

# ACTION

## CAROLINA

ISSUE 2, 2025



THE BEST KIND OF VACATION:  
a Refresh for the Body and Soul! pages 4-6

**CAMP MEETING 2025**

# FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN

## A Treasure to My Heart

*This is my Bible  
In it I learn  
That Jesus loves me  
That Jesus died for me  
And Jesus rose for me  
This is my Bible  
In it I learn  
That He's coming back for me  
So that we can live with Him  
In a ceaseless and sinless eternity.*

For years, I have used these lines as a vocal audience response in evangelistic messages shared in churches across the Carolinas. Together, we raise our Bibles, repeat these words, and pray for God to guide us in understanding His sacred pages.

In June, I was in Scotland with 40 fellow pastor colleagues and spouses from the Carolinas on a British Reformation Tour guided by Dr. Greg King, dean of the School of Religion at Southern Adventist University, and his wife, Mary. One of the greatest blessings of this trip was being reminded of the treasure I hold each time I pick up the sacred Book that carries God's voice to my heart.

One morning in Scotland, as I stepped into the shower, I accidentally turned the hot water knob in the wrong direction and felt the sting of scalding water on my skin. As I quickly corrected it, I reflected on the sobering moments we experienced standing on the very sites where faithful men were burned for their commitment to the Bible as the foundation of faith. That painful instant reminded me—if only infinitesimally—of the agony of their martyrdom. They gave their lives so I could have the freedom to hold, read, and embrace the hope of salvation in Christ. I believe Jesus was with them in the flames, shielding them from pain as their bodies were consumed.

I was moved to tears as I bowed



in prayer over the stone initials that mark the spot of the first Scottish Reformation martyr, Patrick Hamilton. Just 24 years old, Hamilton was burned at the stake in 1528. Influenced by Martin Luther's teachings, Hamilton returned to Scotland and published Patrick's Places, summarizing his conviction that justification was by faith in Christ alone. At the time, Scotland was staunchly Roman Catholic, and his convictions were considered heretical. Though meant as a warning, his execution ignited the Protestant Reformation in Scotland.

Not far from Hamilton's site, I prayed again where George Wishart was martyred. By the seaside at St. Andrews, 18 years later, Wishart was sentenced to the flames in 1546 for translating and teaching the Bible in the language of the people. He was 33.

In *The Great Controversy*, Ellen White wrote:

"Then the blood of martyrs gave fresh impetus to the movement... Hamilton and Wishart, princely in character as in birth, with a long line of humbler disciples, yielded up their lives at the stake... But from the burning pile of Wishart there came one whom the flames were not to silence... John Knox had turned away from the traditions... to feed upon the truths of God's Word..." (pp. 249-250).

John Knox courageously led the Scottish Reformation, transforming Christianity through his preaching and lifting the Bible as the foundation of faith. Years later, Knox's son-in-law, John Welch, became a fervent Scottish preacher. He is remembered for his passionate plea, "Give me Scotland or I die," reflecting his desperate prayer for God to bring salvation through the Bible to his nation.

I invite you to sing or meditate on the words of this hymn as you hold your Bible in your hands:

*"Give me the Bible, all my steps  
enlighten,  
Teach me the danger of these  
realms below;  
That lamp of safety, o'er the gloom  
shall brighten,  
That light alone the path of peace  
can show.  
Give me the Bible, holy message  
shining,  
Thy light shall guide me in the  
narrow way,  
Precept and promise, law and love  
combining,  
'Till night shall vanish in eternal  
day."*

Your servant leader,

Leslie Louis  
Carolina Conference President





Due to the growing size of the South Carolina Conference's annual Adventurer Fun Day at Nosoca Pines Ranch, the event was held over two Sundays, April 13 and April 20, with nearly 650 attendees each weekend.

This year's theme, "Building Faith Brick by Brick," creatively used Lego bricks as a medium to teach biblical lessons. Throughout the year, club directors were encouraged to guide Adventurers in earning awards such as "Building Blocks," "Prayer," and "Legos." Families were also challenged to study and memorize Jude 1:20-21 and Ephesians 4:29. As part of their preparation, Adventurers listened to testimonies from their parents about how God had helped them build faith through life's challenges.

By the time Fun Day arrived, the Adventurers were ready. Dressed in Lego-themed costumes, clubs proudly marched in the traditional parade. In the main auditorium, participants recited the Adventurer Pledge and Law, and sang the Adventurer Song and theme song.

Special guests Corey Samuels and Christine "Tacos" Blandino, both former contestants on Fox's Lego

Masters and Seventh-day Adventist believers, inspired the audience with personal testimonies and led hands-on STEM activities using Lego bricks.

The day continued with Lego-themed events, including an obstacle course, a faith-

building block game, and a take-home craft. Additional activities such as horseback

partnered with the Youth Department to extend the impact of the event. Samuels and



## BUILDING FAITH BRICK BY BRICK



riding, a hayride, and inflatable games brought excitement and joy. To cool off, children enjoyed refreshments from Smoothie Igloo. God blessed both weekends with beautiful weather, making for a joyful and spiritually enriching experience.

The Education Department also

Blandino remained in the area throughout the week, visiting a different Adventist elementary school each day, continuing to share their message of faith and creativity.

God's presence was evident, and hearts were encouraged as Adventurers, parents, and leaders celebrated the journey of building faith—one brick at a time.

— Hector Gonzalez, Pathfinder/Adventurer and Youth Director

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Set against the peaceful beauty of Lake Junaluska, Camp Meeting 2025 was more than a physical rest. It was a sacred encounter with “Hope Beyond Tomorrow.” Thousands gathered for a week of worship, spiritual revival, and meaningful community.

In a world marked by stress, busyness, and uncertainty, Carolina Camp Meeting 2025 offered something extraordinary: a vacation for the soul. Set against the serene backdrop of Lake Junaluska, this year’s gathering brought together thousands of believers from across the Carolinas for a full week of worship, renewal, and family connection. More than just a spiritual event, Camp Meeting became, for many, a transformational experience of joy, rest, and recommitment.

With the theme *Hope Beyond Tomorrow*, the May 23 to 31 event followed

a year of rebuilding after Hurricane Helene damaged the grounds. The restored beauty of the campus served as a living metaphor for God’s redemptive power, reminding all in attendance that storms may come, but hope in Christ endures.

Throughout the week, attendees enjoyed the best of both vacation and revival: morning strolls by the lake, refreshing worship services, fellowship over crepes and slushies, and the peaceful rhythms of time away from daily routines. For families, individuals, retirees, and young people, Camp Meeting 2025 proved to be

the kind of getaway that doesn’t just entertain...it transforms.

#### **Powerful Messages, Deeper Purpose**

Each day began with early morning prayer walks around the lake and quiet reflection at the Stone Chapel. Mornings and evenings in Stuart Auditorium were filled with powerful preaching. Shawn Boonstra closed the week with compelling messages on redemption. Pastor Jerry Page, former Ministerial Secretary of the General Conference, led the evening meetings from Sunday through Thursday, calling believers to a deeper life of surrender, mission,

and joy in Christ. Mornings featured scholarly yet spirit-filled presentations from Dr. Roy Gane, who brought clarity to Scripture.

Seminars throughout the day offered practical tools for Christian living. Rick and Cindy Mercer’s testimony of marital restoration and intercessory prayer stirred hearts and inspired conversations. Brad Cauley addressed tough cultural questions with logic and biblical conviction, equipping attendees to defend their faith in today’s world. Health sessions with Dr. Roman Pawlak helped dispel common dietary myths, encouraging participants





Photo by Scottie Deal

to steward their bodies for God's glory.

### **Something for Every Age**

Camp Meeting felt like a vacation designed with the entire family in mind. From cradle roll to collegiate, every age group found meaningful programming, hands-on activities, and space to grow spiritually. In the children's divisions, Beginners entered a throne room experience, Kindergartners explored "Castles and Crowns," and Primary children learned Bible stories through songs and crafts.

Junior and Earliteen groups were immersed in outdoor fun, worship, and Bible study, while youth enjoyed adventure and spiritual challenge. Many teens took on the adventure of rafting the Nantahala River. Young adults attended small group devotionals, partici-

pated in their own rafting trip, and shared testimonies of transformation through prayer and connection.

### **Fun That Matters**

One of the most beloved traditions, the Run4Life 5K and 1-Mile Fun Run, kicked off Friday morning with laughter, competition, and purpose. Aidan Kimbri took first in the 5K with a time of 19:21, and Matthew Wickham won the 1-Mile. Yet the message of the event went far beyond finish lines. As shared in the devotional

message that followed, we are all running the race of faith (Hebrews 12:1–2), and the reward is not for the fastest, but for those who endure with Jesus.

Other moments of joy included the Bluegrass Sing-Along, the Sabbath concert by Matt and Josie Minikus, and shared moments at the

MPA tent. Children joyfully contributed to the Maranatha \$10 Church offering project, discovering that even their spare change could help build a church on the other side of the world.

### **Rest, Reconnection, and Renewal**

Throughout Harrell Cen-  
...continued on following page



Photo by Courtney Hend



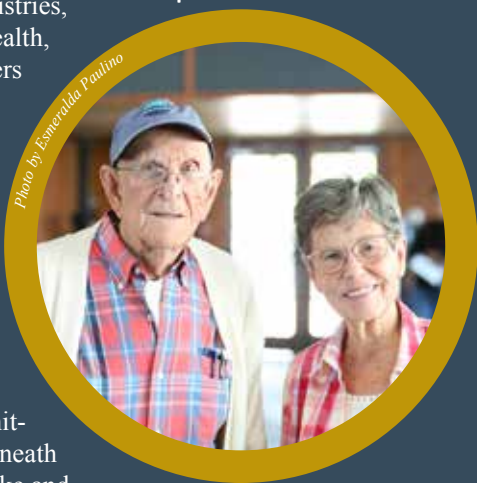


*...continued from previous page*

ter, attendees visited booths representing ministries from across the conference. Literature Evangelism, Women's Ministries, Pathway to Health, and many others shared opportunities for service and growth. Informal conversations turned into prayer circles. Booth visits became mission commitments. And beneath every handshake and smile was the presence of the Holy Spirit, gently inviting each heart to live with eternal purpose.

Friday evening's Anointing Service provided a sacred space for healing. For many, this was the most profound moment of the

week, a time to lay burdens down and invite Christ's restoring touch. As tears fell and prayers rose, hearts were mended and faith



renewed.

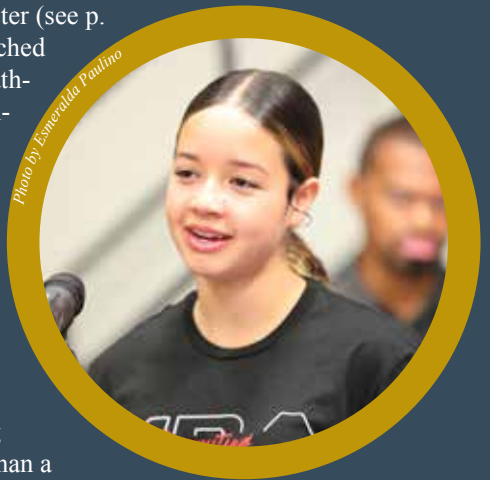
On Sabbath afternoon, the campgrounds pulsed with celebration. Beth Grisom, director of Women's and Prayer Ministries for the Carolina Conference, was officially commis-

sioned as a minister (see p. 7). Children marched proudly in the Pathfinder and Adventurer Parade, and music echoed from Stuart Auditorium to the lakeside trails.

### **A Getaway That Changes Everything**

Camp Meeting 2025 was more than a week of rest and inspiration. It was a spiritual milestone. It was laughter over lemonade, healing during hymns, mission calls in quiet corners, and lifelong memories made around every picnic blanket.

As the sun set on Lake Junaluska and families packed up to return home, one truth remained clear: this wasn't just a vacation. It was a divine appointment. An invitation to let



go of fear, to embrace hope, and to live with "Hope Beyond Tomorrow," anchored in Jesus.

As the theme reminded us each day, our hope is not in this world, but in the One who is coming again.

—Benjamin Lawson, Mauricio Schiavenin, Esmeralda Paulino, Rebecca Carpenter

# A Spirit of Service BETH GRISSOM COMMISSIONED

As the spirit of worship and community filled Camp Meeting this year, one of its most profound moments came during Sabbath afternoon, when the Carolina Conference family gathered to celebrate the commissioning of Elizabeth “Beth” Grissom. Set against the backdrop of Lake Junaluska and the swelling voices of praise, this sacred service marked not just an event, but a milestone in a lifelong calling.

“For as long as I can remember, I’ve felt called to ministry,” she reflected. “Even as a child, I preached to my dolls and baptized them.”

Raised in a pastoral family, Beth grew up immersed in church life, but she also

internalized early messages that ministry might not be a path open to women. A pastor once told her she should marry a pastor so her gifts wouldn’t go to waste—an idea she carried into adulthood.

But God had other plans.

She eventually married a CPA and embarked on her own path. Over the years, she served in nearly every ministry role available to her. A degree in Communications with

a concentration in Public Advocacy sharpened her ability to lead, speak, and serve. “The gifts and passion had always been there,” she says. “I just needed to stop waiting for permission and start walking in

the call God placed on my life.”

Beth credits mentors like Lynn Ortel, Pastor Ryan Ashlock, and Kiera Deschamp with affirming her calling and helping her grow in confidence and leadership. These three were on hand to affirm her at this ceremony.

Chaplain June Price delivered a powerful message, and as leaders gathered to lay hands on Beth, the moment was deeply moving. “It stirred something deep within me,” Beth said. “When you’ve questioned your place, that kind of affirmation is powerful.”

For Beth, ministry is about people, not position. “A pastor is a shepherd

and a servant,” she says. She believes deeply in the Spirit’s call regardless of gender and is committed to reflecting Christ through her leadership.

With a family legacy of ministry behind her, she once wondered if she was simply following a path laid by others. Now, she knows: “It’s my own voice I heard—God’s voice—calling me to lead.”

To others wrestling with a sense of calling, she offers this encouragement:

“If God planted a calling in your heart, don’t let doubt or tradition silence it. He created you, gifted you, and called you—just as you are.”

— by Esmeralda Paulino



**LATOYA HAZELL-ALCIDE** is a pastor, author, speaker, and advocate for building trauma-informed churches. She writes for Outlook and Message Magazine.

**TEEN TRACK—KIERA DESCHAMPS** has over 30 years of youth ministry experience with a background in counseling. She mentors with empathy and insight.

## Fragrance of FRIENDSHIP

CAROLINA CONFERENCE WOMEN'S RETREAT 2025

3-5 • Nosoca Pines Ranch

SCAN to register between Sept. 4-22, 2025  
Partial scholarships will be available in limited quantities.  
If you need a scholarship, contact Chana Gentry at [cgentry@carolinadasa.org](mailto:cgentry@carolinadasa.org) (first-come, first-served basis).





Photo by Rebecca Carpenter

Pastor Devon Lilly

# AN AFFIRMATION OF THEIR CALLING

## Carolina Conference Pastors Receive Ordination

In John 10:11, Jesus refers to Himself as the “good shepherd,” explaining that “the good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.” In today’s Church, pastors are entrusted with caring for Jesus’ flocks in His physical absence. While not called to lay down their lives in a literal sense, pastors give sacrificially of their time, energy, and hearts in service to Christ’s mission.

Carolina Conference leadership walks closely with these shepherds, preparing and supporting them in their sacred calling. That preparation culminates in ordination—a milestone that affirms their call to ministry and recognizes the Holy Spirit’s gifting for service in partnership with the Church.

In early 2025, the Conference celebrated the ordinations of three dedicated pastors: Mark Kent, Devin Lilly, and Rodrick London.

Pastor Mark Kent was ordained on Sabbath,

January 22, at the Florence First Church. The message was delivered with heartfelt warmth by Dr. Throstur Thordarson, affirming the Kent family’s commitment to ministry.

On Sabbath, February 1, the ordination of Pastor Rodrick “Rod” London took place at the Asheville Foster Church. Senior Pastor Patrick Williams shared a message of encouragement, weaving in reflections from members and family that highlighted London’s spiritual

leadership.

Later that month, on Sabbath, February 22, Pastor Devin Lilly was ordained at the West Columbia Church. His father-in-law, Pastor Shawn Boonstra, was the guest speaker, delivering a Spirit-led message that moved the congregation deeply.

The Carolina Conference is grateful for the

faithfulness of these pastoral families. Their commitment to the Gospel and their congregations continues to advance the cause of Christ throughout the region.

May the Lord richly bless their ministries as they serve alongside their church families in building up the kingdom of God.

—by Darryl Bentley



Pastor Mark Kent

Photo by Courtney Herod



Photo by Courtney Herod

Pastor Rod London



Carolina Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

# MEN'S MINISTRY RETREAT

CH. Jorge Torres LTC  
English

Pr. Paulino Domingo  
Spanish



September 26-28, 2025  
Nosoca Pines Ranch

Unite in commitment  
to God and our duty  
as faithful servants.

**FREE T-SHIRT**  
if registered by August 30, 2025

SCAN HERE to register.  
Deadline September 14, 2025



[www.carolinasda.org](http://www.carolinasda.org)

Every year, as the Carolina Conference camp meeting fills with the familiar rhythm of sermons, seminars, sunshine (and sometimes rain), a quieter yet significant event takes place: the Ministerial Spouses' Luncheon, hosted by the Ministerial Spouses' Association (MSA) of the Carolina Conference.

Don't be misled by the idea of a gathering for pastors' wives. Yes, there are beautifully arranged tables,

whispered, 'You're not alone.'

It was the kind of appre-

Luncheon lies not only in its programming but in its spirit. We laugh, we share,

## A SACRED SISTERHOOD: MSA Luncheon Experience

*Where ministry spouses find connection, encouragement, and a reason to keep going.*

thoughtful centerpieces, and a delicious meal, but this gathering, coordinated by Carole Louis, Angela Kent, and their dedicated team, is so much more. It's a space of soul care. A place of quiet strength. A sacred circle of shared calling.

When my family first arrived in the Carolina Conference, we were the "new kids." It wasn't long before we attended our first camp meeting, and I found myself at my very first MSA Luncheon. I didn't know what to expect, but the moment I stepped through the door, I felt seen. The smiles were warm, the greetings sincere, and the atmosphere gently

ciation I didn't even know I needed. Ministerial spouses often serve behind the scenes—praying, encouraging, planning, and supporting without much recognition. And while we don't serve for applause, being reminded that our role matters and someone sees and values our quiet presence is a blessing.

At my second luncheon, everything had changed. Familiar faces greeted me with warmth, the room buzzed with joyful chatter, and I even took part in the program. This time, I didn't just attend. And there's something profoundly healing about belonging.

The strength of the MSA

sometimes we cry—but always, we leave renewed. The devotionals uplift. The testimonies resonate. The prayers reach deep. It's not just a gathering. It's a ministry to the ministers.

And this year, we had even more reason to celebrate. The North American Division awarded the *Hope & Compassion Grant* to 13 of our very own spouses in the Carolina Conference. Congratulations to Preety Kamei, Inaicen Barrios, Judith Flores, Rocio Paredes, Tania Johnson, Brenda Wennerberg, Edlin Bernal, Teresa Hindman, Kimberly Bujeker, Yohana Vegas, Janet Cordero, Wanlapa Shwe, and Nickele Harper!

Praise the Lord! I am so proud of each of you. I believe God will use your projects to bless others and lead hearts to Christ.

More than anything, the MSA Luncheon reminds us that we are not serving alone. It's where prayer partners are discovered, friendships are formed, and ministry ideas are swapped like favorite potluck recipes, the kind that come with love and legacy.

To those who pour their hearts into planning this event each year, thank you. You minister to the minis-

ters' spouses—and in doing so, you strengthen the entire body of Christ.

—by Karine Schiavenin



Photo contributed



Photo by Jessica Pieretti



Photo contributed



## PERSISTENCE PAYS OFF: Bethel Haitian Church

After years of prayer, dedication, and unwavering commitment, the Bethel Haitian Seventh-day Adventist Company in Raleigh, NC, was officially organized as a church on May 17, 2025—a historic milestone that marked a new chapter in their spiritual journey.

The roots of this congregation date back to the years between 2005 and 2007, when a few faithful Haitian families began meeting at Living Wood. Life was not easy; many were facing financial hardship, but their faith remained strong. Despite challenges, the group found strength and encouragement through worshipping together.

In 2011, the group reached out to the Carolina Conference for guidance and support. The Conference assisted

them in finding a space for them to worship, even though



the membership remained small. Over time, families from surrounding areas joined the

fellowship, and by 2017, the group had grown enough to be officially recognized as a church company.

*Photos by Rebecca Carpenter*



The road to full church status was not without obstacles. The COVID-19 pandemic deeply impacted the group, causing attendance to decline and connection to falter. Yet, through the leadership of Pastor Cris Cazarine Dutra (pictured left), the group experienced renewed growth. By 2025, the congregation had reached approximately

On May 17, their long-anticipated dream came true. The church was formally organized as a full-fledged congregation. The celebration featured Rick Russell, VP of finance for the Carolina Conference, as the special guest speaker. While the church is currently between pastors, Pastor Michael Taylor is expected to begin serving in June.

Looking ahead, the congregation is filled with hope and anticipation. One truth remains certain: this church has been built on faith, persever-

ance, and the unyielding spirit of a community that refused to give up.

—Esmeralda Paulino

## The Lord Is Our Shepherd: PATHFINDER WORKBEE

Each year, Pathfinders across the region look forward to one of the most anticipated events on the calendar: the annual Pathfinder Workbee. Held at Nosoca Pines Ranch on March 14-16, this three-day gathering is more than just camping, it's a time of spiritual renewal, skill-building, and community bonding.

This year's Workbee, centered on the theme "The Lord is Our Shepherd," welcomed approximately 650 participants. Although some clubs were unable to attend due to inclement weather or long travel dis-



tances, those who made the journey, some even for just a single day, helped create an unforgettable weekend.

The event kicked off Friday afternoon as clubs arrived and began setting up their campsites.

The evening concluded with a devotional around the fire, where voices lifted in worship set the tone for a weekend rooted in faith and fellowship.

Sabbath was packed with activity. The day began with a serene outdoor worship service by the lake, reminding everyone of God's presence in the beauty of His creation.

Throughout the day, Pathfinders rotated through

a variety of honor classes taught by the 26 clubs in attendance. From knot-tying and nature studies to more creative honors, there was something for everyone. Additionally, self-guided walkthrough honors allowed Pathfinders to work at their own pace, adding flexibility to the learning experience.

The afternoon brought recreational fun, including hayrides, canoeing, and pontoon boat rides. The evening closed with a powerful campfire worship led by Pastor Ben Lawson, whose heartfelt messages reminded everyone that no matter where life takes us, the Lord is truly our Shepherd.

Unfortunately, Sunday's traditional service projects had to be canceled due to



heavy rain. However, the spirit of service and joy remained strong. Many younger Pathfinders were attending their very first Camporee, and despite the weather, they left with smiles on their faces and memories to cherish.

The 2025 Pathfinder Workbee reminded all that even through grey skies and muddy trails, God leads His flock, and where He leads, we follow with joy.

—by Esmeralda Paulino and Vanessa Arana

In the quiet town of Morganton, North Carolina, there is a church family that has been blessed by the dedicated presence of Walter and Linda Moore. They have been part of the Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church since 2011. Their story is one of answered prayers, spiritual growth, and a strong desire to give back—not only in life, but through their legacy.

Their journey began with a simple flyer in the mail advertising a prophecy seminar. Curious and seeking answers to long-held spiritual questions, Walter and Linda decided to attend. One thing led to another: a visit from a friendly deacon, a community outreach event

especially those concerning the Sabbath, caught their attention. They began attending regularly and officially joined the church in 2011.

Yet their spiritual journey didn't stop with church attendance. The Moores deeply engaged in service.

Linda served as a deaconess, assistant church secretary, and later, substitute secretary. She helped prepare bulletins, count offerings, and support various ministries. Walter served as assistant head deacon and Sabbath School teacher. Together, they worked in the church thrift shop and supported outreach efforts, including a church plant in Valdese.

The Moores also opened their hearts to *Planned*

gently used clothing to those in need at little or no cost. The prison ministry offers hope and biblical guidance to people often forgotten. The thrift store serves the community with affordable goods and meaningful conversations.

These ministries meant a great deal to the Moores—not only because they were involved, but because they saw the impact firsthand. For them, it wasn't about money. It was about mission.

Their love story is equally inspiring. They first met in the 1970s, parted ways, and later reunited



Linda Moore's involvement in the Carolina Conference's *Planned Giving and Trust Services* department, they found a meaningful way to continue

## A LEGACY OF LOVE, FAITH AND SERVICE

### WALTER AND LINDA MOORE'S STORY

called *Journey Through Bethlehem*, and Bible seminars that began to answer questions they had pondered for decades.

Linda recalls a pivotal moment during a slow tax season at work when she heard a voice say, "*Linda, you could be at church today.*" The feeling that voice stirred in her never left. That seed grew into a life-changing decision for both Linda and Walter.

They had visited other churches—Pentecostal and Baptist—but still craved deeper biblical knowledge. The Adventist teachings,

*Giving and Trust Services*, the Carolina Conference's estate planning ministry. Through thoughtful planning, they are preserving a legacy that will serve others long after they are gone. They chose to include their church, its ministries, and community projects like God's Closet and the local secondhand store in their estate plan.

Why did they choose to include the church? "*Because of everything that they do—the school, God's Closet, prison ministry—it's worth it.*"

God's Closet provides

when Walter returned from the Gulf War. Guided by prayer and a desire to follow God's plan, they married just five weeks after reconnecting.

When asked how they would like to be remembered, they offered a few simple yet powerful words: "*For being workers in the church, helping people, and attending faithfully.*"

#### Why This Matters

Walter and Linda Moore's story is more than a personal testimony—it's an example of what a life of faith and service can look like. Through the Caro-

lina Conference's *Planned Giving and Trust Services* department, they found a meaningful way to continue

their ministry long after their time here.

And you can too.

Their story reminds us that our service doesn't have to end with this life. With faith-based estate planning, your legacy can live on.

If you'd like to learn how your church or favorite ministry can be part of your estate plan, contact the *Carolina Conference Planned Giving and Trust Services Department* today. Like Walter and Linda Moore, you too can leave a legacy of faith, love, and service.

—by Esmeralda Paulino

**GENEROUS**  
LIVING

All of Me in  
Response to All  
of Him



# LOVING GOD THROUGH LOVING OTHERS

## SABBATH SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY SERVICES WORKSHOP



*Ignacio Goya*



*Cesar Perozo*



*Forrest Watson, Philip Samaan, Ignacio Goya*

From May 17-19, more than 70 ministry leaders and church members gathered at Nosoca Pines Ranch (NPR) for a spiritually enriching retreat under the themes “Faith in Action: Serving Together” and “Living Christ’s Method Alone.” Leaders representing Sabbath School and Community Services came together for a weekend of inspiration, training, and fellowship.

Guest speaker Phillip Samaan, D.Min. (pictured in gray suit, above right), delivered a series of powerful messages throughout the weekend. He opened on Friday evening with “The Four S’s of Impacting Society,” urging listeners to live lives of meaningful Christian witness. Other presenters included Ignacio Goya, Director of the Center for Community Change at the Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University, and Cesar Perozo, Carolina Conference Sabbath School Director.

The retreat schedule included times of worship, breakout sessions, and recreation. After Friday registration, participants were welcomed with praise and prayer before gathering for the evening message. Sabbath morn-

ing began with worship and continued with a variety of focused workshops. The afternoon allowed time for rest and fellowship, including hayrides, pontoon boat rides, and music by harpist Sherrilyn Samaan. Sabbath closed with recreational activities at the pool and gym.

Workshops for Sabbath School leaders were held in the NPR Chapel under the theme “Faith in Action.”

unique challenges faced by women in spiritual leadership, presented by Denise Barnwell of Upward Church.

While Sabbath School sessions were underway in the chapel, Community Services leaders met in the NPR Cafeteria for a series of workshops centered on “Living Christ’s Method Alone.” Topics included regional service opportunities, strategies for bridging gaps between churches and their communities, navigating resistance to change, and reimagining the Great Commission through service-based ministry.

The retreat concluded with a Community Services Federation Board meeting, affirming a united commitment to expand Christ-centered ministry across the Carolinas.

Many attendees described the weekend as a spiritual reset—an opportunity not just to receive training, but

to be renewed in their calling. One participant remarked, “This was a reminder that effective ministry doesn’t start with programs—it starts with Christ’s method, lived out in love.”

—by Esmeralda Paulino



John Hudgins of Upward Seventh-day Adventist Church led a timely session addressing artificial intelligence in ministry, encouraging leaders to embrace relevant tools for mission. Other sessions focused on nurturing spiritually grounded children, the emotional health of leaders, and the



# LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

## OUTDOOR EDUCATION AT NOSOCA PINES RANCH

Every spring, the Carolina Conference Education Department hosts one of its most enriching and memorable events—Outdoor Education—at the beautiful Nosoca Pines Ranch. The program, held this year on October 7-9, is specially designed for 5th and 6th grade students across the conference, providing them with a hands-on learning experience like no other.

Outdoor Education is all about bringing the classroom outside. This year's event featured a dynamic mix of classes, all taught in the fresh air and natural surroundings of Nosoca. Teachers, office staff, and even one 11th-grade student from the Carolina Conference stepped up to lead engaging and creative activities across a wide range of subjects. This year's offerings included pickleball, orienteering and map making, shelter building, bully prevention, kites, paper airplanes, and walking sticks.

But Outdoor Education is more than just outdoor learning. At its heart, it is

a spiritual experience. Each year, the event is centered around a specific worship theme. This year's theme was "I AM: Revealing God, Discovering Me."

Throughout the weekend, students explored what it means to know the great "I AM"—God—and how learning more about His character helps us understand our own identity and purpose. The camp pastor led morning and evening worships, creating space for reflection, connection, and worship amid the natural beauty of Nosoca.

A highlight of every Outdoor Education event is the special guest presenter, and this year's was a huge hit. Jay Bell from Reptiles 101 brought a fascinating live animal presentation, featur-



ing snakes, lizards, and turtles. Students not only got to see these amazing creatures up close, but also learned about their habits, behaviors, and importance in the ecosystem. It was an exciting and educational experience that had students buzzing with curiosity and amazement.

With 135 students in attendance, this year's Outdoor Education at Nosoca Pines Ranch was a joyful, meaningful, and impactful time. It gave students the chance to disconnect



from screens, breathe in the outdoors, bond with new friends, explore their world, and grow in their faith.

—by Esmeralda Paulino

*Our amazing and fearless Education Department Team pictured with Jay Bell and some of his slithery friends.*





## Carolina Obituaries

**CANOSA, LILA IRENE, 92**, born November 17, 1932, in Bainville, MT, died October 22, 2024, in Candler, NC. The daughter of Russian immigrant farmers Carl and Mary Misenko, Irene was the youngest of eight children. Her parents, while living in Kiev, Russia, began reading the Bible secretly with a neighbor, ultimately becoming Sabbath keepers despite religious persecution. Fleeing under threat of imprisonment, the family endured a dangerous escape journey through Europe, temporary imprisonment by Soviet authorities, and eventual resettlement in Canada before homesteading in Montana. Irene learned English after starting school and remained fluent in both English and Russian throughout her life. She earned a nursing degree from Fletcher School of Nursing and later married Louis Canosa in 1955. They shared 65 years of marriage. Irene was known for her deep faith and lifelong commitment to her beliefs. She is survived by her daughters, Carole Canosa and Elizabeth Canosa-Maize; grandsons, Joel Sholtes (Kari), David Sholtes, and Jesse Maize; and great-grandchildren, Penny, Saul, Naomi, and Samuel Sholtes, and Dalton Maize.

**HARRISON, NOREEN ANN, 90**, was born January 11, 1935, in Joliet, IL, and died April 11, 2025, in Hendersonville, NC. She graduated from Joliet Township High School in 1953 and later completed nursing school. On December 24, 1955, she married Benjamin Harrison. Following Benjamin's military service in Germany, the couple returned to Joliet in 1960, where Noreen began her nursing career as a registered nurse in the operating room at Silver Cross Hospital. In 1972, the family relocated to Hendersonville, NC. Noreen worked in the operating room at Mountain Sanatorium and Hospital, later known as Fletcher Hospital. In 1981, she began working for Porta Medic in Asheville, NC, where she remained until her retirement. She was a member of the Fletcher Adventist Church for more than 52 years. She is survived by one son, Michael Harrison, of Mills River, NC; one daughter, Lori Harrison Smith (Richard), of Penrose, NC; three granddaughters, Christina Smith Pedigo (Matthew), of Hendersonville, NC; Kayla Harrison Gaddy (Corey), of Penrose, NC; Caroline Harrison Adams (Austin), of Belmont,

NC; four great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her husband of 63 years, Benjamin Harrison; her parents, William James Bolton and Edna Mae Noreen Bolton; and her sister, Joan Bolton Funk.

**HUSKINS, CICERO D., JR., 93**, was born June 3, 1931, in High Point, NC, and died April 27, 2025, in North Carolina. He was the eldest of two sons born to Cicero "Doc" and Jessie "Penny" Huskins. He was preceded in death by his wife, Alice, in 2019; their daughter, Penny, in 2023; their great-granddaughter, Ellington, in 2018; his parents; and his brother. Huskins and his wife were founding members of the Arden Adventist Church in North Carolina. He served in various leadership roles over 50 years of active membership, including elder, treasurer, and athletics coach for Fletcher Academy. His life reflected a deep commitment to his faith and to supporting the work of the church. He is survived by three children: John Huskins (Sherryl) of Ooltewah, TN; Kay Fischer (Frank) of Northport, ME; and Ted Huskins (Cynthia) of Leominster, MA; son-in-law, David Butler; 11 grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren.

**LEE, TOMMIE, 86**, born April 2, 1938, in Lumberton, NC, died February 22, 2025, in Hendersonville, NC. He served in the United States Navy before retiring with honor. Following his military service, he worked for the United States Postal Service and retired from that position as well. He was a member of the Fletcher Adventist Church, where he found strength and fellowship throughout his life. **LEE, MARILYN E. LOWDER, 91**, born July 2, 1933, in Albemarle, NC, died November 24, 2024, in Fletcher, NC. She worked for Southern Airways after attending aviation school and later served as a telephone operator for the Mountain Sanitarium and Park Ridge Hospital (now Adventist Health, Hendersonville). She was also a member of the Fletcher Adventist Church. Tommie and Marilyn are survived by their sons, Chris Lee (Pamela) of Belmont, NC, and Robert Lee (Rebecca) of Aledo, TX; grandchildren, Sam T. Lee of Belmont, NC, and Emily A. Lee of Aledo, TX; Marilyn's brother, Robert Ray Lowder of Crescent City, CA; and Tommie's brother, Mack B. Lee of St. Pauls, NC.

**SMITH, LINDA, 79**, born April 12, 1945, in South Carolina, died March 25, 2025, in West Columbia, SC. She attended Fletcher Academy in Fletcher, NC. She worked as a nurse for many years before retiring in the Columbia, SC area. She was a member of the Irmo Adventist Fellowship. She is remembered with love and respect by all who knew her.

## Conference Calendar

### AUGUST

7-10 – LE Summer Retreat. NPR.  
22-24 – Pathfinder/Adventurer Leadership Convention. NPR.

### SEPTEMBER

5-7 – Master Guide Expedition. TBD.  
7-11 – CRAN Retirees Retreat. NPR.  
13 – Pathfinder World Day  
26-28 – Men's Retreat. NPR

### OCTOBER

3-5 – Women's Retreat. NPR.  
10-12 – Hispanic Women's Retreat. NPR.  
11-13 – Teen Invitational Backpacking. TBA.  
16-18 – Pathfinder Camporee. Camp Barnhardt.  
24-25 – Young Adult Life Tour (YAL)  
24-26 – Prayer Retreat. NPR.  
31-Nov. 2 – Low Country Campout. Camp Kinard.  
31-Nov 2 – Impact Youth Rally. MPA.

### NOVEMBER

14-16 – Children's Ministries Certification Weekend. NPR.  
21-23 – Youth Bible Retreat. NPR.  
30 – Pathfinders Ice Skating. Greenville, SC

### DECEMBER

No events

### JANUARY 2026

1-3 – Evangelism IMPACT. Myrtle Beach, SC.  
1-4 – LE Year-end Retreat. Indian Creek Camp, Liberty, TN  
4-5 – Ministerial Workers Meeting. Myrtle Beach, SC.

MORE EVENTS AT  
[WWW.CAROLINASDA.ORG](http://WWW.CAROLINASDA.ORG)

## The Carolina Action

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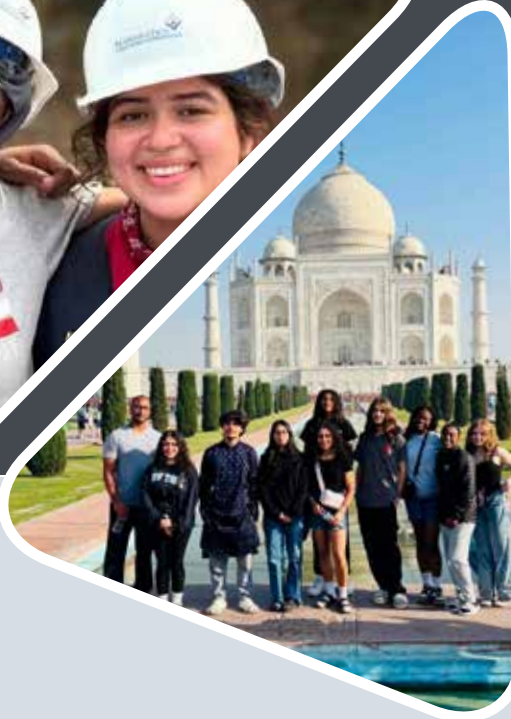
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