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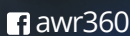
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# Adventist Journey

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## My Journey

Visual media is absolutely essential for the church, for the body of Christ. Look how people are communicating with each other; how they're telling stories. If we're not participating in that way of talking to others with that kind of storytelling, it's like we're silent. We have to have a presence there.

Visit [nadadventist.org/ajlynelleellis](http://nadadventist.org/ajlynelleellis) for more of Ellis's story.

### LYNELLE ELLIS,

program director of Cinema Religion, and Worldview, Walla Walla University



Cover photo by Dan Weber

**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!

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### ADVENTIST JOURNEY

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# The Church's Needed Witness

Understanding “God’s Call to Live in Healing and Harmony” in today’s social climate.

BY LESLIE N. POLLARD


The political and social events of the year 2020 have once again pushed unresolved issues around race relations in the United States to center stage in our national and international conversations. The video-recorded murder of George Floyd by a police officer on May 25, 2020, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, represented for millions a tipping point, one that elicited an outcry by leaders who highlighted historical inequity and called for social justice across a diverse range of political, commercial, academic, and ecclesiastical institutions.

On September 15, 2020, the General Conference executive committee voted the statement “One Humanity: A Human Relations Statement Addressing Racism, Casteism, Tribalism, and Ethnocentrism,” which seeks to recognize the existence of “racial injustice, tribal conflicts, and caste system bigotry suffered by millions of persons in every society and world region.”

In reference to the GC statement (available at <https://www.adventist.org>) and the aforementioned event, the statement “God’s Call to Live in Healing and Harmony” (see p. 7), as a biblical response to the issues specific to the NAD, contextualizes the “One Humanity” document within the North American setting.

## What Is Critical Race Theory?

Such pronouncements, while aiding the church’s mission by making its positions on race relations clear, could



As Seventh-day Adventists, we hold and teach that “the Holy Scriptures are the supreme, authoritative, and the infallible revelation of His will.”

also, however, be easily misunderstood by some of the NAD’s constituents. Because of the emotionally, politically, and socially charged perspectives on racial discussions in the territories represented in the North American Division, the NAD executive committee requested that the same writing committee, comprised of executive committee members, provide an important preamble regarding the voted NAD statement. During the gathering of data for that preamble the need for an extended look at the issues emerged.

Recent discussions of race in North America have been colored by a thread of academic conversation known as critical race theory (CRT). CRT represents a perspective that emerged from legal scholars in academic circles in the 1970s. It was an attempt to interpret and explain the slowdown or reversal on racial progress in America following the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s; and raise discussion of the U.S. Constitution, judicial system, and legal rulings when the system pertained to African Americans.

CRT is grounded in a Marxist critique and analysis of Western institutions that rested heavily on the deconstructive work of what is known as the Frankfurt School. For more than 40 years CRT was virtually confined to ivory-towered academic discussions. CRT assumes that all of life is structured around two social realities—oppressors and the oppressed. In CRT, individuals are either active or unwitting racists or

they are conscious anti-racists (colloquially known as “woke”). CRT asserts that racism in America is normative, not aberrational, and is often called “America’s original sin.”

### Clarity and Context

The North American Division statement is not CRT. It does not embrace CRT’s assumptions. The NAD statement is grounded in a radically different and higher source of authority—the witness of the Bible.

As Seventh-day Adventists, we hold and teach that “the Holy Scriptures are the supreme, authoritative, and the infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the test of experience, the definitive revealer of doctrines, and the trustworthy record of God’s acts in history. (Ps. 119:105; Prov. 30:5, 6; Isa. 8:20; John 17:17; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; Heb. 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20, 21)” (Fundamental Belief 1). Accepting the authenticity, validity, and historicity of the Holy Scriptures, especially Genesis 1 and 2, our NAD statement holds that God established His will for the human family at Creation.

The NAD statement holds that the Fall, recorded in Genesis 3, affected and infected all human beings, individually and collectively—whether history’s oppressor or history’s oppressed. Adventists assert that “all humanity is now involved in a great controversy” (Fundamental Belief 8). Because of the evil that arises



from this controversy, human history records the sad saga of how sin has contaminated individual and group relations in the forms of racism, sexism, classism, tribalism, ethnocentrism, and a host of other distortions of God's will for human community. Whether war, discrimination, class exploitation, human trafficking, molestation, sexual violation, or enslavement, sin individually and collectively has savaged our social order since the fall of humankind.

Unlike CRT, the redemption envisioned in our NAD statement is wholistic; its moral claims transcend politics,<sup>5</sup> its spiritual claims establish an "In Christ" identity; its mental claims transform and renew the mind; its unifying claims create culture of kingdom communities; and its social claims promote justice and equitable treatment to all God's children.

### A Critical Moment

The messenger to the remnant reminds us that race relations will worsen before the coming of Christ. Long before the rise of CRT, Ellen White wrote to Southern workers about proclaiming the truth where there's race antagonism. She said that opposition strengthens "as time advances" (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 205) and race prejudices increase. "As time advances" is one of White's go-to formulas for the describing the approaching end of history and the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit from the world. Her eschatological perspective anticipated an increase in racial animus and activity. For her the reality of the time-advance drove home the necessity for urgency in our mission service. We believe that we are in that unforeseen end-time. For the Seventh-day Adventist Church

For the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America to fail to witness to God's truth during this end-time reality is to miss a critical moment of ministry opportunity.

in North America to fail to witness to God's truth during this end-time reality is to miss a critical moment of ministry opportunity. Silence on God's will in these matters will be considered indifference or consent, either of which undermines the church's needed witness.

The statement, voted by the North American Division church leadership, provides guidance in our witness to His coming kingdom in both the "already" and the "not yet." It is in this spirit of kingdom witness that the statement is presented.

<sup>5</sup>Adventist pioneer J. N. Andrews reminds us, in referring to American slavery, that public immorality cannot be excused because it is labeled as politics. He wrote, "This sin is snugly stowed away in a certain package which is labeled 'Politics.' They deny the right of their fellow men to condemn any of the favorite sins which they have placed in this bundle; and they evidently expect that any parcel bearing this label will pass the final custom-house, i.e., the judgment of the great day—without being examined. Should the All-seeing Judge, however, inquire into their connection with this great iniquity, they suppose the following answer will be entirely satisfactory to Him: 'I am not all the censurable for anything said or done by me in behalf of slavery; for, O Lord, Thou knowest, it was a part of my politics!'" ("Slavery," *Review and Herald*, Oct. 25, 1864, p. 172).

Leslie N. Pollard, Ph.D., D.Min., M.Div., MBA, is president of Oakwood University in Huntsville, Alabama.

# God's Call to Live in Healing and Harmony

The North American Division responds in support of the "One Humanity" General Conference statement in the following document, voted April 29, 2021.

*The North American Division stands in support of the principles outlined in the General Conference statement "One Humanity: A Human Relations Statement Addressing Racism, Casteism, Tribalism, and Ethnocentrism." This document offers a biblical response to the issues specific to the NAD, contextualizes the "One Humanity" document into the North American setting, and faithfully reflects the biblical understanding of justice and Christian responsibility.<sup>1</sup>*

God is the Creator of all humanity, and we are all God's children. All of us have equal value, and we celebrate each other's inherited and acquired differences. God compels us to love and respect others, regard them as equals, and uphold justice. Our God is both loving and just and calls every person to live a life of love and justice. "He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8, NKJV).

As Seventh-day Adventists, we recognize that historical events and decisions in the North American Division territory, influenced by colonial principles and practices, have allowed for structural, societal, and institutional oppression toward marginalized populations, including women and people of color. These injustices continue to plague our society and our denomination today, and run contrary to our biblical faith. They mar the psychological, social, physical, and spiritual health of any community and are unacceptable for a growing journey of Christlikeness. In failing to advocate on behalf of those who are overlooked, ignored, or excluded (Ps. 82:3), we acknowledge that as a church we have been reticent to address these discriminatory practices. We take accountability for the church's silence during the struggles against these practices and apologize for our past actions and inactions and will continue to work to change the future.

Jesus is our example, and our response to injustice must adhere to His principles. He rebukes those who oppress, devalue, and undervalue others (Luke 11:42-44). There is no place for these behaviors—individually or collectively—among His followers. Therefore, as Jesus did, we must stand with and for those who are marginalized. When we fail to treat people with dignity and respect, or refuse to acknowledge the wrongs committed against them, we are guilty of mistreating God (Jer. 22:16). If we don't do what we know is right, we have sinned (James 4:17). We must speak and act against racial injustices, historic inequities, and abuses of power. Love will govern our actions as we stand in the gap for those who have been mistreated (John 13:34).

In the tradition of our pioneers who worked with different organizations in the public square (*Review and Herald*, June 5, 1900; *The Southern Work*, pp. 9-15), we will thoughtfully engage with those who seek to reverse and confront the results of oppression (Matt. 25:45; James 2:26). Ellen White said that the Savior mingled with people as one who desired their good (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 143). We therefore fully support this conscientious witness of our members, especially our young adults, who advocate for and participate in the nonviolent dismantling of such dehumanizing policies and practices that deny our one humanity. Such advocacy fulfills the biblical calls of Micah 6:6-8 and Isaiah 58.

As a North American Division community, we invite our members to uphold our Creator's commitment to humanity and affirm our commitment in seeking opportunities to understand our shared values, interests, cultural commonalities and differences (Col. 3:11). We will strive for a changed culture that embraces, celebrates, and values diversity<sup>2</sup> (1 Cor. 12:12-14), and works to close the spaces between us. Thus, we appeal to our members and leaders to actively promote inclusion<sup>3</sup> and oppose intolerance in our church and institutions and toward all God's children—for we are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:26-29; Eph. 4:1-6). We also appeal to our church entities to develop proactive strategies, implement policies, and support local initiatives that combat and seek to eliminate all social inequities.

In committing to live in healing and harmony, individually *and* collectively, we will experience a foretaste of the kingdom to come—"a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues" (Rev. 7:9, NKJV)—and realize God's greatest commandment to love each other as He has loved us.

*"And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love" (1 Cor. 13:13, NIV).*

<sup>1</sup> See Leslie N. Pollard's article "The Church's Needed Witness" in the October 2021 issue of *Adventist Journey*.

<sup>2</sup> *Diversity* here represents the Adventist understanding of humanity in the Bible ("A great multitude . . . from every nation, tribe, and people and language") with various backgrounds, characteristics, and perspectives as it converges in our Christian community (see 1 Cor. 12:12-14).

<sup>3</sup> *Inclusion* here denotes that intentionality within the Adventist context to welcome and genuinely embrace all members of the body of Christ, recognize that we are all fearfully and wonderfully made in the image of God, and encourage each to contribute value for the glory of God.

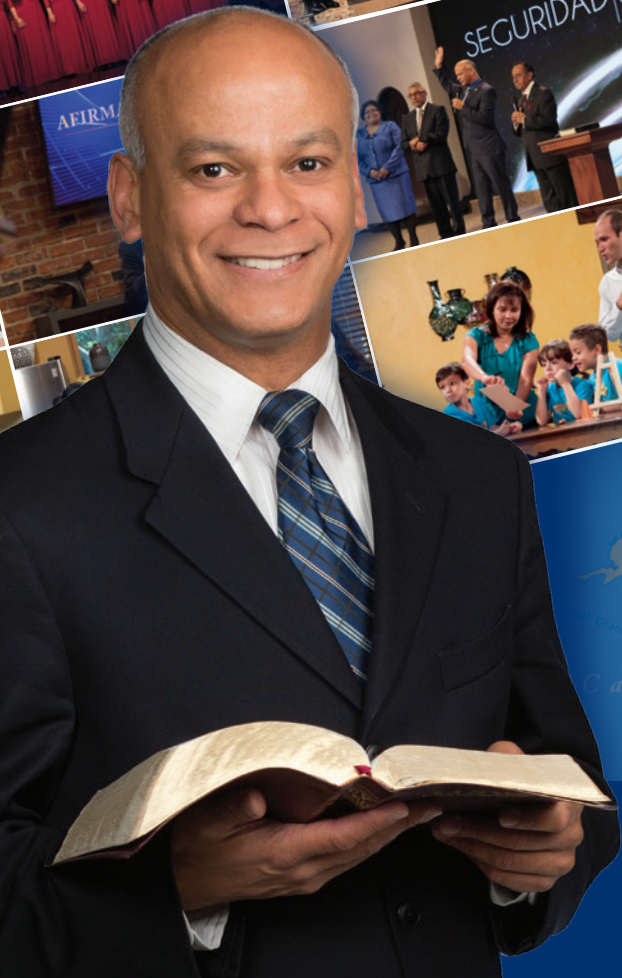
*This statement was voted during the North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church Executive Committee on April 29, 2021, in Columbia, Maryland.*



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**MISSIONARIES:** Dany and Jean Goris **LOCATION:** Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands

# God's Protection, Provision, and Providence

*Dany and Jean Goris are full-time missionaries who have served in Saipan for seven years. A favorite verse is found in Joshua 1:9: "This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go" (NLT)\*. Below is their story.*

**G**od had put a burden in each of our hearts to serve as full-time missionaries, even before He drew our hearts to each other. After we met, we were elated when we discovered that each of us shared this same passion! The Lord even gave us a time line for when we would leave our home to serve as full-time missionaries.

We stepped out in faith by leaving our well-paying and secure jobs, waiting on God to open the door. We had been inspired by those who've served as missionaries before us, setting an example in our youth, and serving as a guide and support for us.

In 2013 the Lord directed us to serve in Baja California, Mexico, for a short while, to prepare us for what would come next. We knew that the Lord was leading us to serve in the Pacific Islands, but we did not know precisely where. We prayed for an open and shut door. The Adventist Volunteer Service call listings revealed a place called Saipan, a small island in the Northern Mariana Islands; it was the only place that would accept married couples at the time. We knew that this is where God was leading us.

In 2014 we accepted the call to Saipan to serve as a PE teacher and a registrar at the only Seventh-day Adventist school on the island. We decided to serve for one year, and then prayed about our next mission destination. After our first year, the Lord had already revealed where we would serve next. That did not mean right away, however. We were glad to continue our service in Saipan for another year.



When you give up everything to serve and honor God . . . you will never be without, and your heart will be full.

It has now been seven years since we first came to Saipan. During these years we have experienced two record-setting super typhoons, Soudelor and Yutu, that destroyed most of the island. God gave us two beautiful children, Joshua and Esther, who are the joys of our lives. And we were both able to pursue our graduate studies in education and business. With God, nothing is impossible!

We have met amazing people, served with amazing missionaries, and built lifelong friendships. These years have brought us both joys and sorrows, but God has always been faithful to us. This has been a testimony of the Lord's protection, provision, and providence.

When you give up everything to serve and honor God in response to His love and calling, you will never be without, and your heart will be full. We hope and pray that others will boldly step out in faith, serving God wholeheartedly, holding nothing back.

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# NAD NEWS BRIEFS



← From left to right: The Ngaih Cin family: SangPi; Cady; Pastor SB Ngaih Cin; his wife, Ma Aye; and KhaiKhai. *Jeffrey Saelee*

## Young Refugees Empowered as Adventist Leaders in Ministry on World Refugee Sabbath

**T**he North American Division and the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church designate a special day each year during the month of June as Refugee Sabbath (“World Refugee Sabbath”) to raise awareness of the needs of the unprecedented numbers of refugees who have fled their homes because of war and persecution.

This year, on June 19, two significant events occurred on Refugee Sabbath, serving to empower refugees and their leaders in ministry.

Arkansas-Louisiana Conference organized the Clarksville Karen company as a church on World Refugee Sabbath, and recognized their leader, Naylkowah Moo. The group has grown from two families when they first arrived from the refugee camp in Thailand to more than 60 members in less than seven years. Each Karen congregation in the North American Division holds three services every Sabbath: Sabbath School, worship, and AY (Adventist Youth).

Jimmy Shwe, an Adventist pastor who serves as division-wide church planting consultant for this language group, along with the local leaders of each congregation, actively empower and mentor the youth in ministry. This is evident in the high level of youth involvement in Karen congregations across the NAD.

During the Michigan camp meeting, the Michigan Conference and Lake Union ordained Pastor SB Luan Ngaih Cin, who came to the United States as a refugee with his wife, Ma Aye, and three children in 2012. Ngaih Cin pastors the Grand Rapids Zomi company and the Battle Creek Zomi group. He also served for four years as secretary of the division-wide Zomi Seventh-day Adventist advisory.

Each of Ngaih Cin’s children is active in ministry. His daughter, Cady Cin, led in the launch of Myanmar Community Services, an Adventist Community Services center in Grand Rapids, Michigan. His older son, KhaiKhai, serves as a pastor in Kent, Washington, and their younger son, Sang-Pi, worked for the Michigan Conference this past summer as an auditor, soon to graduate from Andrews University with a degree in accounting.

Both of these leaders and their members, along with a total of 55 Karen congregations, 15 Zomi congregations, and 13 Burmese-speaking congregations in the North American Division, are from Myanmar, a country that is currently experiencing extreme political unrest after a military coup followed the February 2021 election.

— *Terri Saelee, NAD Adventist Refugee and Immigrant Ministries*





## Debleaire Snell Named Speaker/Director Elect of Breath of Life Ministries

**O**n July 28, 2021 the North American Division Adventist Media Ministries board voted to accept the name of Debleaire Snell for the position of speaker/director of Breath of Life Ministries. Snell is set to replace Carlton P. Byrd, who accepted a call to serve as president of the Southwest Region Conference this past May.

“Pastor Snell is a gifted communicator of the gospel of Jesus Christ,” said G. Alexander Bryant, NAD president. “God has called him to build on the great legacy of the Breath of Life Ministries forged by those who have gone before. I believe God has brought him to this ministry for such a time as this.”

Since 2010 BOL speaker/director elect Snell has served as senior pastor of the three campuses of the First Seventh-day Adventist Church (First church, Abundant Life, and “The Bridge”) in Huntsville, Alabama. He has conducted several major evangelistic meetings for the church; and throughout his time at First Church, there have been a total of 878 baptisms. In 2020 Snell launched a local television ministry with the Huntsville CBS affiliate.

Snell has taught at Oakwood University as an adjunct professor since 2010. He graduated from Oakwood in 1999 with a bachelor’s degree in theology. In 2001 Snell earned his Master of Divinity from Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan.

—*Kimberly Luste Maran, NAD Communication*

## New Programs at Southern Adventist University Expand Opportunities in Digital Fields

**S**outhern Adventist University (SAU) has expanded the academic options offered in digital fields such as web design and cybersecurity. Two new degrees and several additional concentrations are available beginning this fall. These options were developed in response to high demand from prospective students and employers, and are included in SAU’s academic master plan.

“The new programs will add breadth to Southern’s academic portfolio, allowing us to better meet the needs of our constituents,” said Robert Young, Ph.D., senior vice president for academic administration.

Additionally, the School of Computing has added a new master’s degree, the Master of Science in Applied Computer Science, which includes a choice of four certificates: Data Analytics, Computer Science, Cybersecurity, and Web Development. At the undergraduate level, two new concentrations—security and web development—are available as part of several different degrees, including the Bachelor of Science in Computer Science.

—*Janell Hullquist, Southern Adventist University*

## Ana Patterson Named Twenty-sixth President of Southwestern Adventist University

**T**he Southwestern Adventist University board of trustees voted unanimously on July 7, 2021, for Ana Patterson to become the twenty-sixth president of the university. Patterson has served as the interim president following former president Ken Shaw’s transition to Southern Adventist University.

“Ana Patterson is the epitome of both competence and humility. Her passion and love of both the university and its students and their continued success made her the ideal candidate for the role of president. We thank God for His leadership in the selection process,” says Carlos J. Craig, chair of the Southwestern Adventist University board of trustees and president of the Southwestern Union Conference.

Patterson graduated from Southwestern Adventist Univer-



sity with a Bachelor of Business Administration in long-term health care in 1999 and a Master of Business Administration in 2012. She will be both the university’s first female and first Hispanic president. Patterson most recently worked as the special assistant to the president for the university, has nearly a decade of teaching experience as a business professor at the university, served as chair of the university’s diversity and inclusion committee, and was named educator of the year for the 2016-2017 school year.

“I’m grateful and pleased that God led us to Ana Patterson and that she has graciously accepted the invitation to become the university’s next president,” said Craig.

—*Jessica Lozano, Southwestern Union Communication*

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### Baby Rescue

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### Slum Rescue

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BY ESTHER R. KNOTT

# The Delight in Their Eyes

**D**uring an offering appeal I once asked, “What secular holiday is in our faces all through the month of October?” There were some children sitting near the front. Their immediate and energetic response was “Halloween!” The delight in their eyes was, of course, much less about their understanding of the paganism behind this ritual, than it was about the candy and treats they might receive at a “fall festival”—a stash to last all year.

I wanted the children (and members) to engage in a different kind of day that occurs in October—Clergy Appreciation Day. While churches use the second weekend of October to celebrate this day, the entire month of October is now Clergy Appreciation Month in the U.S.

The apostle Paul wrote to young Timothy: “Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine” (1 Tim. 5:17, NKJV).<sup>\*</sup> While in recent years Hallmark may have helped us focus our appreciation by buying cards and gifts from their stores during October, Paul reminds us that it is biblical to honor and care for our pastors.

## Making a List

It takes a lot of commitment and energy for pastors to serve their congregations. During this time of COVID-19 the work of our pastors has shifted and increased as they have developed new skills and become increasingly creative in the way they serve their members and their communities. They’ve been kept busy as they check in on members through phone calls, Zoom sessions, and home visits (often from the sidewalk). Pastors have delivered meals, Sabbath School Bible study guides, and hope.

Our pastors have also keenly felt the isolation. This year it is important to have a Sabbath—or even an entire month—in October set aside to shower our pastor(s) with tangible evidences of our appreciation, love, and care for them.

## Ways to Show Your Pastor Appreciation

Below are a few ideas that I hope will be a springboard for your own personalized expressions of appreciation this October. You know your pastor best; and if you have more than one pastor on your church staff, be sure to do something special for each of them.

- Send a message of appreciation by card, text, email, and/or “snail mail.” Post something nice about your pastor on social media—and tag them. Recall a specific way that you have been blessed by the ministry of your pastor.

- Give a gift card from Amazon, Visa, Master Card, American Express, etc.
- Provide Sabbath lunch for the family. Let them enjoy the meal alone.
- Show up at prayer meeting (in person or online).
- Love your pastor’s children and find appropriate ways to demonstrate this. (Do not expect more of them than you do of your own children.)
- Do not wait to be asked to fill a position in the church that needs your gifts—volunteer.
- Mow their lawn; and/or rake their leaves.
- Pray for your pastor and their family every day in October and let each family member know.
- Have the children’s Sabbath School classes make cards to present to the pastor.

Clergy Appreciation Month is not just about the pastor. It is about giving the congregation the opportunity to fulfil the biblical imperative to honor those who serve. And it includes demonstrating to our children how to care for others. It is about seeing delight in the eyes of our children as they see the delight in someone else’s eyes because of what they (the children) have given, not received.

The “treat” that you give your pastors this October will lead to the delight we will see in our heavenly Father’s eyes when He opens the door and welcomes us into His kingdom, which, of course, will be the greatest “treat” of all — because the sweetness will last throughout eternity.

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Clergy Appreciation Month is an opportunity to fulfil a biblical imperative.

AMAZING FACTS

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opportunity



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# Sponsor a Facebook Lead Generation Ad... with **PROJECT: Steps to Christ**



## 1. Choose Your Ad

We have multiple ads to choose from, including free offers for *Steps to Christ*, *The Great Controversy*, *The Ministry of Healing*, and several different Bible studies.

## 2. Choose Your Audience

Target by ZIP code, county, country, radius, language, age, gender. We've got the whole free world covered with Facebook.

## 3. Set Your Budget

We can work with budgets under \$500 and beyond. Rule of thumb: the more you invest, the more people you'll reach, and the more leads you'll get.

## 4. Launch Your Ad

PSTC will launch and manage your entire ad campaign from start to finish, fulfill all requests for free materials, and provide you with leads for follow-up ministry.

## 5. Go to Work

Soul winning has never been easy. But every soul is worth the painstaking and patient effort required to lead them to Christ and bring them His last message of mercy.

## Contact Us Today!

PSTC evangelism specialists are waiting to help you launch your first Facebook ad campaign and reach more souls for the Kingdom. Call 1.800.728.6872 or visit [www.projectstc.org](http://www.projectstc.org)