

EDITORIAL
As For Me and My House

FEATURE
Discovering Revelation: Kelli's Baptism
and Unexpected Reunion

NEWS
CAMP MEETING SPEAKERS

MEMO

INFORMING MEMBERS SINCE 1988

MARCH 2024

AS FOR

Me and My House.

JOSHUA 24:15



SPECIAL CAMP MEETING EDITION



As For Me and My House

It is my prayer that you are eagerly anticipating joining us this June for Michigan Conference camp meeting. Our camp meeting theme this year is “As for Me and My House.”

This theme is drawn from the well-known appeal of Joshua to the congregation of Israel, found in Joshua 24:15, “*And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.*”



Justin Ringstaff

Joshua’s call to the Israelites to choose whom they would serve is just as significant for us today as it was to those entering the promised land thousands of years ago.

It seems odd to say that serving the Lord would “seem evil.” But we are living in a time the prophet Isaiah described when there would be “those who call evil good and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!” (Isa. 5:20) And as Jesus said, “If then the

light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!” (Matt. 6:23)

At every step the enemy of souls attempts to lay the trap of temptation to catch us in his snare. Distractions and the love of the world can creep in ever so subtly. Unless we are watching and praying as Jesus calls us to, we will fall into temptation (See Matthew 26:41). And it might not be that we view serving the Lord as evil but the service of God may start to seem “undesirable” or “disagreeable” as some versions are translated. (See for example NIV, NASB) We may begin to love the world and the things in the world more than we love Jesus and the things of heaven.

Dear brothers and sisters, let’s “set [our] hearts on things above, where Christ is, at the right hand of God...and not on earthly things.” (Col. 3:1-2, NIV). Let’s be found where prayer is wont to be made. Let’s be where there is a heavenly and godly influence – where angels love

EDITORIAL
AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE, 2

FEATURE
DISCOVERING REVELATION:
KELLI’S BAPTISM AND
UNEXPECTED REUNION, 4

NEWS
CAMP MEETING, 6
NEWS BRIEFS, 7

NATURE NUGGET
BLUE-CROWNED PARAKEET, 8

Editor: Andy Imaim@misda.org
Copy Editor: Beth Thomasthomaseditorial@gmail.com
Administrative Assistant: Judy Ringstaff.....jkringstaff@misda.org
Layout/Design:Eric Pletcher
Printing:Seminars Unlimited

Copyright © 2024, All Rights Reserved
March 2024 | Vol. 36, No. 3

The MICHIGAN MEMO, published by the Michigan Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, is a monthly publication, with the exception of June/July and a combined issue for November/December that totals nine publications per year. Correspondence mail can be sent to P.O. Box 24187, Lansing, Michigan 48909. Printed and shipped from Seminars Unlimited, Keene, Texas.

“It is often in the assembly of His saints that the Holy Spirit is poured out in great measure.”

to tread. And we can be of good courage—because of Jesus we can choose to serve the Lord!


It is often in the assembly of His saints that the Holy Spirit is poured out in great measure. Decisions are made and God’s people go out in great power and boldness to serve the Lord with the love that Jesus declares embodies the whole of the law. “And you shall love the Lord our God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. This *is* the first commandment. And the second, like *it*, is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”(Mark 12:30-31)

That was the testimony of Joshua as he declared with every fiber of remaining strength, “As for me and my house we will serve the Lord.” Friends, how much more important it is for us to press together in sacred assemblies where such appeals are made as we are nearing the heavenly promised land. This is our prayer for Michigan camp meeting. Everywhere I go it seems I hear stories of how camp meeting has impacted families and has helped them in their personal walk with the Lord and increased their desire to serve Him.

In many ways, just like in Joshua’s day or at the yearly Feast of Tabernacles, camp meeting can be the type of gathering that the servant of the Lord encourages for the people of God today – “a joyous commemoration of the blessing of God to them” (*Patriarch’s and Prophets*, p. 540).

In recounting the joy of such gatherings for ancient Israel, God’s messenger says, “at these yearly assemblies the hearts of old and young would be encouraged in the service of God, while the association of the people from the different quarters of the land would strengthen the ties that bound them to God and to one another” (ibid.).

This is what we want the Lord to do for us at our yearly gatherings where God’s people gather from all over the state of Michigan and often far beyond.



Our prayer is that as we press together in tents, classrooms, campers, and auditoriums, we too would be bound closer to God and closer to each other. And again, “that the hearts of old and young would be encouraged in the service of God.” Is this the prayer and desire of your heart?

The Lord’s servant goes on to say that, “As the children of Israel celebrated the deliverance that God had wrought for their fathers, and His miraculous preservation of them during their journeyings from Egypt, so should we gratefully call to mind the various ways He has devised for bringing us out from the world, and from the darkness of error, into the precious light of His grace and truth” (ibid.).

What a precious blessing and privilege to be a part of this end-time movement that can celebrate so clearly God’s leading hand of providence! We are so grateful that at camp meeting we can proclaim from every pulpit the precious light of Jesus’ grace and truth. This is where we want our focus to be.

God in His wonderful providence is still leading His remnant people today as we draw nearer and nearer to the coming of Jesus. We are so close to entering the heavenly promised land. As we see the Day of Christ approaching, could we not use such a gathering as camp meeting to continue “to stir up love and good works” as the apostle exhorts us to do? (See Hebrews 10:24)

The Day is approaching, friends. Let’s plan now to gather together, young and old, with our sons and our daughters and keep the hope that we have burning in our hearts—hope in the coming of the Lord.

And when the appeal is made, “Choose this day whom you will serve,” I pray that you will proclaim, as did Joshua, “as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord!” 🙏

By Justin Ringstaff, Executive Secretary of the Michigan Conference.

Discovering Revelation: Kelli's Baptism and Unexpected Reunion

Jeremiah 29:11 is a well-known and often quoted verse in which God reveals His thoughts toward His children. He says they are, “thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give [them] a future and a hope.” This is a beautiful promise and one that becomes even more amazing when God’s thoughts and plans are personally experienced.

Recently, the Kalamazoo church witnessed God’s hand working in the life of one specific individual as she was led to truth and to her new church family.

Pastor Moise Ratsara recalls arriving extra early for the first night of the *Discovering Revelation* series. After working on preparations for about 30 minutes, he noticed a car pulling into the church parking lot. Pastor Ratsara didn’t know it at the time, but the driver of that car, Kelli, was going to be the subject of an incredible story, one which would serve as a testament to God’s love and guidance.

Introductions took place between Kelli and Pastor Ratsara, and Kelli explained that she was looking forward to the seminar that evening. She was aware she was 40 minutes early, but was willing to wait, and eager to learn more about the book of Revelation. Pastor Ratsara and several other members were immediately curious about how Kelli had learned about the meetings and what had led her to the Kalamazoo church. This was an especially interesting part of the conversation to them because although the church had been advertising both through online media and mailed flyers, there had been difficulties with the mailed materials. Many of the handbills had not arrived at their intended addresses. It was a surprise, then, when Kelli revealed she had received one of the flyers in the mail. Looking back, Pastor Ratsara states, “As far as we know, she wasn’t supposed to get a flyer, but she got a flyer and the flyer had all the information, my picture, everything.”

Kelli (right) pictured here with her father on the day of her baptism.



“Kelli says, with great emphasis, ‘Those people made me feel like I had been coming there for years!’”

When Kelli reflects on her experience with God before the seminars, she says that although she had “always had a relationship with God,” it was “not necessarily the right one, or in the right way.” She was consistently looking for more, looking for truth, and looking for a loving church family. “There was always something keeping me out of the church. Nothing would draw me there.” When she looked at the mailer, and read that the topic was Revelation, she was more than eager to attend and see what the seminar was all about. The flyer was a special invitation to Kelli and

offered an opportunity for her to explore Revelation in a way that she had always wanted to.

That first night, Kelli received a very warm welcome. Kelli says, with great emphasis, “Those people made me feel like I had been coming there for years! I was greeted, [and] I was welcomed.” Almost immediately, the Kalamazoo church felt like the home she had been searching for. The Kalamazoo church couldn’t have agreed more. Pastor Ratsara mentions specifically the connection between Alma, one member of the church and Kelli, saying, “Alma sat with her...through all the studies and everything.”

The comfortable and accepting atmosphere of the church, the companionship of the members, and the well-presented message by Pastor Ratsara were all tools God used to help Kelli find the truth she had been longing for.

Kelli continued to attend the series faithfully, asking more questions and making more comments. Pastor Ratsara notes with awe, “We were just amazed that every question she asked would be [answered] in the next presentation.” It was as if the presentations had been written specifically for Kelli.

When Pastor Ratsara made an appeal for baptism, Kelli was interested, and she began attending baptismal classes with the same fervor she had during the *Discovering Revelation* seminars. Throughout the entirety of the classes, God guided conversations, and Kelli became confident in her choice to commit her life to the Lord through baptism. Pastor Ratsara explains that although several dates had been considered for the baptism, earnest prayer led them to choose November 4th, 2023, as the Sabbath Kelli would officially become part of the Kalamazoo church family.

This decision came with yet another choice for Kelli. Some members of her family did not share her beliefs regarding Adventism. Although this was to be a joyous occasion, and one she was whole-heartedly ready for, Kelli made the difficult decision not to tell any of her family. Kelli, however, along with the entire Kalamazoo church, was in for another incredible demonstration of God’s interest in the lives of His children.

The week of November 4th, Kelli’s father, a longtime Adventist, had been mulling over an idea. Longing for his daughter to become closer in her walk with Jesus, and unaware that Kelli had taken

baptismal classes, he decided to gift his Bible to her along with a copy of the current Sabbath School quarterly. At the time, however, he didn’t have a quarterly. His thoughts were led to the Kalamazoo church where he had once attended. Pastor Ratsara refers to this part of the story saying, “Only God can do this!”

Kelli’s father determined that the Kalamazoo church would be the perfect place to retrieve a quarterly. He decided that if his son was ready for church on Sabbath morning, they would attend their usual church, however, if his son was not ready, it would be a sign that he should go to the Kalamazoo church.

On the morning of Sabbath, November 4, Kelli’s father had his answer—his son wasn’t going to attend church that day. With the ultimate intent of acquiring a quarterly for his daughter, Kelli’s father headed to Kalamazoo. When he pulled into the parking lot, he was puzzled to see his daughter’s car. Inquisitively, he entered the church and sat down. Pastor Ratsara comments, “The next time he sees his daughter is when she’s in a baptismal gown.”

Unaware of her father’s presence, a newly baptized and spiritually revived Kelli joyfully made her way to the back of the church. Moments later, Kelli heard what seemed to be a familiar voice outside the changing room. When she exited the room she saw the loving face of her father. According to Kelli, they “hugged and cried and laughed.” Instead of giving her his Bible as he

Pastor Moise baptizes Kelli on Sabbath, November 4 at the Kalamazoo church following the *Discovering Revelation* evangelistic series.



AS FOR

+++ Me and My House.



Jim Micheff Jr. accepted a call to pastor for the Michigan Conference in 1996. He now serves as the President of the Michigan Conference.



Mark Finley is an international evangelist, television and radio personality, author, teacher, and speaker for the Hope Lives 365 broadcast. He regularly conducts international satellite evangelistic campaigns and has spoken in nearly 100 countries. His sermons have been translated into over 50 languages, and he has written more than 70 books on Christian living, Bible doctrines, and the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation. His worldwide ministry is headquartered at the Living Hope School of Evangelism in Haymarket, VA.



John Wesley Taylor V is the seventh President of Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan. He was born in Puerto Rico and has served as a teacher and administrator at elementary through graduate levels in a dozen different countries. Prior to serving at Andrews, he served as the associate director of Education at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. He is married to Miriam, and together they have two adult children.



Steve Wohlberg, the Speaker/Director of White Horse Media, has authored 40+ books, including his latest, "Satan's War Against the Godhead." Steve is happily married to Kristin Wohlberg and is the proud father of two children, Seth (19) and Abby (16). His passion is to share the love of Jesus Christ and assist others in preparing for His imminent return. The Wohlbergs reside in Priest River, Idaho, where Steve enjoys gardening, jogging, and swimming. You can find more about his ministry on his main website, www.whitehorsemedia.com.



Dwain Neilson Esmond, Ph.D. (Student), is a writer, editor, and ordained minister. He is a graduate of both Oakwood University and Pittsburg State University and accepted the call to ministry nearly 30 years ago. From 2010 to 2014, Dwain served as Vice-President of Editorial Services for the Review and Herald Publishing Association before joining the Ellen G. White Estate as Associate Director/Editor in 2015.



MICHIGAN
Camp Meeting

June 14-22, 2024 | Cedar Lake
Registration opens March 1

(Discovering Revelation, continued from page 4)

originally intended, Kelli's father was able to present her with her baptismal certificate. There, in her new church home, with her heart closer than ever to her Heavenly Father, Kelli was welcomed to the Adventist faith by her earthly father.

There is one more detail that supports this incredible story. About halfway through the *Discovering Revelation Series*, Kelli and Pastor Ratsara discovered that Kelli's father had brought her to the Kalamazoo church as a child. To the amazement of all involved, Sharon, one of the first to greet Kelli at the meetings, had also welcomed her years before. Kelli's relationship with the

Kalamazoo church had come full circle. Small, yet significant pieces of Kelli's story remind her that God has always had a plan for her.

Kelli is excited to continue her journey, growing in her relationship with God and with her new church family. The Kalamazoo church is excited to have Kelli as a part of their family as well. The whole experience exemplifies God's special plan for each individual and how He is working to fulfill those plans through each and every detail of our lives. As Pastor Ratsara reflects, "God works in ways that we cannot imagine." 🙏

By Georgia Schulze, member, Cadillac church

Camp Meeting Opportunities



Camp Meeting Workers Needed!

Are you interested in gaining a blessing, being a blessing, AND earning some cash at the same time? We might have just the job for you! The Michigan Conference HR department is looking for children's ministry workers and janitors during camp meeting, **June 14-22, 2024.**

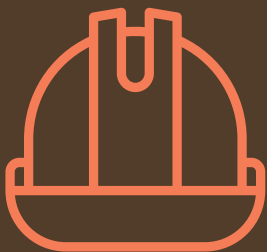
To be eligible, an applicant must:

- Be 14 years of age or older
- Have confirmed lodging

To apply, please email the HR department at lim@misda.org.

For detailed requirements and job descriptions, please visit the following URL: <https://www.misda.org/CM-Work-Forms>.

We look forward to hearing from you!



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 **517-315-1524.**





Seventh-day Adventist® Church

MICHIGAN CONFERENCE

P.O. Box 24187
Lansing, MI 48909
517-316-1500 | Fax: 517-316-1501
communication@misda.org
www.misda.org
www.facebook.com/miconf

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

NATURE NUGGET Blue-crowned Parakeet

On a recent trip to Florida, I had the pleasure of observing and photographing the Blue-crowned Parakeet, aptly named for the striking blue crown encircling their heads. Originally from South America, these parakeets are frequently kept as pets, with some inevitably escaping or intentionally released leading to the establishment of breeding populations in Florida where the climate mirrors their native habitat.

Known for their adaptability, they utilize diverse nesting sites, including tree cavities and artificial structures such as utility poles and buildings. In the wild, their diet comprises fruits, seeds, nuts, and vegetation, while in urban environments, they may also forage on agricultural crops, occasionally leading to conflicts with local farmers. During my observation, I noticed them feeding on dried Resurrection Fern on large oak trees, relishing both protein-rich acorns and a "salad."



Blue-crowned parakeets boast impressive longevity, with lifespans ranging from 25 to 30 years. They exhibit strong social bonds, often engaging in communal roosting and foraging. Preening each other's feathers is a common social behavior that helps maintain their intricate social structure. Their lively squawks

resonate as they move from tree to tree, ensuring continuous connection within the group. Like many parrot species, blue-crowned parakeets are adept mimics,

capable of imitating various sounds including human speech, and making them popular pets.

Reflecting on these parrots prompts a question: Who do we mimic in our lives? The hope is that we emulate the positive qualities of Jesus, fostering a more constructive impact on those with whom we interact. 🙏

By Dr. Gordon Atkins, Head Naturalist, Camp Au Sable
Photo by Dr. Gordon Atkins

MONTHLY CALENDAR

March

- 1-15** Camp Meeting Registration
- 2** PBE Conference Level
- 8-10** MI Tribe Training (CAS)
- 14-24** GLAA Spring Break
- 15-24** Youth Trip
- 24-30** Emmanuel Institute (Conf Office)
- 29-31** ACS Retreat (CAS)
- 29-31** Youth Rush Summit (CAS)

April

- 5-7** Hispanic Marriage Retreat (CAS)
- 6** Literature Impact
- 12-14** Women's Ministry Retreat (CAS)
- 19-21** Women's Ministry Retreat (CAS)
- 19-20** PBE Division Level
- 20** Statewide Youth Rally/Train (GLAA)
- 22-28** GLAA Home Leave
- 26-28** Church Leaders Workshop (CAS)
- 26-27** Lake Union ASI

*CAS = Camp Au Sable