an award-winning practicing physician who also serves as president of Weimar University, a higher education institution that houses the world-famous NEWSTART program. He has presented and published numerous scientific studies in the medical/scientific literature and is well known as an author, public speaker, and teacher throughout the world. Many souls have been won or revived as a result of Dr. Nedley's medical ministry.



Adam Ramdin was born and raised in England in an Adventist home. He went to the United States to study at the age of 19 and later worked for several years as an evangelist with *Amazing Facts*. He is presently the Personal Ministries & Evangelism director for the North England Conference and the Executive Producer for the *Lineage Journey* video series.



Dr. Philip Samaan is professor emeritus of applied theology at Southern Adventist University in Collegedale, Tennessee where he has taught for 20 years. Prior to that, he served as a professor at Andrews University for 10 years. Pastor Samaan also served as a missionary at the headquarters of the former Africa-Indian Ocean Division. He pastored and was ordained in the Idaho Conference, and he directed youth outreach and campus ministries in the North Pacific Union. He is a prolific author and an engaging speaker.

WEEK AT A GLANCE

Time	Friday	Sabbath	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sabbath
7:00 - 7:45	Adam Ramdin (Sab through Sab)								
7:45 - 8:30	Breakfast								
8:30 - 9:00	Welcome to Michigan Camp Meeting	Sabbath School 9:00 - 10:30 Worship* 10:45 - 12:15 John Bradshaw	Michigan Conference Staff Meetings (Sun through Fri)						Sabbath School 9:00 - 10:30 Worship* 10:45 - 12:15 Neil Nedley
9:30 - 10:30			Seminars & Workshops (Mon through Fri)						
10:45 - 12:00			10:15 To 4:00 Blood Drive	10:30 12:00 Path-finder Parade	Philip Samaan (Mon through Fri)				
12:15 - 1:15	Lunch								
1:30 - 2:00	Family Time								
2:15 - 3:15	Seminars & Workshops (Sun through Fri)								Teacher Commissioning 3:00
3:30 - 4:30	Ministerial Ordination 3:00 Soul Winning Hour 4:30	Seminars & Workshops (Sun through Fri)						Soul Winning Hour 4:30	
5:15 - 6:00	Supper								
7:00 - 8:45	Musical Program and Evening Meetings (Final Sabbath evening meetings will close at sunset)								
	Jim Micheff	John Bradshaw	John Bradshaw	John Bradshaw	John Bradshaw	Neil Nedley	Neil Nedley	Neil Nedley	Neil Nedley

* Sabbath overflow site will be the (1) Cafeteria; and when it is full, (2) the Academy Chapel.

(Subject to change)

NEWS BRIEF

Camp Meeting Janitors Needed!



Janitors are needed to clean the men's and women's restrooms during camp meeting, **June 10-18, 2022.**

To be eligible to apply, an applicant must:

- Be 14 years of age or older.
- Have confirmed lodging.
- Complete an employment application. The application can be scanned and emailed to lim@misda.org or mailed to the HR Dept. at the MI Conference address.
- Applications are available at www.misda.org.

Safety Officer Volunteer Application



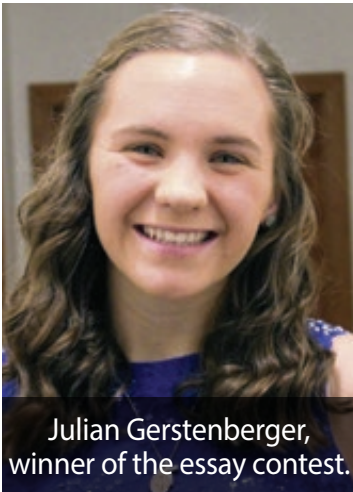
The Michigan Conference is looking for interested Adventist church members to supplement the Safety Team during this year's camp meeting. If you are at least 21 years of age, have an interest, and would like to be considered for such a position, please contact **Joel Nephew** at jdnephew@misda.org or 517-316-1524.

PLEASE NOTE: *It is the applicant's responsibility to submit a fully completed application with three references. An incomplete application may affect applicant's hire.*

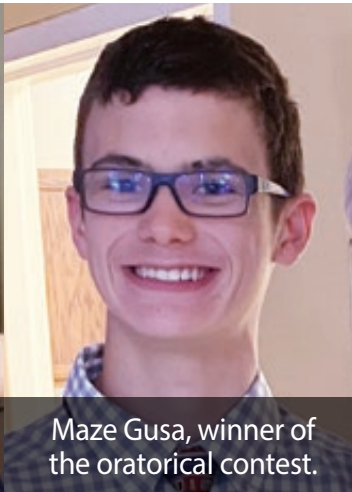
All applications will be reviewed by the committee. Additional required employment documents will be sent to those who are hired.

For detailed requirements and a job description, please visit www.misda.org. The deadline for applications is **April 28, 2022.**

(The Temperance Movement Reimagined)



Julian Gerstenberger, winner of the essay contest.



Maze Gusa, winner of the oratorical contest.

also gained the support of other local Adventist churches. Together, we knew that reaching young people was key, because through them we could also reach their parents. It made sense to allocate a portion of the church evangelism budget for the cash awards given to the contest winners.

To promote the contest, a group of church volunteers emailed every sheriff, mayor, city manager, judge, school principal, Art teacher, English teacher and head Librarian in Huron, Port Sanilac and Tuscola counties. Along with the supportive responses we received, these emails provided an opportunity to introduce our Adventist churches to regional thought leaders.

And, the results are in! The first place winner for the oratorical contest was Maze Gusa, a senior at Ubly High School, located in Ubly Michigan.. The first place winner for the essay contest was Julian Gerstenberger, a home-school

student in the 8th grade. Both young people represented their families well.

“Of all who claim to be numbered among the friends of temperance, Seventh-day Adventists should stand in the *front ranks*” (Gospel Workers, p. 384). As Seventh-day Adventists, temperance should be in our DNA. And, knowing the downstream collateral damage that addictive substances inflict on communities and individual homes, the volume of our collective voice on this topic needs to increase in a marked way. While thrilled for our contest winners, it would be an even greater thrill to see similar temperance activities elevated across our conference.

Now that the contest has ended, we're considering doing the contest again next year. We don't want to be known merely for our stance on temperance, however. Our health message is broad based. We've partnered with an Adventist non-profit called Lifestyle By Design Health (www.lifestylebydesignhealth.org) that produces an all-natural Immune Care Box as a health evangelism tool. Our members are prayerfully giving boxes to neighbors, family and friends, with the intent of promoting strong immune health and educating on right health principals.

And the next time an announcement is made for an evangelistic harvesting series, the individuals we're now praying about, fasting over and studying with will respond to the disinterested kindness revealed through us from our heavenly Father.

By Raymond Waller,
Elder, Vassar church

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MONTHLY CALENDAR

Due to COVID-19, events on the schedule are subject to change.

MARCH

- 1-15 Camp Meeting Registration
- 4-6 Evangelistic Training
- 5 PBE Conference Level
- 17-27 GLAA Spring Break
- 19 PBE Union Level

APRIL

- 1-3 Hispanic Marriage Retreat
- 8-10 Women's Ministry Retreat
- 15-17 Women's Ministry Retreat
- 15-16 PBE Division Level
- 25-May 1 GLAA Home Leave
- 29-May 1 Marriage Commitment Retreat

MICHIGAN MEMO is a monthly publication of the Michigan Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for its constituents. Andy Im, editor; Beth Thomas, acting assistant editor; **Seminars Unlimited**, layout, design, and print. Comments may be submitted by emailing communication@misda.org.

NATURE NUGGET

Blue Mockingbird

By Nolan Keyes,
Nature Center intern at
Camp Au Sable



Photo: Dr. Gordon Atkins

Recently, I assisted Dr. Atkins in guiding a small group of people on a birding tour to New Mexico. Highlights of our trip included seeing 10,000 Snow Geese at Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Reserve, Rosy-Finches at the top of Sandia Crest, and a flock of Pinyon Jays feeding on pinyon nuts. My favorite bird on this trip, however, was the Blue Mockingbird.

Blue Mockingbirds are native only to Mexico and rarely visit the United States (less than ten have ever been recorded in the US). This is the first ever to show up in New Mexico. It arrived last November at Carlsbad Caverns National Park and was still there when we saw it in mid-January.

Like other types of mockingbirds, Blue Mockingbirds are mimics. They can imitate sounds they hear in their environment, especially other bird calls. This particular Blue Mockingbird's favorite call to mimic was the Northern Flicker, which we heard it do several times. Unlike its cousin, the Northern

Mockingbird, the Blue Mockingbird can be very secretive and prefers to skulk in the underbrush and only occasionally show itself to outside observers.

True to its nature, our Blue Mockingbird proved uncooperative in giving good views.

After a couple of hours, the rest of the group went off to find other birds in the area, leaving me with just one couple who weren't in our group. After four hours of waiting, they also gave up. Two minutes later, the bird hopped up and sat long enough for me to get satisfactory pictures.

This story of my experience with the Blue Mockingbird teaches us an important lesson. When God asks us to do something, more often than not we will come up against difficulties while trying to complete the task. If we persevere, there is always a blessing at the end that makes it well worth it. If we give up when it gets difficult, however, like that couple did, we may never know if we were just minutes away from an amazing reward.