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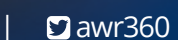
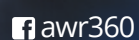
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# Adventist Journey

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## My Journey

In the hospital they call me a “pastor doctor” because I pray for patients and whenever [the hospital] has difficulty with patients—consent for surgery and all, because they don’t understand—they call me. When I talk about God, I tell them that I believe in God and I also believe in science. A lot of times after I pray for patients, they change their minds.

Visit [nadadventist.org/ajjeraldpelayo](http://nadadventist.org/ajjeraldpelayo) for more of Pelayo’s story.

**JERALD PELAYO,**  
*former resident physician, internal medicine,  
in Pennsylvania; now primary-care physician/clinic  
medical director/hospitalist in California*

Jerald L. Pelayo



Cover photo by Art Brando

**Dear Reader:** The publication in your hands represents the collaborative efforts of the North American Division and *Adventist World* magazine, which follows *Adventist Journey* (after page 16). Please enjoy both magazines!

*Adventist Journey* (ISSN 1557-5519) is the journal of the North American Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The Northern Asia-Pacific Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists is the publisher. It is printed monthly by the Pacific Press® Publishing Association. Copyright © 2022. Send address changes to your local conference membership clerk. Contact information should be available through your local church.

PRINTED IN THE U.S.A. Vol. 5, No. 9. September 2022. **Adventist Journey Publication Board** G. Alexander Bryant (chair), Kimberly Luste Maran (secretary), Kyoshin Ahn, Curtis Randolph Robinson, Wendy Eberhardt, Minner Labrador, Arne Nielsen, Calvin Watkins Sr., Rick Remmers, Julio Muñoz, Karnik Doukmetzian, legal advisor **Scripture References** Unless otherwise noted, all Bible references are taken from the *The Holy Bible, New International Version*. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Email: [AdventistJourney@nadadventist.org](mailto:AdventistJourney@nadadventist.org) | Web site: [nadadventist.org](http://nadadventist.org)

### ADVENTIST JOURNEY

Editor **Kimberly Luste Maran**

Senior Editorial Assistant

Art Direction & Design **Ellen Musselman / Types & Symbols**

Consultants **G. Earl Knight, Mark Johnson, Dave Weigley, Kenneth Denslow, Gary Thurber, John Freedman, Bradford C. Newton, Ron C. Smith, Carlos Craig**

Executive Editor, *Adventist World* **Bill Knott**

G. Alexander Bryant (right), North American Division president, along with secretary Kyoshin Ahn (left) and treasurer Randy Robinson, introduce the NAD video report at General Conference Session on June 10, 2022. *Pieter Damsteegt*

## TOGETHER IN MISSION AT THE GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION

Highlights from the Adventist Church's official business meeting.

BY KIMBERLY LUSTE MARAN

**A**fter a two-year postponement, the sixty-first General Conference Session was held June 6-11, 2022, in St. Louis, Missouri. Approximately 2,700 delegates attended the session, more than 1,900 registered to attend in person, and close to 700 registered to attend virtually. World church leaders, including GC officers and vice presidents, department directors, and department associate directors; as well as officers from the church's 13 divisions, were elected.

The General Conference president, secretary, and treasurer were elected again to their positions. Similarly, the North American Division officers will again serve in their positions. News highlights from the GC Session follow.<sup>1</sup>

### North American Division Report

The first division report presented at the 2022 General Conference Session was from the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America (NAD). During the morning of June 10 the NAD officers, president G. Alexander Bryant, secretary Kyoshin Ahn, and treasurer Randy Robinson, introduced the video report that concentrated on the quinquennium (2015-2020) plus the past two years—largely told from the perspective of church members and leaders from across the division.

"We bring greetings to all of our brothers and sisters from around the world on behalf of the nearly 1.3 million members of the North American

Division," began Bryant on the GC Session stage. "We want to thank God for the miraculous things He has done in our division over the past seven years, which you will see in the video."

Bryant expressed his gratitude for the division's membership and for what God has done. He continued, "We are asking God to do even more, and we need everyone in every aspect of the church to get involved. . . . We have selected the theme 'Together in Mission: I Will Go.'"

During the past seven years the NAD has been focused on spreading the distinctive Christ-centered Seventh-day Adventist message of hope and wholeness. Since 2015 nearly 220,000 people were baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, churches creatively baptized

people, baptizing them in local lakes, rivers, and streams. A few reports indicated that some were even baptized in a bathtub. In other cases, pastors put on their masks and, in empty churches with just a family member present, baptized people at the local church. The focus has been on not just adding members, but on making disciples.

In 2015, under the leadership of Daniel R. Jackson, who was serving as president of the NAD,<sup>2</sup> the division launched an initiative called Plant 1000, a vision to plant 1,000 new congregations by 2020. The NAD was well on its way to achieving that objective, but COVID-19 curtailed those efforts. By God's grace, however, the NAD and its membership planted more than 900 new congregations across the division by the end of 2020.

In addition to centers of influence beginning to multiply throughout the territory, NAD churches operated more than 1,500

“We want to thank God for the miraculous things He has done in our division. . . . We are asking God to do even more, and we need everyone to get involved.”

food distribution centers during the past few years.

And as a division, together in mission, the NAD reached the \$1 billion annual tithe threshold. During the quinquennium and for the years 2020 and 2021 the tithe in North America totaled more than \$7.4 billion. Many used the platform called AdventistGiving, a tool where members in North America can return tithe and give offerings to their local churches online—without being physically present at church.

To assist the local conferences, where most churches and schools

closed during the height of the pandemic, the North American Division provided what was termed a stimulus package of more than \$10 million in funding, and most unions added their own funding in addition to this unprecedented appropriation. Nearly \$2 million was also provided for those involved in community outreach and relief through the NAD Adventist Community Services ministry department.

The North American Division has a total of 918 childhood programs/schools in its educational system. This includes a variety of configura-

## GC PRESIDENT'S REPORT AND ELECTION

**D**uring the morning business session on June 6, Adventist world church president Ted N.C. Wilson delivered his president's report, which provided a comprehensive overview of the significant events and achievements of the world church during the past seven years.

“Since our last General Conference Session, in 2015, the world has experienced significant crises and has undergone unprecedented change,” he began, acknowledging the hard work and challenges that all church departments, ministries, and institutions have faced due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine conflict, and other troubling world events.

A clear theme expressed throughout Wilson's report was how, despite setbacks, the Adventist Church and its bodies have adapted and innovated, resulting in many new initiatives and resources. Many of these are now focused on supporting the “I Will Go” strategic framework of the worldwide church for 2020-2025.

“We praise God for the many creative ways He has led His church to continue carrying His mission forward through various channels,” he said.

Finishing his report with a powerful call to church members to embrace Total Member Involvement and reach others with the gospel message.

“For each of us, let us recommit ourselves to the Lord and His Advent movement and continue moving forward in confidence in Total Member Involvement, saying to the Lord, ‘I will go proclaim the three angels' messages,’ looking not ‘at the things which are seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal’ [2 Cor. 4:18]. Jesus is Coming! Get Involved!”

During the final minutes of the business session on Monday, June 6, the GC in session voted to reelect Wilson as president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Church. This will be Wilson's third term.

— *Maryellen Hacko, Adventist News Network, with Angelica Sanchez*



G. Alexander and Desiree Bryant share the stage with the other division presidents and spouses on June 8, 2022. Bryant was elected president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America at the GC Session on June 8. Pieter Damsteegt

tions of the pre-K to 12 platform. The division operates 13 colleges/universities. All counted, 3,808 early childhood students, 37,817 elementary students, 11,680 secondary students, and 20,939 college/university students attend division schools.

During the pandemic, shuttered schools went online. As they reopened, in many cases they transitioned to a hybrid model, managing students in-person while at the same time managing students online. Educators had a herculean task to keep students on track with their educational pursuits while helping them cope with the mental strain and stressors that COVID-19 unleashed. Across the NAD, there has been an increase in enrollment in the pre-K to 12 program.

Five health-care systems collectively lead 1,148 clinics/hospitals throughout the division. They are engaged in the healing ministry of Jesus every single day and thousands are touched by their compassionate ministry. This pandemic revealed the level of commitment, courage, and resolve they have in delivering care and healing at the risk of their own lives.

At the division office, a new NAD website and branding strategy with visual identity, in line with the General Conference, was launched during the quinquennium. The magazine *Adventist Journey* was also started in partnership with *Adventist World* magazine, through Adventist Review Ministries. The division engaged in conducting high-quality virtual meetings through the Zoom platform, revolutionizing how the business of the church can be accomplished.

### NAD Officer Elections, Leadership Movement

On June 8, 2022, the GC in session voted to accept the nomination of G. Alexander Bryant as president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America. Bryant began serving in July 2020 when elected by the GC executive committee, replacing Jackson, who retired on July 1, 2020, and passed away in July 2022 (see p. 8).

After his election Bryant said, "I am humbled by the election, and also privileged to serve and to lead the North American Division with such a tremendous team

that we have in our office and across the territory. We're excited about what God has planned and what He will do in our territory over the next three years; and we ask for your prayers."

Before his 2020 election Bryant most recently served as executive secretary of the NAD and associate secretary of the GC, positions he'd held since October 2008 when elected at the GC Annual Council in Manila, Philippines. Bryant was reelected secretary at the 2010 GC Session.<sup>3</sup>

During the evening business meeting on June 8, NAD executive secretary Kyoshin Ahn and treasurer Randy Robinson were elected to their positions when the delegates at the session voted to approve the nominating committee recommendations for all 13 division secretaries and treasurers. The two are slated to serve the 2022-2025 term.

"I am humbled to have this opportunity to serve in this great division, in this leadership role," said Ahn who became secretary of the division in August 2020, replacing Bryant. "We have so many committed members in this division, I look forward to serving with them, spreading the eternal gospel across the North American Division territory and around the globe."

Robinson, who has served as NAD treasurer since November 2018 said, "It's a privilege to serve. I love the people I'm working with. They are incredible administrators. They love the Lord, and they want the mission of the church to go forward. I'm just very, very grateful and very, very humbled."

At the session two NAD leaders were elected to serve in General Conference positions. Maurice R. Valentine II, NAD vice president for Adventist Media Ministries, accepted one of the positions of general vice president at the GC. Richard Stephenson, NAD Information Technology Services director, accepted the position of associate treasurer, technology operations and strategy.

<sup>1</sup>Watch the division report at <https://vimeo.com/719139843>. For links to all NAD coverage at the 2022 GC Session, including articles and video news interviews, visit <https://www.nadadventist.org/news/north-american-division-coverage-2022-general-conference-session>.

<sup>2</sup>Daniel R. Jackson retired on July 1, 2020, and G. Alexander Bryant was elected president of the NAD in July 2020.

<sup>3</sup>At the 2022 GC Session it was voted that the NAD secretary and treasurer will no longer serve as associate officers of the General Conference.

# NAD NEWS BRIEFS

## A Sweet Singer in Israel, Walter Arties III, Passes to His Rest

**W**alter Eugene Arties III passed away in Phoenix, Arizona, on June 26, 2022, from an acute neurological condition after several weeks in the hospital. Arties was 80.

“Walter Arties was a visionary,” said G. Alexander Bryant, North American Division president. “He led in the blockbuster idea that the Seventh-day Adventist Church needed to have in its gospel arsenal a TV program targeted to a Black audience. As a result of his untiring efforts, *Breath of Life* was born and tens of thousands will be in the kingdom. This church’s witness and light have shone brighter as a result of this great man of faith and unparalleled vision.”

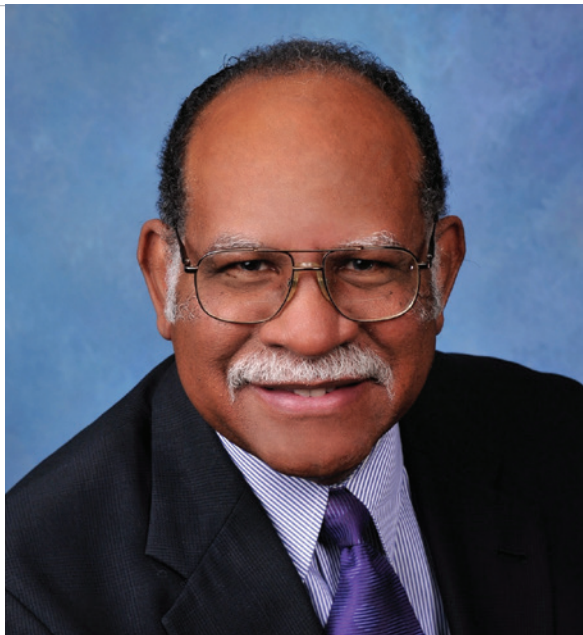
The six-day Watts uprising of August 1965 sparked a dream that had been tossing around in Arties’ head. Watts was a low-income Black community that reacted to the unjust arrest of a young African American motorist. Rioting, looting, and violence followed and 34 people were killed, more than a thousand injured, almost 4,000 arrested and property damage was upward of \$40 million. Arties felt that something had to be done to bring hope and new life to Watts and African Americans in general. The vision to develop a ministry to reach the Black community was born. The idea of a program of religious music and preaching, he felt, could rejuvenate this troubled city. Walter dreamed of this kind of program and began laying plans to implement this dream.

A pilot program for the proposed *Breath of Life* TV program was developed and approved by the leadership of the Southern California Conference. After the pilot was aired on KHOF, Arties was invited to a communications advisory at Hinsdale Sanitarium where he showed his concept. The world church leaders approved it and recommended Charles D. Brooks to serve as the speaker. Brooks accepted the position and the first BOL programs were aired in 1974.

Arties, part of the original BOL quartet, had a unique and captivating singing style; and to the delight and amazement of his audiences, Arties could hold a note for several measures—seemingly forever. Enhancing his vocal skills was the piano artistry of his long-time accompanist Myrna Matthews Haynes, who also toured with him.

Arties is survived by wife Beverly, and two nieces, Ethelda and Arlene Dyer. Visit <https://www.nadadventist.org/news/sweet-singer-israel-walter-arties-iii-passes-his-rest> to read the full article.

—DeWitt S. Williams



↑ Walter E. Arties III *Breath of Life Ministries*

## In Canada, Alberta Invests \$600,000 in Burman University

**T**he Alberta government’s targeted enrollment expansion program will invest \$600,000 in Burman University over the next three years.\* The investment aims to support more than 88 new seats to expand enrollment in the Bachelor of Business Administration program.

This Alberta at Work initiative helps the post-secondary system support Alberta’s labor market now and in the future, and gives students more opportunities to gain the skills and training they need to enter the workforce. The funding is part of the \$171-million targeted enrollment expansion program for post-secondary institutions, announced in February during the unveiling of the 2022-23 provincial budget.

“This new investment will ensure that Alberta’s workforce in the Central region remains highly skilled and has the expertise needed for the jobs of today and for the jobs of tomorrow,” said Demetrios Nicolaidis, Minister of Advanced Education.

“We greatly appreciate that the Alberta government worked with post-secondary institutions to create real solutions for these high-demand programs. Burman University and its students will truly benefit from this support,” shared Noble Donkor, vice-president of academics for Burman University.

\*Figures are in Canadian dollars.

—Burman University News



**REMEMBERING**

# DANIEL R. JACKSON,

**FORMER NAD PRESIDENT**

“The best way for me to understand my life and my service for God is to keep my eyes fixed upon Jesus as my Example and my Mentor,” said Jackson near his retirement in 2020.

**BY KIMBERLY LUSTE MARAN**

**O**n Sabbath morning, July 23, 2022, Daniel R. Jackson, former president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America, passed to his rest after several months of battling cancer. He was 73.

Jackson, who served the Adventist Church for 49 years, retired on July 1, 2020, after serving as NAD president for a decade. As president, Jackson made many contributions to the church in North America during his 10 years of service at the division, including the building up of the NAD Ministerial Association; the creation of a missional strategic plan; and the addition of the Guam-Micronesia Mission, Oakwood University, Pacific Press Publishing Association, AdventSource, and Christian Record Services for the Blind.

In addition to the division moving to its own headquarters in Columbia, Maryland, in 2017, record titles came in annually during Jackson's tenure; almost 1,000 churches were planted; more than 300,000 people were baptized; and the legacy Adventist media ministries (Breath of Life, Faith For Today, It Is Written and Escrito Está, Jesus 101, La Voz de la Esperanza, Lifetalk Radio, and the Voice of Prophecy) found their own homes and identities. During this time the number of women working as pastors and chaplains doubled; the Adventist Learning Community, a robust digital ministry resource, was created; both the Young Adult Life initiative and Big Data + Social Media department came to fruition; and



← In August 2017, Daniel R. Jackson, then president of the North American Division, pauses a moment in the C. D. Brooks Prayer Chapel at the North American Division headquarters. *Pieter Damsteegt*

the division started the magazine *Adventist Journey*.

Jackson was elected on June 28, 2010, by delegates of the world church at the General Conference Session in Atlanta, Georgia, and reelected to this position on July 6, 2015, at the 60th General Conference Session held in San Antonio, Texas. The General Conference Session is the highest governing body in the Adventist Church.

Jackson, a native Canadian and, with the exception of five years of service in the Southern Asia Division, lived and ministered in the North American Division. He was a graduate of Canadian Union College (now Burman University) and Andrews University, from which he holds an M.A. in Religion in Systematic Theology. Jackson is one of the authors of the book *Becoming a Mission-Driven Church*.

He was known for his love of music, keen sense of humor, and mission-mindedness—all hallmarks of his ministry throughout the years.

During his career, Jackson served the church as a pastor, teacher, and administrator. But Jackson, who frequently started a talk or sermon reminding his audience that he was “a broken man in need of the Savior,” often said that foremost, he was a fellow traveler on the same



Dan and Donna Jackson give a gift to Charles and Ethel Bradford during the grand opening celebration for the NAD headquarters in Columbia, Maryland, on October 26, 2017. Bradford, the first president of the NAD, passed to his rest on September 9, 2021. *Pieter Damsteegt*

path as every Christian headed toward the kingdom.

“Elder Dan Jackson was not only a fellow colleague in ministry, he was also a true friend and brother who demonstrated his faith in real and practical ways. Having served with him for 10 years I can say with authority that he was the genuine article. It is no overstatement to say a giant among us has fallen,” said G. Alexander Bryant, current NAD president and successor to Jackson.

Bryant continued, “He stood firmly on his convictions with courage and humility. He would often lend his voice to speak up for the marginalized and the disenfranchised among us. He embodied the concept of servant leadership; and he empowered others around him and assisted them in striving for their God-given potential. This church has been tremendously blessed by his ministry and is the better off because Elder Jackson walked among us.”

“Elder Jackson was such a godly man and a wonderful leader,” said Kyoshn Ahn, NAD executive secretary. “His kindness and courage inspired many members. His love for the church was infinite and unlimited. He simply lived out the gospel he preached so passionately. God has immensely blessed the church

and the NAD with his leadership and service.”

Current NAD treasurer/CFO Randy Robinson said, “Elder Jackson had a passion for Jesus, for the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and for the members of the North American Division. You could not be around him for any length of time without recognizing each of those three passions. During his tenure, he led the church in North America forward as he depended on the grace of Jesus. He will be deeply missed!”

“When Dan was elected NAD president in 2010, I felt that he was the man of the hour and what we needed in leadership,” shared Thomas G. Evans, former treasurer/CFO who worked with Jackson for more than eight years at the division. “He lived his love for Christ and promoted it to those around him. He reminded all of us that we are broken and need the Lord. One of the highlights of his tenure was the move of the NAD office from the GC in Silver Spring to Columbia, which continues to prove to be a blessing to the division.

Evans added, “Dan was also a family man. He loved Donna and his kids and extended family. He will be missed by all who knew him.”



Dan and Donna Jackson in June 2020. *Dan Weber*

## A Visionary Leader, A Humble Spirit

During a tribute at Jackson's 2020 retirement, Bryant shared how shortly after the 2010 election, Jackson discovered a note in his desk that was written by Bob Dale, a former executive secretary of the division, that outlined a 70-year-plan for the division. The plan included moving the division's headquarters from the General Conference building into its own building.

"He started on a journey that seemed to be an improbable journey. In fact, many people even [in the NAD] did not believe it was possible," said Bryant. "And here we're now celebrating our third year-end meeting in this building. It speaks to Dan's leadership, courage, and it was not without bruises and pain. ... But he moved forward anyway."

Jackson never imagined he'd become the president of the Adventist Church in North America. In a 2020 interview with Dan Weber, former NAD Communication director, Jackson said that he thought there would never be a chance he'd serve in any administrative role.

"I had no aspirations to be an administrator. And no clue that it would ever happen," he said. He talked about how he and his wife Donna raised their children with the belief in Christ's soon coming. "Our burning desire was just to win souls for Jesus and see Him return."

In regard to his work at the NAD, Jackson shared that supporting women in ministry was a significant part of his lifework. "I have always had the belief that women ought to be treated on an equal basis with men. God has gifted women just as He has gifted men. He's called women just as He has called men. There's ample evidence and direction of that in Scripture," Jackson said. "When I came to the North American Division, we



During the Adventist Christian Fellowship's installment of "Is This Thing On?" conversation with NAD leadership and young adults on May 22, 2019, Daniel R. Jackson, NAD president, gives an audience comment a thumbs up as G. Alexander Bryant, then NAD executive secretary, prepares to speak. *Pieter Damsteegt*

## "I pray that mission continues to remain our church's focus."

thought through some of the strategic initiatives that the NAD team would undertake together. Women in ministry was one of the highest priorities."

As he retired, Jackson shared, "What I'll cherish most is the idea that during our time we were able to help get the mission of the church in focus. That all of the adjustments we made administratively were shaping, shaping, shaping the idea that this work has only one target: under the direction of Jesus we are moving forward in mission. I pray that mission continues to remain our church's focus."

### Following Jesus

Jackson had a burden to reach others with the gospel message—to share the hope and wholeness found in Jesus. "We are called by God to plant ourselves in the soil of human need—as different and as difficult and as hard as the soil may be today," said Jackson in his 2017 NAD year-end meeting sermon.

"Where does love call us?" asked Jackson. "We will never discover the answer to that nor the true basis for effective Christ-centered ministry with more seminars, with better personal coaches, or mentors, or by looking to others."

The answer, Jackson said, is found in the Apostle Paul's words in Hebrews 12:1, 2. "The best way for me to understand my life and my service for God is to keep my eyes fixed upon Jesus as my Example and my Mentor."

"Serving has always been a privilege," Jackson shared near his retirement. "I've always held the idea that God would move us into this role in great reverence. ... It is the people that make the job very rich and a huge blessing. I deeply respect and revere what God is willing to do in the life of a scamp from Edmonton, Alberta, and a wonderful woman from Sidney, British Columbia."

Jackson is survived by his wife, Donna, who served as an associate director for the NAD Ministerial Association before she retired in 2020; three children; and four grandchildren. A memorial service for Jackson was held on Aug. 12, 2022, at the Rutland Seventh-day Adventist in Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada.

*Kimberly Luste Maran is editor of Adventist Journey.*

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BY MAURICE R. VALENTINE II

# Exciting Work, Important Ministry

**R**emember the excitement of the 70 disciples who, when they returned from being sent out by Jesus, exclaimed with joy, “Even the demons submit to us in Your name” (Luke 10:17)?

Working for Jesus is exciting work! For the past year I have had the wonderful privilege of supporting the media and media-related ministries of the North American Division. Each of these ministries plays a pivotal role in helping people to come to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

Faith for Today, as speaker/director Roy Ice describes it, reaches people who are typically beyond the reach of traditional Adventist approaches of sharing the gospel. Ice’s life-coaching show interviews celebrities from all walks of life in the hope of developing a rapport and, if needed, an interest on their part in spiritual things. Similarly, LifeTalk Radio reaches homes and people through its programming on more than 100 radio outlets. Content produced by each of the other six media ministries are featured on Life Talk Radio. LifeTalk started a children’s channel with many favorite programs from yesteryear and new programs for today. Elizabeth Talbot, speaker/director for Jesus 101, while teaching the truths of God’s love, also helps the viewer understand we are solidly a part of the Christian community that loves Jesus. Talbot can be heard saying passionately on many programs, “It’s all about Jesus!” And it certainly is, as we are the people who love the Lord, follow His commandments, and work assiduously to hasten His appearing.

The next group of media ministries works hard taking people of casual to moderate interest to greater depths of understanding the gospel, sometimes through full-fledged evangelistic meetings. Voice of Prophecy addresses issues that are deep and delicate. Recently speaker/director Shawn Boonstra conducted an evangelistic event with churches that signed up to hear his historical study on the state of the dead. During the show Boonstra stayed in what is considered by many to be a haunted hotel room to show that the dead are really dead. Additionally, he has a passion for undergraduate and graduate school professors, and he presents content that challenges scholars whose study area is philosophy.

La Voz de la Esperanza (The Voice of Hope), through speaker/director Omar and Nesity Grieve, preaches the gospel worldwide

by holding as many as 12 evangelistic meetings a year. This ministry grew out of Voice of Prophecy and now stands tall on the landscape of Latino ministry along with Escrito Esta, a Hispanic ministry birthed by It Is Written. Speaking of It Is Written, John Bradshaw and the IIW team are doing outstanding work reaching people through evangelistic outreach. Just before the pandemic, Bradshaw had planned a meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana. He quickly retooled this as a net meeting, and the Word of God was rich and powerful as he preached our special truths nightly. Breath of Life has a new speaker/director, Debleaire Snell, who is off to a grand start. BOL began as a ministry for people of color and was the first coast-to-coast ministry for this demographic. Under Snell’s leadership BOL is birthing a school of evangelism and advancing the growth of its global audience. During his short tenure, Snell has already written and released a New York *Times* best-selling book.

The last group of ministries, Adventist Information Ministry and Adventist Learning Community, work alongside the media ministries, one providing phone support and the other providing a digital media format of online Bible Studies, podcasts, and trainings that are enjoyed by tens of thousands each month.

The Lord’s work is, indeed, very exciting! All media ministries are reaching people for Christ by the thousands each month while reaching different demographic targets.

*Maurice R. Valentine II was NAD vice president for media before he accepted the call in June 2022 to serve as a General Conference vice president.*

We are the people who love the Lord, follow His commandments, and work assiduously to hasten His appearing.

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ADRA

# Would you eat dirt

## if it was all you had?

Can you imagine being so hungry you'd eat dirt to make the pain go away?

Soamihery's son, Damy, is sick and so hungry he could die. He is too weak to walk, let alone fight off exhaustion and disease.

Damy's two older siblings skip school to forage for food. The tasteless cactus fruit they hope to find fills their stomachs, but does little to reduce their risk of starvation. And if they don't find food, they don't eat.



Every day, people like Damy are dying. You can help save them. **Please, will you help?**

"I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat."  
Matthew 25:35 (NIV)

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