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# FLORIDA FOCUS

A quarterly journal of Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

## PRESS ON

FEAR NOT, GOD IS WITH US

72<sup>ND</sup>  
**CONSTITUENCY**  
SESSION 2022

Quadrennial Report for the 72nd Regular Constituency Meeting — October 9, 2022





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Allan Machado  
Florida Conference President

# PRESS ON

## President's Report

As we reflect on the last six years of this constituency period, we must recognize that God has been with His church every step of the way.

At the end of the last quadrennium, and even in preparation for our constituency meeting initially scheduled for late 2020, we could not have imagined that we'd soon face a pandemic that would bring our world to a halt. We have witnessed the world shrinking into chaos, revealing that God's judgments have begun to blow over the earth, announcing that the Second Coming of Jesus is near. We have endured a worldwide pandemic, social unrest, political instability, natural disasters, and economic hardship. We have lost family members, church brothers and sisters, dear friends. We must acknowledge that we have gone through uncertainty, fears, pain, and loss like never recorded in our generation.

Yet, the church has continued to fulfill its mission. We have experienced countless miracles, and we have seen how God has opened the floodgates of heaven and poured out unprecedented blessings. Last year, even amid COVID-19, more than 1,000 souls were baptized. We continued to follow where God led, planting churches, evangelizing throughout our state, and carrying forth His mission.

### WALKING TOGETHER

Since the last constituency meeting, we adopted a new mission statement at Florida Conference: Walking

Together in Faith, Hope, and Love. Faith in Jesus, Hope in the Second Coming, and experiencing and sharing the Love of God. It is with this mission in mind that our institutions, departments, leaders, and workforce aim to affect change and make a difference for His Kingdom. In this special Quadrennial Report issue of Florida Focus, you will see this mission reflected in all areas of our conference, from administrative projects to soul-winning.

### REVITALIZING THE MISSION

To better accomplish the work that the Lord has set before us, and serve our constituents and communities, we created new departments and transformed the responsibilities of others.

- Disaster Response became an integral part of Adventist Community Services. With hundreds of volunteers across Florida, the ACS & DR department provides critical aid during emergencies both here and abroad.

- We expanded the responsibilities of the Communication department to include Public Relations. As our world changes, so must our methods of communication. In order to create a healthy environment where the church can operate successfully, our message must be clear and undistorted.

- To prioritize people over tasks, the Human Resources department added an emphasis on Talent Management. Focusing on our employees has led to exciting developments in technology and training.



- Most recently, the Office of Legal Counsel was created to manage the legal landscape of Florida Conference, with the intention to reduce risks and liabilities so we can focus on God's work.

- We created Prayer Ministries to work in conjunction with Women's Ministries, recognizing how vital it is that we support our churches, members, and other ministries through prayer and Bible study.

- After studying why our youth leave the church in large numbers—70% of young adults ages 18 to 22 stop attending church regularly— we created a dedicated Youth and Young Adult Ministries department to minister to young people who age out of Pathfinders and Adventurers. This ministry works with local churches and pastors to encourage our congregations to "Grow Young" and connect with young people, training and equipping them to be the future of our church.

You can read more about these ministries and many others in the coming pages.

## EVANGELISM

We have so many reasons to praise God for His faithfulness. Over the past six years, 12,073 souls have found the Savior and joined our church through baptism or profession of faith. Each of our departments and ministries has a hand in evangelism, and our Pastoral Ministries and Volunteer Lay Pastors have added significantly to our evangelism efforts by planting more than 60 churches since the last quadrennium.

The local church is a fundamental part of ministry. Since 2019, we have committed more than \$1M in evangelism funds to churches every year. In just the last three years, we have hired 65 pastors to shepherd God's people. Also, 10 ministerial positions have been created. The Lord has blessed our efforts, and we have experienced miraculous tithe gains, even in the middle of the pandemic.

Our schools and academies are also key to evangelism and our emphasis on supporting and mentoring the next generation. In partnership with AdventHealth, we opened North Tampa Christian Academy, a new state-of-the-art school in the Tampa Bay area. We also have plans for a new academy in Broward and an Innovation Center in Central Florida.

Our Executive Secretary, Treasurer, and Vice Presidents will share more in their respective reports.

## GOD IS WITH US

Though our future is uncertain and surely full of challenges, I know God's church will press on. We have learned to adapt, we have learned to endure, we have learned the real meaning of being faithful to God. When we consider the bigger picture, if we allow the light of God to illuminate our present reality based on the truth and

prophesies foretold by Jesus Himself, we must praise our Lord and Savior because He revealed to us that God will never abandon nor forsake us. Jesus taught us with His life, His death, and resurrection that life will always win over death, the resurrection will win over the grave, love will always win over hatred, freedom over oppression, forgiveness over condemnation, salvation and restoration will always win over destruction, and reconnecting over isolation and separation.

This is the message God wants to share with you as we prepare ourselves for the coming constituency cycle:

*Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.* Isaiah 41:10

The Lord is asking us to take advantage of the realities we are witnessing today. It is my conviction that God organized the Seventh-day Adventist Church to shine precisely in a world that is shrinking into chaos. To preach hope in a hopeless world. To share a message of wholeness in a world that lacks everything. To preach the Second Coming of Jesus to a world that already believes the end of this planet earth is near.

YouGov Survey<sup>[1]</sup> published research in which Americans were asked if they believed the world was ending. For the first time in our generation, there was consensus that there is no hope for our beautiful green planet. The study reported that most of the participants believe that this planet, sooner than later, will become another moon in the solar system. Many believe this earth as we know it is fast evolving into extinction. The argument offered various theories like climate change, nuclear war, and even an invasion of aliens. Regardless of the range of theories, the conclusion was that this world is coming to an end.

And here we are, you and I, being called by God to fulfill the most precious mission ever entrusted to human beings, to go to the world and proclaim the wonderful news of the Gospel: Jesus is coming again. It will not be easy, and we will undoubtedly face challenges. We have to learn to adapt and, more importantly, commit to God's church. We are called to live the Gospel and live by faith.

As you read this report in preparation for our 72nd Constituency Meeting, I hope you will see a church that has trusted God, allowing itself to be led through triumphs and challenges. I hope you, like I, resolve to have no other choice but to praise the Lord for His faithfulness and determine to press on until His Second Coming.

<sup>[1]</sup>YouGov plc (2020) "End of the World."

[https://docs.cdn.yougov.com/8pjb1zrx6/Results%20for%20YouGov%20Realtime%20\(End%20of%20the%20World\)%2053%203.2.2020.pdf](https://docs.cdn.yougov.com/8pjb1zrx6/Results%20for%20YouGov%20Realtime%20(End%20of%20the%20World)%2053%203.2.2020.pdf)

# INSTITUTIONS



## Adventist Book Centers/ A Better Choice/ Kulaqua General Store

*led by Kristin Rodriguez, Director*

**MISSION:** To serve God, the church, and community through Christ-centered customer service by providing customers with products to nourish their mind, body, and spirit.

The last several years have been busy and challenging, but God has blessed the ABC and the efforts of our team.

In early 2017, the ABC sold the old faithful bookmobile and bought a transit van. By dedicating the van to deliveries, we can visit several more churches each weekend, covering the entire state every eight weeks. Whether you live near the ABC or not, you can get the items you want and need with no added shipping cost.

After prayerful consideration, we made the difficult decision to close the Miami store in December 2017. The store had been suffering declining sales and was not financially viable. We continue to serve the constituents of South Florida and the entire state through our express delivery.

The ABC had the opportunity to partner with AdventHealth by subleasing the previous entry space of the Altamonte Springs store to the AdventHealth Credit Union and also subleased the deli to Norma's Plant-Based Cuisine. Norma's offers tasty plant-based cuisine and promotes our health vision as a church.

The ABC hosts story time every Monday in the children's corner. This weekly event is a blessing to kids and an outreach to the community. Besides a story, there are crafts and goodies to take home each week.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been challenging for everyone, and retail stores were no exception, especially considering the difficulty in getting goods and supplies. The ABC remains diligent in getting items members and churches need. We are blessed to remain busy serving our customers in-store, online, and through express deliveries. We know our materials are making a difference in spreading the gospel.

Our vision for the future is to launch a fully functioning online store for all our products, including food. We aim to remain relevant and current in an ever-changing retail climate so we can serve our members and churches until the Second Coming of Jesus.



## Camp Ministries

*led by Phil Younts, Director*

**MISSION:** Camp Kulaqua's mission is to serve the constituents of Florida Conference by providing a friendly, quality camping and retreat facility that sets an atmosphere allowing for the Holy Spirit to touch as many lives as possible. We also aim for Camp Kulaqua to be an outreach opportunity to nonmembers who can abide by the policies of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the principles of Christianity. May all be to the honor and glory of God.

From 2016 through 2019, Camp Kulaqua continued to grow and serve more than 50,000 guests every year. Each summer, 50 to 75 campers were baptized, with hundreds committing their lives to Christ. Multiple churches had successful retreats, and thousands of people enjoyed God's great outdoors. Then came 2020. We had a wonderful Women's Ministries retreat in February, a great Men's Ministries convention in March, and suddenly COVID-19 hit us right between the eyes and shut us down. We had never experienced such an empty camp. Staff were furloughed, animals were taken care of, and the

camp was secure, but the silence was deafening. Without people to serve, our mission could not move forward. The summer of 2020 was the first time in the 66-year history of Camp Kulaqua with no summer camp.

We were discouraged, but God had not forgotten nor forsaken us. With the help of conference Administration and the prayers of thousands of supporters, we continued to hold the fort looking forward to the light at the end of the tunnel. That year, we hosted the first-annual Camp Kulaqua Fund Race Virtual 5K and 25-Mile Bike Ride. Hundreds of participants virtually joined together to get moving, get outdoors, and support our camp.

In 2021, people began to move about and return to having church events and family gatherings. In the summer of 2021, 945 campers attended summer camp, and 130 college students worked and ministered to them. During that summer, 75 campers were baptized in the spring and two staff were rebaptized along with two campers' parents. Praise God for His faithfulness, protection, and care.

After a successful summer, we were excited for an even stronger 2022. Camp Meeting, Campestre, conventions, several Pathfinder events, and many others resumed in-person at Camp Kulaqua. God has promised that He will never leave us or forsake us. We have seen His hand at work, returning our camp to full strength for His glory. We love hearing the voices of children and families enjoying God's beautiful creation at Camp Kulaqua.

Camp Kulaqua is blessed to:

- Welcome 50,000 campers per year
- Have 80 workers serving God year-round
- Accept 130 college and academy students serving each summer
- Witness more than 1,000 summer camp children meeting Jesus in God's beautiful outdoors
- Host more than 400 family campers
- Baptize 50 to 75 children and individuals each summer
- See hundreds of youth committing to Jesus each year
- Be the largest camp operation in the Adventist world.



## Florida Living Retirement Community

*led by Nancy Pleasants, Administrator*

**MISSION:** As a faith-based community, we strive to promote a friendly and caring environment where our residents feel connected, supported, and respected. By providing professional and servant leadership, we encourage and honor the resident's right for confidentiality and autonomy while showing excellence as a benchmark in the community.

For more than 55 years, Florida Living Retirement Community has been led by the Lord to serve our seniors and our community. This has been especially true in the past six years.

In keeping with promoting health and well-being, we are able to host the AdventHealth University Physical Therapy

and Occupational Therapy students on our campus for teaching and classes. Our residents respond well to these programs. FLRC staff also provide promotional health and exercise activities throughout the year.

Spiritual health is also a top priority. The community continues a close, cooperative relationship with the Florida Living Church, whose current pastor is Alan Jones. Pastor Jones takes care of our spiritual needs, whether individuals are Florida Living Church members or not. He is loved, and we appreciate him very much.

Florida Living continues to be represented throughout our community. Instead of a virtual booth on the General Conference site, we decided to attend in-person at the ASI Convention in Orlando. What a successful and rich experience! We plan to represent our community at these events for years to come.

COVID-19 has been with us a while now, and we follow vital guidelines for the protection of all. We hosted a vaccination site for the Health Department; our residents were treated along with many from the community. At first, we all seemed to stand still in time, but as we have moved through this new disease that surrounds us, we have continued our monthly social events, including Thanksgiving and Christmas banquets and several programs. It is amazing how creative we can be to keep our residents safe.

As of the beginning of this year, our occupancy is about 80%, fluctuating slightly on a monthly basis. We maintain eight to ten short-term furnished units for guest dwellings, with renovation projects continually underway. Roofs are always replaced as needed, and we are supporting four more roofing projects. In 2022, we completed renovations on the office and church building roof, located at Fritsche Hall. Although we maintain a capital replacement fund, the maintenance needs are extensive on an older facility such



as FLRC. We utilize loyal subcontractors with electrical, plumbing, construction, and roofing skills to allow us to save on other maintenance costs.

When Seventh-day Adventist seniors hear the words “Florida Living Retirement Community,” it is our goal that they automatically think of a sunny, healthy environment that invites them in to rest a while. We seek a stronger emphasis on implementing optional healthy living programs that may help address chronic conditions, mobility challenges, and any impedance to living a life full of vitality.



## Forest Lake Academy

*led by Glen Baker, Principal*

**MISSION:** To show students Christ, nurture their love for Him and others, teach them to think critically, and empower them as scholars to live the gospel.

Forest Lake Academy has a rich tradition of providing an outstanding academic and Christian education program for high school young people for over 100 years. The school is committed to being at the forefront of implementing best teaching practices, fostering faith development in our students, utilizing data to guide decisions, and being innovative in our educational programs.

### ENROLLMENT

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, FLA's enrollment was approximately 420 students in grades 9 through 12. In the first full school year of the pandemic, enrollment dropped by 40 students as some parents chose to keep their students at home for safety. However, this past year, enrollment at Forest Lake Academy exceeded expectations, with enrollment growing by 60 additional students for a total of 440 students. The school now has the challenge of operating at full capacity, so plans are in process for a critical capital development project to add a new building to the campus that will provide five new classrooms and three new science labs to accommodate more students.

### SCHOOL FACILITIES

Numerous developments have taken place on our campus to improve the physical appearance of our campus and buildings. To reflect what a quality educational environment should look like, buildings have been repainted, a 3-4 million dollar water project was completed that re-piped the entire campus, and extensive landscaping and irrigation repairs were completed, all of which have resulted in a beautiful and efficient campus.

The school has entered into a partnership agreement with the Forest Lake Church to convert a large warehouse building into a new state-of-the-art Youth Ministries Center that will benefit young people throughout Central Florida. Our Innovation Lab continues to grow and has been relocated to new and expanded facilities, and a new athletic field renovation project will soon be complete.

These projects fit into the school's strategic plan of providing the best and most conducive educational environment for our students.

### MINISTRY AND SERVICE

Above all else, FLA remains true to its priority mission of fostering faith development and a commitment to serving others. Strong collaboration between our Bible teachers, campus pastor, administration, and local pastors provides students with experiential opportunities to develop and strengthen their faith through ministry to fellow students on campus, involvement in service activities, and actively sharing their faith in the community.

### ACADEMICS

Forest Lake Academy is committed to constant improvement. To further this goal, an intentional effort is taken to make FLA a data-driven school, where data drives curriculum, innovation, decision-making, and school improvement efforts. As a college preparatory institution, our goal is to allow every student to take ownership of their academic preparation and success through a data-driven approach that informs and involves them in individual goal setting. At the same time, there is a continued and intentional focus on the ongoing professional development of our teaching team to improve effectiveness in the classroom for all students.

Our school continues to expand dual enrollment class opportunities offered through partnerships with AdventHealth University and Union College. We recently added two new dual enrollment engineering classes through a collaboration between our FLA Innovation Program and Walla Walla University. Another exciting curricular development at FLA is the implementation of custom-designed, competency-based courses under the framework of our Innovation Program that allow students to study the areas they are passionate about. This unique instructional model will enable students to discover their God-given gifts in a way that the traditional one-size-fits-all model does not.



One such project, based on a student's passion for addressing food insecurity in her local community, has resulted in a partnership between FLA and AdventHealth to establish a Fourth Industrial Urban Garden on the campus of FLA, called Alive Gardens, to produce food for those in need. The garden features IoT sensors powered by a solar panel that provide real-time data regarding water levels, plant nutrition, and other factors. By empowering them to think critically, serve others, and live the gospel, FLA students can make a difference in this world and for His Kingdom.



## Greater Miami Adventist Academy

*led by Lorna Leon, Principal*

**MISSION:** Mental precision, physical restoration, spiritual redemption, pursuing excellence for the purpose of service.

Throughout the years, God has blessed Greater Miami Adventist Academy, and He continues to do so through the many advancements and improvements we continue to accomplish. We have seen God's hand guide us in all aspects of GMAA. God has ushered in a new era at our school by establishing the first female principal in the history of Greater Miami Adventist Academy. We continue to allow God to guide us in facing new challenges that arise, as well as seeking new opportunities.

### MENTAL PRECISION

Every year, we continue to expand the academic curriculum. We have introduced many college-credit courses through our partnerships with Adventist universities to provide our students with a head-start in their higher education. We have implemented Advanced Placement courses that offer the opportunity to gain key credits that will be recognized at colleges and universities across the nation.

### PHYSICAL RESTORATION

Despite our recent challenges, we have kept our athletic programs going strong. We believe in the education of students as a whole and that keeping them healthy and active is imperative. The continued development of both male and female sports programs is a fundamental focus. We are blessed to have a strong alumni coaching staff who give back through their countless hours of direct involvement. In addition to this support, more than fifty percent of our faculty are alumni. Our graduates seek to continuously support their school and remain part of the GMAA family.

### SPIRITUAL REDEMPTION

Although our world has been going through a pandemic, the Lord has not forsaken us. We have baptized more than 30 students at our school in the last few years, and many more have been baptized in their home churches. We've also begun plans to resume mission trip campaigns now that safe travel is once again possible.

In the next few years, our goals are to complete the Master Plan, which includes a new track, soccer field, auditorium, pool, and to add more Advanced Placement classes to our high school curriculum. We are excited to have God's guidance in forging innovative paths in Greater Miami Academy for years to come.



## North Tampa Christian Academy

*led by Orton Varona, President,  
and Stephen Herr, Head of Schools*

**MISSION:** Leadership Through Christian Innovation

North Tampa Christian Academy's extraordinary story is the result of a Spirit-led collaboration among Florida Conference, AdventHealth, and Tampa Bay Adventist churches to establish a new state-of-the-art campus in

Wesley Chapel. NTCA aims to more effectively prepare students to become successful Christian leaders and positive change agents in today's rapidly changing world. To create a connected and well-integrated educational community, NTCA offers an educational experience spanning age two through high school. The school opened for its exciting inaugural year in August 2018.

## SCHOOL FACILITIES

Fielding Nair International, an award-winning international education design firm, designed the campus. Using its global experience, the firm created inspiring buildings and learning spaces that enable advanced instructional strategies, student-centered learning, and interdisciplinary collaboration within a beautiful natural setting on 44 acres. The campus has a unique outdoor educational complex featuring a beautiful pond that enriches a student's sense of well-being and teaches them about environmental sustainability. A brand-new campus with buildings equipped to include 21st-century technology are an integral part of the school's focus on innovation.

## CURRICULUM

The college preparatory curriculum at NTCA is distinguished by innovative and rigorous pedagogies, such as project-

based learning, mastery-based grading, campus-wide themes, signature humanities, STEM programs, signature experiences, honors, advanced placement, and dual-enrollment courses. The spiritual curriculum includes dynamic service partnerships in India and Zambia sponsored by World Vision, and Uncommon, an engaging on-campus spiritual program. NTCA also excels in its athletic programs and sports partnerships. This integration of faith and learning has already resulted in 18 student baptisms, with several other students and their families being baptized into community churches.

## ENROLLMENT

As a result of its new campus, new curriculum, and new methodologies, NTCA has set ambitious enrollment goals to serve as many families as possible with its distinctive educational and spiritual programs. NTCA opened with 221 students in 2018, enrolled 297 students the following year, 314 students in 2020, and 406 students in 2021. Additionally, NTCA offers families the flexibility to enroll in person full-time or to utilize the Titan Teacher Network, which allows parents to have agency with access to classroom instruction. NTCA's master teachers are eager to partner with families to meet their academic and spiritual needs, and the campus is well-positioned to spread the Gospel in the Tampa region and beyond.



# Orlando Junior Academy

*led by Celestine Creighton, Principal*

**MISSION:** The mission of Orlando Junior Academy is to foster in its students a love for learning, encourage explorations, and develop an abiding faith in Jesus.

"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." Orlando Junior Academy has been on a journey for the

last one hundred and sixteen years to educate boys and girls for time and eternity. During the many steps along the way, OJA has faced challenges, trials, and near defeat. However, He who has begun a good work at OJA is still in control and moving the journey forward. By His grace and mercy, Orlando Junior Academy will get to the top of the mountain.

As a result of the challenges it has faced, OJA is currently operating under the auspices of the Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Our school serves 163 boys and girls representing Florida's diverse population, and the Florida Conference has committed to keeping OJA on the path and ensuring that the school's mission lives on.

For the next ten years, OJA expects to grow into the jewel God intends for it to be. The future looks bright because we have placed our school in the hands of the One who stills the water. As a result, OJA aims to build a brighter spiritual and academic future for all students.

Our future goals include strengthening the spiritual foundation of each student and encouraging academic growth and development. With a principal willing to go the extra mile and a staff committed to excellence and ready to engage students to do their best work, Orlando Junior Academy will shine bright for His honor and glory.



# DEPARTMENTS



## Adventist Community Services & Disaster Response

*led by Conrad Duncan, Vice President for General Administration*

**MISSION:** The mission of the Adventist Community Services & Disaster Response department of Florida Conference is to train, equip and deploy qualified personnel and the appropriate equipment for addressing people's needs before, during, and after a disaster. This department aims to serve the church and the community as Jesus instructed us to do in Luke 4:18.

To serve the needs of our communities and respond efficiently to disasters, the ACS & DR department recruited and trained more than 100 volunteers in various regions of Florida Conference through six major training events for local church directors and volunteers.

Since then, our teams have responded successfully to more than nine climate-related disasters here and overseas and a building collapse in South Florida. By the grace of God, we have raised more than \$300,000 to assist victims of disasters in The Bahamas, St. Vincent, Cuba, Nicaragua, Honduras, Puerto Rico, and many others as well.

In the years since the last quadrennium, we distributed approximately \$60,000 of Florida Conference funds to aid and sponsor various organizations and individuals in Florida. We have also equipped our response teams with \$300,000 worth of needed equipment.

The COVID-19 pandemic caught many by surprise, but the ACS & DR department was trained and well-equipped. We met the urgent needs of our constituency by:

- Procuring and supplying hundreds of thousands of masks and hand sanitizers.
- Raising and distributing more than \$60,000 to assist struggling food bank ministries in our churches throughout Florida.

Pursuing to continue to fulfill the mission assigned to ACS & DR, the primary goal for the next quadrennium is to raise \$2.5 million to construct a 50-70 thousand square foot warehouse for a state-wide Feed the Hungry Ministry led by our department. Our team also aims to train 60 additional leaders and volunteers for disaster response and warehouse operation and grow food bank programs in all Florida Conference churches.



## Children's, Family, and Singles' Ministries

*led by Judy Smith, Director*

**MISSION:** Our mission is to provide resources, training, and healing to bring hope to children, families, and singles of Florida Conference.

Over the past six years, the Children's, Family, and Singles' Ministries department of Florida Conference has strived to provide resources for the local church, conference, and families. Our team trains volunteers and distributes materials for Sabbath School, VBS, and for starting Singles', Family, or Children's Ministries in local churches. Resources are also available for family worship, marriage, Sabbath School, leadership training, mission trips, and mental health.

## Evangelism

The Go Fish for Kids program helps kids share Christ; we have hosted 20 of these events in the past six years. Our staff and volunteer team also plan and execute programming for summer camps, ministerial retreats, Family Camp, Camp Meetings, and local church events. We partner with Pathfinders and Adventurers by teaching honors at camporees, and the Youth and Young Adult department by providing resources and programming for young single adults. Our staff and volunteers often travel across the state and abroad to minister to kids, 500 kids in Africa in 2018 and 250 kids in the Philippines in 2019.

## Training Events

Every year, we provide Vacation Bible School workshops, both in-person and virtually, in several areas of the state. We also offer basic and advanced Adult Leadership Certification classes multiple times each year. In just the past two years, 300 leaders earned their certification. Churches benefit greatly from our Creative Ministry Workshops for Adults. More than 20 churches attend these events, taught at least four times a year. Our director also participated in twenty leadership training events at other conferences during the past six years.

## Children's Leadership Training

Our team attends and is involved in the Agape Conference, training for Sabbath School, Family, and Singles' ministries. Last year's event had 600 individuals in attendance and added the ability to obtain leadership training virtually and on the website.

## Family Life

Family Ministry events involve multiple churches, with 25 events held in person and virtually over six years. We marked the 100th Family Life Celebration in 2019, with 2,000 adults and 190 children attending.

## Enrichment

Healing is a necessary part of this ministry. We organize yearly retreats to help heal and enrich marriages, as well as provide support and encouragement to singles and single parents. Family Life weekends and Family Camp include programming for the entire family. The associate director, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist-MT4106, is qualified to provide counseling and resources to help aid in the next steps of recovery.

We have been developing the Learning to Love Curriculum for teaching children, families, and singles to learn to love each other and be transformed by the power of God's love. Another meaningful goal is to conduct mental health awareness for children, families, and singles at Florida Conference churches. Our team has already begun offering Mental Health First-Aid Training in partnership with the University of Florida, AdventHealth, and Mannaba Counseling. We are excited to see this program grow and develop more mental health resources.



# Communication and Public Relations

*led by Raquel Levy Gonzalez, Interim Director*

**MISSION:** The mission of the Communication and Public Relations department is to tell the story of Florida Conference, using all mediums of communication to share how the Lord is working through His church in Florida. We are the bridge connecting our churches, constituents, and leaders in carrying the message of faith, hope, and love throughout our conference.

The way we communicate has changed considerably in the last few years. Yet, at its core, the message we aim to share remains the same: the Good News of Christ and how He is leading our ministry work throughout Florida. Our goal is to carry this message effectively, efficiently, and in a way that is relevant to the 21st century as we connect the members of this conference to each other and to our collective mission.

In the years prior to the pandemic, we increased our social media and advanced technology efforts, creating a strategy that increased reach and engagement with our constituents. We've seen a more than 30% boost in social media followers across all digital platforms. Our groundwork paid off when our world changed seemingly overnight, and ministry had to be done on an entirely virtual platform. We were blessed to host 17 weeks of Open Church services, reaching our members as well as strangers across the world. We also had the opportunity to broadcast a virtual, statewide convocation, Worship Together, and our first-ever virtual Camp Meeting in 2021. Our goal of amplifying the work of our various ministries has been achieved by virtual, hybrid, and in-person programs, expanding their reach more than ever.



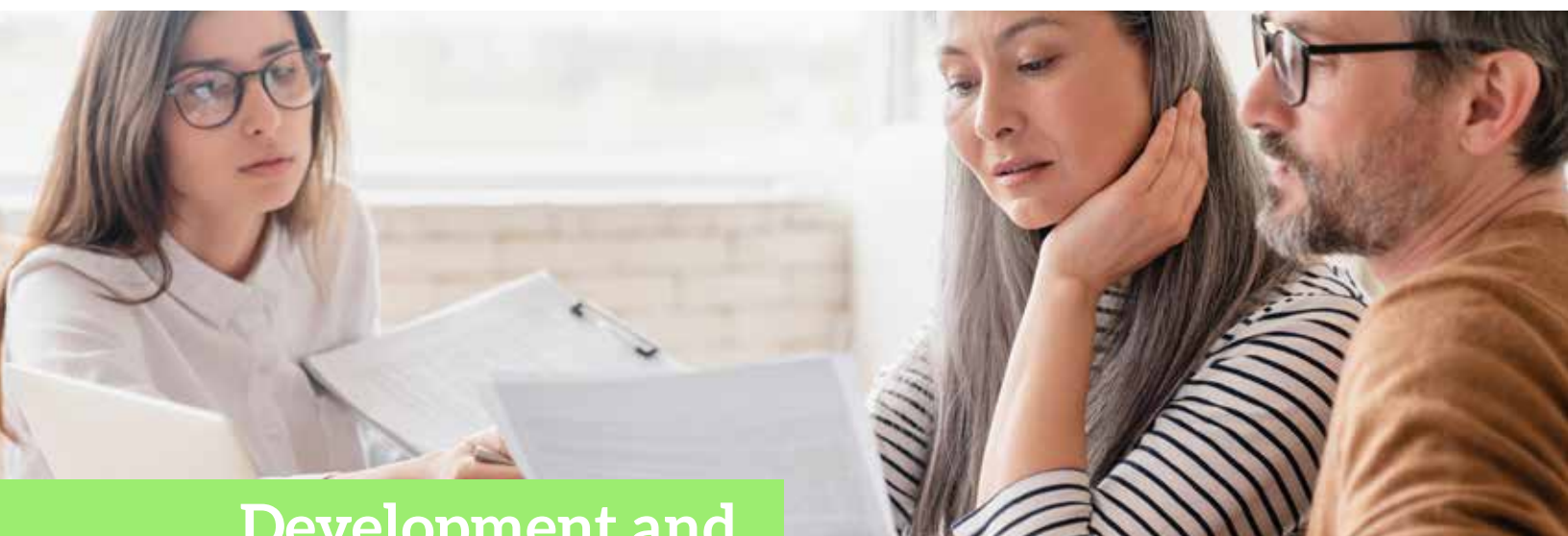
We now have a team of public relations professionals specializing in various areas, including graphic design, video production, web development, and digital media. We can now provide a vast amount of resources in-house, while yielding considerable savings. Our team has been heavily involved in serving all internal departments in their branding, marketing, and events. This collaboration has allowed the department to significantly save on costs.

In the last three years, we implemented a complete rebranding in accordance with NAD brand standards. We have been purposeful in ensuring consistency and quality through our messages, making the church more relevant visually, and staying better connected with future generations.

The official magazine of Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Florida Focus—including this special Constituency

Report—has been visually redesigned, more than doubled in pages, and has evolved into a publication focusing on evangelism and testimonies. In Southern Tidings, Florida feature articles are shared six times a year and two pages of news articles are shared each month. These publications continue to be an essential part of our department.

To fulfill our mission, our department is striving to focus on church collaboration by providing local churches with the resources to support their communication efforts. These resources would help develop digital marketing, social media strategy, and web presence. Because communication is a dynamic field, we aim to continue to equip our Florida Conference studio to handle emerging technologies. All of our investments and efforts, from the largest project to the most fundamental task, share the purpose of furthering God's Kingdom and His message to His people.



## Development and Planned Giving

*led by Philip Bond, Director*

**MISSION:** Our mission is to help our constituents with their goal of providing for their families and the church through estate planning and administration.

Estate planning is the process of making sure one's wishes are honored if he or she becomes incapacitated or dies. To help our constituents with their questions and concerns, our field representatives go through an intense training and certification process. We provide information on and assist with the following:

- Revocable and Irrevocable trusts
- Last Will and Testament
- Charitable Gift Annuities
- Southern Union Revolving Fund
- Asset Protection Trusts
- Trust Deeds
- Durable Power of Attorney
- Health Care Surrogate
- Living Wills

Since the last constituency meeting, we have assisted more than 500 families by creating their wills and all estate planning or administration needs.

- Income for 2016-2019 for the local churches, the conference, and other Yearbook ministries exceeded \$8,747,265.

- Income for 2020-2021 for the local churches, the conference, and other Yearbook ministries exceeded \$2,733,769. Praise the Lord!

As the baby boomers age—the current average age is 75 years old—estate planning becomes even more important. We strive to ensure they are given all the pertinent information they need by sharing practical webinars, newsletters, and sending pamphlets to our constituent's homes. These efforts align with our goal to educate and encourage them, along with all of our constituents. Our second goal is to ensure that your planned giving representatives stay informed on the latest estate planning tools and strategies that make us the “go-to” people when members have estate questions and needs.



# FLCOE: Florida Conference Office of Education

*led by Frank Runnels, Vice President for Education*

**MISSION:** To discover and develop the God-given potential of teachers and students through a Christ-centered experiential curriculum, real-world learning, and quality instruction within a grace-filled environment, thereby creating Christian leaders who will remain rooted in their love for Jesus and His church.

Faithful! That's our God. The past six years presented us with unique opportunities, challenges of epic proportions, and countless examples of God's faithfulness. The pandemic greatly tolled our administrators, teachers, and students with devastating effects. Even amidst the loss of loved ones, friends, and family members to this insidious virus, our education family continues to show up and give their best. The results of their faithfulness have been nothing short of amazing, as God continues to work wonders in our midst. In fact, during the initial days of the pandemic, most of our schools didn't miss a beat and were back teaching online within seven days.

While COVID-19 undermined our school finances and enrollments, we have returned conference-wide to our pre-pandemic highs, overseeing 4,352 students and 457 teachers in our schools and early childhood centers. Several of our programs are at capacity, with some turning away students due to a lack of teachers or space. We remain optimistic that additional recovery and restorative days are imminent.

Here are just a few notable events:

- In 2018, North Tampa Christian Academy, our new PreK-12 school in Tampa, opened its doors and overachieved proforma enrollment expectations.

- In 2019, out of 1800 plus schools, the State of Florida chose five schools for visits by Governor DeSantis. Two of those were Florida Conference schools.

- The Florida Conference Innovation Lab has garnered recognition from several leading institutions and partnered with Loma Linda University, Walla Walla University, AdventHealth University, Southern Adventist University, and Andrews University for teacher training and student entrepreneurship.

While recognition and visits from state leaders and groups are notable events that many might see as success, we are most proud that each day Jesus is present and at home in our schools. Nothing excites us more than the affirmation of our Heavenly Father leading. Since 2016, more than 1,000 students have given their hearts to Jesus, with 750 plus students receiving baptism at their local churches. We are so blessed to be supported by a conference administration and pastoral ministries department that intentionally seek opportunities to collaborate and move the vision of Adventist Christian education forward. They, with us, believe that education is a significant and vital part of the evangelistic outreach of the Seventh-day Adventist ecosystem and that every child has the right to know Jesus and hear the Gospel, which establishes their belonging to Him.

No, we have not arrived and still have much more to accomplish. We seek to cultivate and inculcate leaders that will join us in producing equitable levels of access and learning for all. But with Heaven's favor and your support, we continue to work for sustainable programs where the Kingdom's message, innovation, real-world learning, advocacy, and curiosity are the culture and norm. No matter the size of the school, we continue to believe that every teacher and student has the right to reach their God-given potential and will persist until that opportunity and reality exists for all. We aim to progress towards an innovation school in Broward County, the completion of the Florida Conference Innovation Center, and further develop creative evangelistic opportunities for all students to know Jesus and share their faith.



# Human Resources and Talent Management

*led by Yasmin Then, Director*

**MISSION:** To become the leading Human Resources/Talent Management team that sets the benchmark for innovation and growth in the Seventh-day Adventist Church by partnering with and supporting our faith-based workforce.

Human Resources and Talent Management supports the Florida Conference throughout the full employee lifecycle, from recruitment through retirement or voluntary separation. We serve more than 1,400 employees, a workforce encompassing teachers, pastors, clerical, and operational support staff.

Our team operates through the competencies of human resources experience, business acumen, technical expertise, communication, consultation, ethical practices, leadership, relationship management, and critical evaluation. We strive to protect the interest of employees as well as the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

We provide support to both employees and hiring managers by:

- Collaborating to select the right candidate, developing their potential, and building their commitment to the organization.
- Relocating, onboarding, and providing duplicate housing assistance.

- Providing guidance on federal and state employment laws and regulations such as Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), Fair Labor Standards Act, as well as many other rules and regulations.
- Managing employee separations, including resignations, performance-related issues, and layoffs.
- Partnering with leadership to develop strategies for aligning talent lifecycle and performance to the goals of the organization. These strategies include performance management, succession planning, organizational effectiveness, continuing education, coaching, mentoring, and leadership development.

Since the last constituency, our main focus has been our employees instead of administrative work. As part of our Human Resources transformation, we have added technology to increase efficiency throughout the department and, ultimately, the organization.

We have successfully implemented the Cyber Recruiter tool, which has automated many routine administrative tasks, provided an applicant tracking system, and increased the ability to develop and maintain a robust and extensive applicant pool. To empower our employees to take charge of their work life, we have equipped them with the HR Actions management hub, where they can complete their onboarding paperwork, expense reports, and reimbursements. HR Actions gives employees direct access to view and manage their data and activities and reduces the administrative burden on HR and Payroll.

To transform the yearly review and goal-setting process, we launched a new performance management system, Synergita. Instead of a single performance review once yearly, this program guides employees through the ongoing process of improving one's skills, capabilities, and knowledge. Part of this is setting goals and allowing employees the opportunity to set and review goals with their managers on an ongoing basis.

During the unprecedented time of COVID-19, we have employed a series of tools to help our employees remain engaged while feeling supported: Bookboon, "water-cooler" virtual meetings to encourage connection with coworkers, and leadership development workshops with an emphasis on how to lead during the pandemic.

With the goal to "Care, Equip, and Comply," we conducted the first HR Summit, a dream of caring for employees, equipping them with tools for their work, and ultimately leading them in compliance with human resources procedures.

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart as working for the Lord." Colossians 3:23. This is the sincere desire of the Human Resources and Talent Management team as we align ourselves with the mission and values of the organization. We can humbly state that our department has been a leader in initiating change and spearheading progress.





## Office of Legal Counsel

*led by William Cochran, General Counsel*

**MISSION:** Protecting God's Work throughout Florida Conference is the sole objective of the newly-created Office of Legal Counsel.

The Office of Legal Counsel was newly established this constituency cycle to help Florida Conference and its affiliated entities navigate the increasingly complex and demanding legal landscape and reduce their risk and liability profile. It was borne out of the recognition that risk and liability drain resources that would otherwise be available to further mission work throughout the conference. The office provides this support through education, consultation, document review, and representation in legal proceedings.

Meeting with a wide variety of groups like pastors, treasurers, and school leaders regularly, the office seeks to engage with the field at all levels through engaging presentations. These presentations are selected and prepared to deal directly with the persistent issues that most frequently compromise local operations.

Counsel is available, at the direction of the leadership in all areas of conference operations, for consultation in navigating the legal challenges that face many of our people and programs every day. In a world increasingly subject to legal and regulatory constraints, early dialog and guidance can make the difference between reacting to problems after they arise and avoiding them altogether.

The office is also tasked with developing and reviewing many of the agreements and contracts the conference and local entities encounter in their work. Understanding the nature of church operations at all levels allows legal counsel to tailor these documents to both protect and empower the entities that need them. Helping to craft and utilize effective contracts, leases, and other agreements also aids in limiting the scope of problems facing the work.

Until this world is made new, no amount of diligence will avoid all its problems, legal or otherwise. So when significant problems do arise, the Office of Legal Counsel also assists and represents the Conference in litigation and mediation proceedings.



## Men's Ministries

*led by Dan Schiffbauer, Director*

**MISSION:** Galvanize the energy and resources of men for God, family, church, and community.

God has blessed Men's Ministries in Florida Conference tremendously over the past six years. Under the leadership of Ronaldo Da Cunha through the beginning of 2020 and Dan Schiffbauer from 2020 to the present, the ministry has seen a steady increase in activities and participation throughout the conference.

Our flagship event is our annual Men's Ministries Convention at Camp Kulaqua with outstanding speakers such as Southern Union Conference President Ron Smith, Florida Conference President Allan Machado,



and North American Division Men's Ministries Director Claudio Consuegra. In addition, the conventions feature interesting and practical seminars on pertinent men's issues such as health, marriage, finances, and spiritual life and commitment.

In 2018, we celebrated our 25th anniversary with more than 1,000 men in attendance, recognizing Florida as the place where Men's Ministries began in North America. A highlight of the meeting was Ronaldo Da Cunha receiving recognition from the North American Division for his outstanding leadership in Men's Ministries.

In 2021, we hosted a virtual convention encompassing Men's Ministries throughout the Southern Union. We have also continued to offer conventions for our non-English speaking members. Under the direction of pastors Philips Mompremier and Sidney Champagne, more than 200 men attend our Haitian conventions. Spanish conventions have also been growing. In 2021, the event was held at Camp Kulaqua for the first time, with 150 plus men in attendance.

In addition to the annual conventions, Men's Ministries has expanded its ministry to training and certification. Over the past several years, we have initiated Men's Ministries leadership training in local churches utilizing the North American Division Men's Ministries certification book. Approximately 100 men throughout the conference have qualified for the Men's Ministries certification in all language groups. In 2017, we began the certification cruise program where men and their spouses can participate in a Caribbean cruise. In addition to fun and relaxation, we offer certification classes and educational programs. So far, more than 30 men have been certified through this program, and we are planning another cruise in November 2022.

We continue to further our reach throughout the conference. Many of our council members already present Men's Ministries programs in churches. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we offered various Zoom meetings about Men's Ministries to help and encourage men in local churches. We recently launched a monthly newsletter and present periodic Zoom meetings for directors.

Our goals include planning regional rallies throughout the state to reach areas where men may find it difficult to attend the meetings in Camp Kulaqua and exploring ways to better reach out to the young adult men in the conference.

We pray God will continue to bless Men's Ministries that it may continue to be a vital component of Florida Conference. Our purpose is to enable men to experience a deeper commitment to Christ and set the tone for the mission and expansion of the Kingdom of God.



## Pathfinders & Adventurers

*led by Pedro Perez, Director*

**MISSION:** Bringing kids, families, churches, and communities closer to Jesus and each other. Our vision is to train, equip, and deploy an army of young people.

The Florida Conference Pathfinder and Adventurer Department (PAD) has more than 300 Pathfinder and Adventurer clubs across the conference. Sixty percent of our churches have at least one active club, totaling more than 5,000 kids and staff.

The success of PAD is directly linked to God blessing local churches with leaders, families, strong pastoral support, and an amazing team of volunteers. This team comprises 75 trained and equipped adults who serve as an extension of our department and help clubs every weekend. Our goal is to have at least one volunteer within 30 miles of any club throughout our conference. We are very close, 90%, to reaching this goal.

Club Ministries continues to offer annual Leadership Training, Family Campouts, Camporees, Blaze Ministries Training, Fun Days, Super Fun Days, Reveilles, Red Zone, and more events. Our events serve two purposes: to complement what the local church does and create opportunities to connect with other kids and see a

broader vision. Gathering in large groups adds moment and meaning to what is done locally and gives young people a vision of what God can do when we come together.

Pathfinders and Adventurers have earned awards and honors, preached sermons, gone door-to-door, attended events, supported victims of disasters, camped, served, and helped in their local communities. This army of young people is present and making an impact statewide.

A recent milestone was the 30-year celebration of the Island Navigator program, where Pathfinders spent a weekend in the Florida Keys learning about marine life and snorkeling on the island. In 2019, Florida Conference had the second-largest conference attendance at Oshkosh International Pathfinder Camporee, with more than 3,000 Florida Conference Pathfinders and staff attending. Another momentous milestone is Pathfinder ministry celebrating 70 Years in Florida Conference in 2022. Florida Conference began participating in Pathfinder ministry in 1952 with four clubs. It's incredible to look back at our journey with God and see how we have grown.

In 2019, the Pathfinder and Adventurer Department launched A New Kind of Leader Training to help churches love and lead kids better. In 2020, we partnered with Children's, Family, and Single's Ministries and Youth & Young Adult Ministries for The RED Tour—uniting three departments with one mission: to bless families, homes, and kids. Our goal is to help churches partner with other ministries in their church and connect with families to maximize their impact. We are reminded that the home is still where the most significant impact will happen in a kid's life. Together, with each other and God, we believe the best is yet to come.

The pandemic stretched, and we adapted to find creative ways to still minister to kids virtually. We shifted to online events, limited the number of people gathered for in-person events, took inventory of gaps in our team, and are doing a complete overhaul of every layer of our volunteers.

Our goal is to come out of this stronger than ever. Many clubs have thrived and grown, while others have yet to recover. We believe it is more important now than ever before to mobilize our volunteer team to show up and support clubs to the very best of our ability.



## Pastoral Ministries

*led by Orlando Lopez, Vice President for Pastoral Ministries*

**MISSION:** The mission of the Pastoral Ministries Department is to serve ministerial leaders and their families and affirm the importance of the local church in the completion of Christ's commission. We serve in the following areas: proclamation of the Gospel, spiritual growth, personal development, professional growth, and church growth. With these values, we implement the overarching mission statement of Florida Conference: Walking Together in Faith, Hope, and Love.

We cannot begin this report without first praising our God and giving thanks to our pastors, church leaders, and faithful members. Though the church has been challenged, we have seen the Lord working miracles, and we have seen His people step up and overcome. Even during an unpredictable pandemic, the Lord's church in Florida has fulfilled its mission and grown according to His will.

### CHURCH GROWTH

#### FIELD REPORT

The Pastoral Ministries Department supports the ministries of 172 full-time local church pastors and 76 volunteer lay pastors. These faithful leaders minister across the three districts, North, Central, and South, where there are over 300 churches, companies, and mission groups. Each district consists of churches with a unique variety of languages, including 155 English, 98 Spanish, 29 French, 10 Portuguese, three Filipino, three Korean, two Burmese, one Romanian, and one Vietnamese.

## **PASTORAL PLACEMENTS AND TRANSITIONS**

The department continues to fill pastoral vacancies in collaboration with church boards. Great attention is given to matching a pastor's gifts and experiences with the current needs of the church. During the last six years, many pastors have been recruited or transferred within Florida Conference.

## **CHURCH PLANTING**

Working in conjunction with the Volunteer Lay Pastor Field Associate, we continue to support the growth of Florida Conference congregations. Please see the Volunteer Lay Pastor report for more information.

## **SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

### **MEMBERSHIP**

By enabling pastors to nurture their congregations and engage every member in ministry, churches become loving communities. This model has generated congregational growth to 67,000 members.

### **BAPTISMS**

Our churches have seen significant growth in the last five years, evident by the number of baptisms. Since the previous constituency, our current baptism count is 6,646, and our projected count for 2022 is an additional 2,500. Last year, we saw more than 1,000 baptisms in the midst of COVID-19.

### **ORDINATIONS AND COMMISSIONS**

During this quadrennium, the conference has been blessed to acknowledge the calling placed upon 11 pastors and 11 chaplains through ordination and commission. With the collaboration of the Mission and Ministry department of AdventHealth, chaplains are elected for ordination and commissioning.

## **PROCLAMATION**

### **EVANGELISM**

We accept the great commission of Matthew 28 and are committed to providing the necessary tools to facilitate local ministries. Every year churches have the opportunity to request evangelism funds from the conference. Each church is encouraged to apply and participate in this benefit.

### **CAMPAIGN INITIATIVES**

Reclaim and Pivot were statewide initiatives encompassing more than 30 churches. These week-long series take place in areas of projected growth. The Pastoral Ministries Department partners with local churches, offers support, provides essential resources and speakers to serve the church and surrounding communities.

## **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **COACHING**

The coaching program supports pastors in both their

personal and professional growth. Through one-on-one coaching sessions, pastors can explore areas of development and create strategies to successfully attain goals. The coaching program brings "New Life Coaching Skills" to churches throughout the conference. This program was designed to equip local church leadership with core coaching skills founded on a redemptive and relational perspective.

## **PROFESSIONAL GROWTH**

Professional growth is available to all ministers through quarterly and annual meetings, conference retreats, and workshops. Accessibility to opportunities for reflection and valuation is also instrumental in professional development. Ministers are required to complete two continuing education units every year for their professional growth.

Until His Second Coming, we will strive to continually equip our ministers and churches with skills and resources to develop discipleship and evangelism, consequently advancing God's Kingdom.



## **Prayer Ministries**

*led by Ana E. Pérez, Director*

**MISSION:** To spiritually strengthen and support church leaders by nurturing them and providing resources for spiritual growth, member retention, and prayer.

Created after the last constituency meeting, the new Prayer Ministries Department works in conjunction with Women's Ministries and Pastoral Ministries to bring focus to this



important spiritual discipline. We provide training for small groups and prayer leaders in local churches, hold Prayer Summits, and link with other departments to provide support and resources.

From 2017 to 2020, we hosted a Prayer Line in English and Spanish with more than 150 participants a week. Members and friends called to listen to inspirational words about spiritual growth and then shared their prayer requests and praise reports. Now, we encourage each church to have its own weekly prayer line. Information on these prayer lines can be found on the Prayer Ministries page of the Florida Conference website.

In 2018, Prayer Ministries invited three delegates per church for a day-long Prayer Summit. A Prayer Summit was held at the Ambassador church and another at the Forest City Spanish church. In addition to messages from powerful speakers, attendees were given resources on spiritual growth, member retention, and prayer. We had 287 delegates from local churches.

Following the success of our inaugural Prayer Summit, two more were conducted at the Spring Meadows and West Palm Beach Spanish churches in 2019. Our mission was to provide support and resources to delegates from different local churches. We had community service activities for teens and young adults, and all attendees provided a report on the prayer activities they had with their communities.

Since April 2017, employees and visitors of the Florida Conference office have had a place to sit and pray. Every quarter, a dedicated Prayer Room has different themes to motivate employees to pray and give thanks. We also implemented prayer chimes at the Conference office. These chimes ding four times a day for conference employees to stop and pray for their work, their calling, and our constituents.

We began 2020 with many plans and aspirations, and even held another summit in early March at the Avon Park church. However, when the pandemic hit, we had to cancel the Women of Courage Prayer Summit and another event at the West Palm Beach church. Yet, the Lord's work cannot be stopped, and people needed prayer more than ever. On March 15, 2022, we live streamed 22 days of Bible reading and prayer, encouraging our viewers in English and Spanish. We prayed especially for our healthcare and essential workers and those sick and dying from COVID-19. We also held virtual conventions through YouTube and Facebook, reaching thousands of people online.

This year, we plan to host a retreat for Prayer Coordinators in Camp Kulaqua and equip our district Prayer Coordinators to hold prayer meetings in their respective districts. We continue to provide community prayer initiatives and resources to take back to local churches. These ideas are continually updated and can be implemented by everyone, from the youngest to the most experienced members of local prayer teams.



## Prison Ministries

*led by Frank and Maxine Barton, Directors  
and Conrad Duncan, Vice President for General Administration*

**MISSION:** We present the gospel of Jesus Christ, share the love of God, express the meaning of faith, and show the power of prayer to tell all who are incarcerated, their families, and friends that through Jesus Christ we are all redeemable. Our commission is Hebrews 13:3 and Matthew 25:31-36.

Florida Prison Ministries is committed to ensuring that inmates and their families have an opportunity to know Jesus through training, support programs, and materials. Florida Prison Ministries networks with Shelter from the Storm, transitional housing facilities in Gainesville for both men and women. We have an active Spiritual Pen-Pal Program, a monthly newsletter for inmates, and a program called Love a Mother's Baby, or LAMB, for the children of inmates.

Prison Ministries has continued to move forward with 30 training programs helping roughly 1,000 people analyze where they are called in ministry. We continue to support the NAD, Southern Union programs, and other conference requests for training. Each year, we organize a dinner for leaders so they can gain insight and knowledge from each other and rejoice together in praise to the Lord.

This past year has been a heavy one for the Spiritual Pen-Pal Program, in that we had around 300 inmates request someone to write to them. They are hungry for the Word of the Lord and have many questions that can be answered through this program.

Transitional housing, led by Jeffery Cobb, is still in existence and being blessed by the Lord. Jeffery is able to help these ex-offenders get their life back on track.



They have numerous programs in which they have to participate, and he also has several outlets for them to work and earn money for their future. Eileen Krause is our area coordinator for the Central Florida area, our largest Prison Ministries group. Her group is active in visiting prisons, city facilities, and juvenile detention centers. Another leader, Mavis Lawrence, was recognized for her dedication and untiring support to the federal prison in Tallahassee by the leaders of that facility.

We recently conducted research from a sampling of workers. We found that, in just the last couple of years, our volunteers have given 2,329 Bible studies, worked with 2,429 inmates, driven 8,591 miles to these visitations, put in 715 hours, and distributed 1,848 pieces of literature. The numbers would be astronomical if we had information from all our workers.

We seek to continue expanding Prison Ministries within Florida Conference, and beyond, so that there are prison ministries programs in every church in Florida. We have to become united to finish the work before the Lord returns. Our team is also working on a Daddy Cares program, focused on reaching 1,000 inmates per month in ten months. We've purchased 10,000 Bible lessons to begin to share with these inmates. Our greatest goal is to reach every inmate, their families, and friends so they have the opportunity to know Jesus Christ and be saved.



## Property Development

*led by Deann Hawley, Director*

**MISSION:** Assisting churches and schools with property-related needs through collaboration, education, and service.

The Property Development Department is responsible for shepherding our local leaders in developing and maintaining more than 350 churches, 30 schools, one camp, the conference headquarters, and various other properties. Our primary focus is on helping our congregations be good stewards of their property resources. Over the last six years, the department has brought a more technical approach to this work with extensive design and construction expertise. This expertise has been disseminated to the local churches through extensive educational programming and professional review of projects, plans, and contracts.

Beyond the typical array of church projects, the department also undertook significant educational projects. The new North Tampa Christian Academy represents the most ambitious school project Florida Conference has undertaken in decades. Opening this school consisting of six different buildings on a beautiful natural campus, in time for the 2018-2019 school year, capped off many years of planning and implementation. The department also worked to develop preliminary plans and acquire local municipal entitlements to accommodate a new school in Hollywood. Completing the development of a new academy in that region continues to be a top department and conference priority. Several infrastructure upgrades at Forest Lake Academy, including the complete replacement of the campus-wide water supply main system, were completed. We also partnered with Greater Miami Adventist Academy on the rezoning of their property to allow for anticipated expansion.

Further development and refinement of the Owner's Representative program have increased the success rate of local church projects. Making sure our congregations can complete and sustain the projects they undertake has been the primary objective of this program. The massive reduction in the number of stalled and over budget projects, compared to years past, is testimony to the effectiveness of this program. The department's goals for the program include expansion of the options available to our churches in program administration.

The most recent initiative in pursuit of even better stewardship focuses on long-term planning for the ongoing maintenance and improvement budgets required to keep our church and school homes from deteriorating. Education on these issues is already showing positive results. The department aims to bring an even sharper focus on this critical aspect of property ownership going forward.

During the past six years, Property Development assisted Florida Conference entities with processing 52 loans, purchasing 45 properties, selling 49 properties, and completing 42 major construction projects.

Property Development will continue to help churches and schools be good stewards in managing their property resources with services such as:

- Coordinating real property purchases, sales, and major construction projects
- Reviewing financial information and qualifying local entities for SURF and bank loans
- Processing loan applications on behalf of local churches
- Processing individual church requests for special consideration through appropriate committees
- Guidance on and review of local construction, renovation, and maintenance contracts
- Managing real estate tax exemptions and appeals
- Overseeing upkeep, maintenance, and construction on all conference-owned properties
- Monitoring and assisting churches in responding to municipal code violations
- Educating local congregations on issues arising from all areas of property ownership and maintenance.

The Property Development Department's objective is to foster a culture of responsible stewardship of our church and school properties. We want to continue to work hand-in-hand with our churches and schools to assist in their entity's mission and turn their visions into reality.



## Publishing and Health Ministries

*led by Les McCoy, Director*

### Publishing

**MISSION:** Salvation through Christ, one book and one person at a time.

Our purpose is to publish the gospel of Christ and the living truths of His Word. We accomplish this through our literature evangelists selling books that change lives. We have two programs, our Big Book and our Student program. During the past six years, both ministries have made contact with more than 1.5 million people, distributing 300,000 books for a sales total of \$3,238,106. An additional \$350,000 in matching funds from several Adventist universities enabled our students to continue their education.

Our literature evangelists have incredible stories. One actually saved a person's house from burning down. One student canvassed a man in a Walmart parking lot who was planning to take his life, but when he saw that someone cared enough to pray for him, he knew God still loved him, and he changed his mind.

We have also been blessed by 86 baptisms. One memorable baptism was one of our students, Anastasis Sirotinkaia, from our Ft. Myers student program this past summer. Crucely DeLeon and Fabian Dzul, two of our literature evangelists, canvassed a young man named Smerdis Fuentes. They invited him to join their canvassing team, and he did. After the summer program, they invited him to attend our school at Antillean University in Puerto Rico. He did, and there he was baptized. He majored in theology and is now a pastor.

One of our primary goals is to find more ways to integrate our publishing program with the local churches. To accomplish this, we are making plans to hire a student Bible Worker for one of our canvassing teams this summer. We aim to provide churches with ten solid Bible studies by the end of our summer campaign. During this past winter program, we were able to turn over to the Avon Park Church 300 Bible study interests.

To further integrate with our churches, we are planning medical missionary training for our literature evangelists to provide education on our health message. We have two doctors who are willing to provide this training. Our goal is to have our literature evangelists hold ten health seminars this year.

### Health

**MISSION:** Our mission is to exalt the great health principles of the Bible, leading men and women to a better life and closer relationship with God.

Health Ministries often works in partnership with Publishing Ministries by sponsoring health seminars, led by literature evangelists, at churches, schools, and community events.

We assist our members in reaching personal lifestyle goals through programs such as Creation Health, Full Plate Living, Financial Peace, and Reversing Diabetes

seminars. We have seen amazing experiences from these programs. One of the security guards at the Florida Conference office, Patrick Grudzinsky, almost fainted on his round through the building. He visited the doctor and discovered he had diabetes. He went through our Reversing Diabetes class and, as a result, has lost 70 pounds so far and cut his sugar and cholesterol numbers in half. Patrick is so thankful to have his life back and that he listened to God's message of health reform through His church. Another church member was able to bring her blood pressure down from 240/140 to 98/80 in less than a month by following these health principles.

Last year, we launched our first Health and Fitness Retreat, Fit Together, at Camp Kulaqua. In its inaugural year, the event was a resource for our local Health Ministry directors and blessed our more than 150 attendees. The retreat included several informative and inspiring seminars, featured speakers, sports events, and a fitness class. We are organizing the Fit Together retreat again this coming year and look forward to seeing this event grow.



## Risk Management

*led by Rhonda Harper, Director*

**MISSION:** By planning ahead and making safety a priority in all programs, we create a safe environment for people to focus on building their relationship with Jesus and one another.

The Risk Management Department provides services and resources to all our entities and employees. These services include purchasing and managing multiple insurance policies for our operation and entities, health care and benefits for our employees, claims management, loss prevention guidance, a background screening program for volunteers, and safety programs.

At the end of the past six-year period, the conference's property insurance policy covered approximately 780 buildings valued at \$600,000,000. In 2022, our properties will be appraised through an outside company to ensure the insured limits are in line with rising construction costs.

In an effort to help reduce property and liability claims, each entity was asked to have a Safety Officer. Various Safety Officer trainings took place each year to provide the officer with updated resources and information. A safety incentive program was also offered to give a credit to the entities for completing various safety items. Churches were encouraged to participate in a NAD-wide Safety Sabbath sponsored annually by Adventist Risk Management.

The conference endorses the North American Division's use of the Sterling Verified Volunteer background screening program and requires any volunteer at our facilities to complete the program before being allowed to volunteer. To date, more than 11,000 volunteers have completed the training.

Our department's goal is to help minimize the impact of losses to our entities by identifying the risks and using the proper tools to reduce the exposure, keeping us safe and focused on what matters.



## Spanish-language Ministries

*led by Abdiel Del Toro, Vice President of Spanish-language Ministries*

**MISSION:** To prepare mature disciples in Biblical communities for the second coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.



To fulfill our mission, we intentionally establish an annual emphasis that will inspire, equip, and send disciples into the world. For 2022, our emphasis is The Living Church: how to be a community of disciples. Past missions have included Live It: discipleship as a way of life, Share It: service as part of the disciple's life, Multiply: disciples who live, share, and encourage discipleship, and The Gospel: the disciple's gospel.

Our focus on discipleship has yielded growth in membership, tithe, and churches.

## CHURCH STATISTICS

- Our current membership stands at 19,108, representing a 7.47% gain since 2017.
- Tithe in 2021 reached \$15,467,136. Since 2017, there has been a 24.09% gain.
- Our pastoral staff is comprised of 46 full-time pastors and one part-time pastor. We are also blessed with the leadership of 38 lay pastors in Spanish-sponsored churches.
- Spanish-language Ministries serves a total of 118 congregations comprised of 64 churches, 25 companies, 13 Spanish church-sponsored mission groups, four English church-sponsored mission groups, and 12 prospective Spanish and English groups.
- There are 37 districts, 13 of which have been reconfigured between 2017 and 2022.

## CHURCH PLANTING

From 2017 to 2021, we planted 11 new congregations that are currently mission groups, 12 organized companies, and nine organized churches. This year we are on track to establish four additional church plants.

## NEW CHURCH BUILDINGS

God has blessed the Florida Conference with six new church buildings for our Spanish congregations.

## ANNUAL TRAININGS

All the training and evangelism efforts sponsored by Florida Conference Spanish-language Ministries are done with our mission and vision in mind, and they are as follows:

- FIEL - Florida Institute of Evangelism for Laypeople. Its curriculum centers around discipleship, family, and church growth. Since 2017, we have offered four classes at 11 sites throughout Florida, with an average enrollment of 1,000 students. From 2017 to 2021, attendees have received more than 18,500 books and

other class supplies. Between 2020 and 2021, FIEL Institute became digital. The classes presented reached more than 100,000 viewers through social media.

- REAL - Discipleship and Evangelism Convention. At locations like Camp Kulaqua, Orlando, and Miami, an average of 600 church leaders gathered to learn about discipleship and church growth.
- Spanish-language Ministries also provides ten pastoral training sessions every year.

## EVANGELISM

- The IMPACT: Mission to the Cities project has impacted Ft. Myers, Orlando, Broward County, Tampa, Miami, West Palm Beach, Kissimmee, Avon Park, and Poinciana.
- We celebrated the Caravan of Hope evangelism tours between 2017-2021 with more than 70 participating churches.
- Small group evangelism efforts in local congregations averaged 200 groups every year.
- A Day of Hope and Compassion community service event takes place on the second Sabbath in April.
- On a dedicated Sabbath in October when church elders perform baptisms within their local congregations, more than 250 baptisms took place between 2017 and 2019.
- More than 35,000 books and Bible study guides were provided to churches for evangelism.
- Radio programs *"Revelación"* and *"En Familia"* have proclaimed the Gospel in nine stations across Florida. We have seen 20,000 plus downloads from 2018 to 2021 on 36 different digital platforms. These programs are heard in more than 37 countries.
- Spanish-language Ministries staff preached the Gospel and trained and presented seminars in 100% of its Spanish church districts.
- To the Glory of God, between 2017 and 2021, 4,146 precious souls were baptized, and in 2022, we are aiming at a minimum of 500 baptisms.

Our Spanish-language Ministries team also organizes and backs events like Spanish Camp Meeting, Master Guide Convention for Spanish churches, and Children and Family Training. In 2020 and 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic did not stop our church. We broadcasted weekly programming with an evangelistic approach for the Open Church project, with more than 250 hours through different digital platforms, reaching more than 500,000 viewers.



## Stewardship

led by Conrad Duncan, Vice President for General Administration

**MISSION:** To educate, motivate, and encourage every member of Florida Conference to become self-sufficient and faithful stewards.

The Lord has been so good to His people; it's hard not to proclaim it by being good stewards of our time, talents, treasures, and temple. Our department is committed to serving the stewardship-related needs of constituent churches and members. We hosted a conference-wide Stewardship Symposium for local church directors and other leaders, and collaborated with several church-hosted stewardship symposiums.

The Stewardship team also directed an average of 30 weekend revivals per year in local churches and combined districts of churches, emphasizing personal finance management. We also provided stewardship education resource materials to local churches. In collaboration with the Treasury Department, we helped establish and promote new giving apps as options for church members.

In the next quadrennium, one of our goals is to implement the Children's Stewardship Curriculum in Florida Conference schools and Sabbath school divisions. We also aim to conduct more stewardship seminars on personal finance management in our congregations. As always, we continue to provide the latest stewardship resource materials for local pastors and stewardship directors. When we walk together, seeking God in every area of our lives, we strengthen our relationship with Him and each other.



## Volunteer Lay Pastors

led by Walter Castro, Field Associate for Volunteer Lay Pastors

**MISSION:** Mobilizing and equipping lay people to provide consistent and loving care to congregations. Promoting congregational vitality through lay leadership training and providing a means for those who are called to leadership positions to develop their skills for service in different forms of ministry in the church.

The volunteer lay pastor force consists of 76 individuals across the conference who come from all walks of life. Some are nurses, teachers, retirees, psychologists, or contractors, to name a few.

### MENTORING AND COACHING

Through meetings, phone calls, and coaching sessions, Pastoral Ministries leaders help volunteer lay pastors develop their skills by mentoring and caring for them.

### CONTINUED EDUCATION

The department oversees the development and support of continued education among lay pastors. There are two yearly continuing education retreats where seminars are taught in five different areas: spiritual vitality, Biblical exposition, people skills, evangelism, and team building.

### CHURCH PLANTING

Florida Conference follows a process for church planting. The steps include initiation of the local church, establishment and growth of a new congregation to mission group status, then developing into a company, and finally into a member church of Florida Conference. This process is encouraged and has resulted in the development of close to 65 churches in the last six years.

Resources for church planting are made possible from funds from North American Division. The compassion

grant is a yearly opportunity for special projects. In 2019, we received \$90,000 for this effort.

We praise the Lord for our dedicated lay pastors who work fervently for the Lord and the advancement of His church.



## Women's Ministries

*led by Ana E. Pérez, Director*

### MISSION:

**Women Out Ministering to Every Neighborhood.**

We are called to minister to all of God's daughters. We reach out to women of every age through various programs that provide spiritual nurture, education, motivation, and inspiration.

One of the most important aspects of our ministry is healing education accomplished through weekend retreats specifically designed for women who were abused as children or are victims of domestic violence. Our ultimate goal with every activity is to help women experience the love of Jesus, which will enable them to become passionate witnesses of His love to others.

The annual Women's Ministries Retreat brings together more than a thousand women of all ages from churches throughout Florida. A teen track, a young adult track, and a directors' breakfast are provided to meet the needs of every audience. In 2018, we hosted three retreats with a total attendance of 1,865 people. In 2019, 1,660

ladies attended one convention to celebrate the 30th anniversary of Women's Ministries retreats. In 2020, we were able to do two out of the three planned retreats before the COVID-19 pandemic, and 1,220 ladies attended. In 2021, we followed safety precautions and hosted a smaller retreat with 554 people.

### COMMUNITY SERVICE

During our retreats, we begin a community service event that continues throughout the calendar year.

- In 2020 we made 6,000 plus "We Care Kits," including shampoo, soap, feminine products, and a handwritten note of love to be distributed to homeless ladies living in shelters in the state of Florida.
- In 2021, we sent 650 handwritten letters to breast cancer survivors in Florida.
- This year, we began the Blossom Challenge. Ladies were called to develop a relationship with two neighbors, pray for them, perform acts of kindness, and spread the gospel. We provided them with a guide and supplies for the first month.

### BAPTISMS

The Women's Ministries Department is a soul-winning ministry. Since the beginning of the quadrennium, we planned and implemented baptisms in our retreats. In 2017, we baptized 13 precious souls, and 82 the following year. In 2020, from just two retreats, we had 50 baptisms. In 2021, during September's space-limited event, six ladies answered the call and were baptized.

### HOPE FOR HURTING HEARTS (HHH)

In 2018, we conducted three Hope for Hurting Hearts retreats, including the first-ever event for teens, and 48 ladies received hope from the healing process after sexual abuse. In 2019, we raised funds to continue with this educational program, and 35 ladies attended HHH. We strive to proceed with this inspiring program, even after post-pandemic struggles.

### TRAIN THE TRAINER (TTT)

In 2018, we began a certification program for volunteers to become abuse prevention presenters for their local churches and communities. At the first Train the Trainer event, 48 participants from throughout the state earned certification to conduct this training. In 2019, 52 individuals were certified as trainers.

Women's Ministries staff and the wonderful group of volunteers and committee members continue to work toward advancing our mission. We hope to grow participation, and baptisms at our annual retreats and continue training volunteers to be resources for abuse prevention.





## Youth & Young Adult Ministries

*led by Juan Rodriguez, Director*

**MISSION:** Connecting inter-generationally to the transforming power of the Gospel by walking together with our churches to help them love the next generation well through our five core values of relationships, change, leaders, partnership, and community.

God desires to raise up young warriors for His Kingdom who will be filled with the Holy Spirit to share His message of hope. In the Youth & Young Adult Department, God's desire resonates with our vision. It has been a wonderful journey to witness how adults across our state have been willing to partner together with the next generation to fulfill God's greatest potential for their lives through our core values.

### RELATIONSHIPS

- We created Intergenerational Life and Huddle Small Groups throughout our conference that focused on the importance of a relationship with Christ and each other.

Almost 200 youth, young adults, and seasoned adults participated virtually and in person.

- Our Intergenerational Basketball League had 18 teams in our last season before COVID-19. Several were baptized as a result.
- We have hosted 18 digital events, including worships, scavenger hunts, and escape rooms for high school, college students, and young adult singles.
- We created a high school student Bible Retreat with more than 400 in attendance at Camp Kulaqua. We have planned a free College Retreat this year.
- Our team produced 18 regional youth and family rallies with 5,000 plus in attendance throughout our conference. The latest rallies were the Reconnecting rallies in five different cities.

## CHANGE

- Legacy of Hope convocations throughout our conference emphasized the point of keychain leadership and mentoring the next generation. Two thousand plus Growing Young and 1,500 New Kind of Leaders books were distributed at five convocations.
- The Growing Young Adventists emphasis focused on walking together to change the trajectory of some churches from growing old to growing young in leadership and all facets of church life. Fifteen Growing Young summits were held throughout our conference, and continuous coaching was provided for churches.
- Youth culture is dynamic, so we consistently send new resources, studies, statistics, books, etc., to churches and youth leaders so they can empower and equip the next generation.

## LEADERS

- Before COVID-19, we had four discipleship conferences in different regions and two Sabbath School trainings for teachers of teens. Since the pandemic, we have created and continued two opportunities for leadership growth.
- Lead Deeper, digital monthly leadership gatherings for youth pastors and volunteer youth leaders, occur on the first Wednesday of every month. Leaders gather to network and collaborate. They can also benefit from bi-weekly training sessions led by a youth professional within NAD. We are also planning five in-person sessions throughout our state.

## PARTNERSHIP

- We believe churches and leaders are all different. They can create programming unique to their young people, so we partner with them by subsidizing churches that need money for youth evangelism, retreats, socials, outreach, and various activities organized by local leaders and young people. To date, we have sent churches more than \$300,000 in funding for their endeavors.
- Churches that have joined the Growing Young Adventist network create an intimate partnership with Youth and Young Adult Ministries. We help them with continuous coaching through the process of becoming a church that loves the next generation well and mentors them to become leaders today.

- Digital evangelism is a space where young people can thrive. We are creating partnerships with churches and young people interested in diving into this space. Our collaboration has resulted in: Youth Evangelism Catalysts to train and recruit digital missionaries and ten churches and young people ministering via Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, etc. The Love Beyond Tour began with young adults reaching more than 10,000 views on TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube. For more information, go to [lovebeyondtour.com](http://lovebeyondtour.com).

## COMMUNITY

- Global Youth Day is a yearly event that encourages churches to go out and become the sermon by reaching out to their communities, becoming the hands and feet of Jesus. More than 8,000 members have been involved in four Global Youth Day events, one digital. In the Wynwood District of Miami, a wall is still up with a picture painted by Florida Conference young people. This year, we chose five locations to celebrate what young people accomplished doing community outreach in their different communities with a big multi-city simultaneous celebration that same evening.
- Our department created training sessions for churches to promote an environment where doing life together and serving together is not an exception, but the norm. We teach how our churches can be for the community and not against it and include a campaign for churches to revolutionize their relationship with their respective cities and towns.
- We partnered with churches from Immokalee to Tallahassee to organize an annual toy drive for their communities. More than 350 families received multiple toys for each child, blessing 1,000 plus children with \$12,000 worth of toys.

We have a dream to recruit 100 digital missionaries and create a network of Florida Conference leaders doing all kinds of creative evangelism through social media and other meta-world mission fields. We plan to involve at least 50 churches in the next two years in the Growing Young Adventist network to change the trajectory in their churches from growing old to growing young and creating young leaders to help lead together in their respective churches.





**Tim Goff**  
Florida Conference Executive Secretary

## Secretariat's Report

The Scripture books of Numbers, Chronicles, Kings, and even the Gospels reveal the importance of record keeping. The ability of each generation to give testimony of the grace and mercy of God and the subsequent growth of His Church is our privilege. The story of God and His people is therefore handed from generation to generation and is a beautiful testimony of God's goodness. All who put their trust in Christ are part of this amazing story of redemption. Together we live with confidence that our names are written in the "Lamb's Book of Life" (Revelation 3:5).

It is my privilege, along with our conference Membership Clerk, Carmen Rodriguez, and all of our local church clerks, to maintain the membership records of Florida Conference. During the previous quadrennium, plus 2020-2021, 12,073 precious souls became new members of the Florida Conference family through baptism or professions of faith. Additionally, during the same period, the net increase from letters of transfer resulted in 1,376 new members who transferred from other conferences or territories.

### BAPTISMS AND PROFESSIONS OF FAITH

	Baptisms	POF	Total
2016	1,947	722	2,669
2017	1,759	554	2,313
2018	1,849	637	2,486
2019	1,616	431	2,047
2020	865	242	1,107
2021	1,133	318	1,451
<b>Total</b>	<b>9169</b>	<b>2904</b>	<b>12,073</b>

Early in 2019, conference Administration and the Executive Committee observed significant shifts in membership which led to a study to determine what drove membership losses. It was discovered that concerns for insurance were a factor. Additionally, it became apparent that clarity was needed regarding whether a person is "missing" or "not attending." This discussion resulted

in conference Administration appealing to our pastors and church boards to embrace the teaching of Christ and the Church Manual to restore the missing member to fellowship rather than dropping them for non-attendance. Good news: a few churches are reporting the return of members to our congregations as a result. How beautiful it would be if all churches formed ministries of reconciliation where non-attending members would be ministered to and "gently restored" to fellowship. Training is available for this vital ministry which is encouraged by the Apostle who wrote, "...you who are spiritual should restore..." Galatians 6:1.

### LIST OF CHURCH COMPANY ORGANIZATIONS AND DISSOLUTIONS

#### Newly Formed Churches

Altamonte Springs Spanish SDA Church	12/05/2021
Coral Gables Spanish SDA Church	12/02/2021
Lake Wales First Spanish SDA Church	06/08/2021
Jupiter Spanish SDA Church	03/28/2021
Hermon French SDA Church	01/26/2021
El Nuevo Paraiso of Miramar SDA Church	06/02/2020
North Naples SDA Church	12/08/2019
Gethsemane SDA Church	03/17/2019
Temple Adventiste de Deerfield Bch Ch	03/17/2019
Port Saint Lucie Spanish SDA Church	02/12/2018
Philadelphie French SDA Church	01/30/2018
Arise Miami SDA Church	03/30/2017
Nuevo Comienzo en Jesus Spanish SDA Ch	09/25/2016
North Miami Beach Spanish SDA Church	07/26/2016
DeLand Spanish SDA Church	03/29/2016

#### Newly Formed Companies

Green Acres Spanish SDA Company	03/28/2021
Stuart Spanish SDA Company	06/02/2020
Tampa Haitian SDA Company	06/02/2020
Lighthouse Community SDA Company	08/04/2019
Jacksonville Myanmar SDA Company	12/08/2019
Ocala Spanish SDA Co	01/29/2019

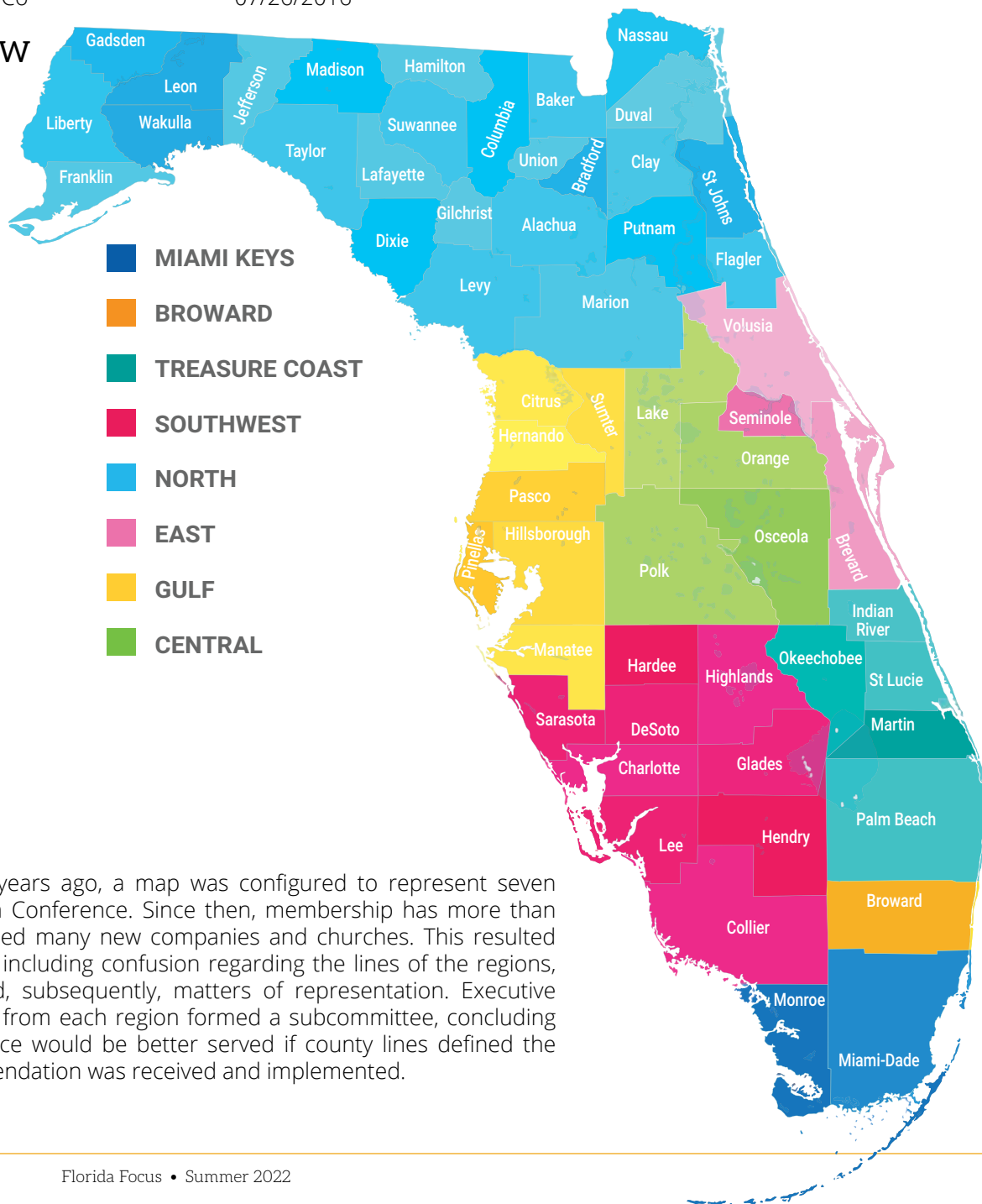


North Naples SDA	12/08/2019
Jacksonville Brazilian SDA Co	12/02/2018
Riverview Spanish SDA Co	03/25/2018
Ocala Haitian SDA Co	12/02/2018
Argyle Forest SDA Co	06/05/2018
Espaco Novo Tempo Orlando SDA Co	03/25/2018
Shekinah French of Palm Bay SDA Co	06/05/2018
Leesburg Spanish SDA Co	08/01/2017
Nerija Spanish SDA Co	08/01/2017
El Nuevo Paraíso of Miramar SDA Co	10/01/2017
Cocoa Spanish SDA Co	08/01/2017
Lake Wales First Spanish SDA Co	03/30/2017
Jennings Lake Spanish SDA Co	08/01/2017
Golgotha French SDA Co	03/29/2016
Tampa Bay Filipino-American SDA Co.	12/04/2016
Gosen Haitian SDA Co.	12/04/2016
Emmanuel French SDA Co	09/25/2016
Smyrne of Miami SDA Co	07/26/2016

## Dissolutions

Simple Church Network (Florida Conf)	12/05/2021
Smyrne of Miami SDA Company	06/02/2020
Englewood SDA Church	10/01/2019
Jasper Spanish SDA Company	10/01/2019
Eben-Ezer French SDA Company	12/08/2019
Fort Myers Shores SDA Church	03/30/2017
Beth Tehillah Vetikva Messianic Cong.	06/04/2017
Morija-Ocoee SDA Company	08/14/2017
Acreage SDA Fellowship (Disbanded)	12/05/2017
South Palm SDA Company	05/22/2016
Interlachen SDA Church	07/26/2016
Fort Myers Brazilian Temple (Mission Gr)	09/06/2016

## MAP OF THE NEW EIGHT REGIONS



Approximately thirty years ago, a map was configured to represent seven regions of the Florida Conference. Since then, membership has more than doubled, and we added many new companies and churches. This resulted in several challenges, including confusion regarding the lines of the regions, church locations, and, subsequently, matters of representation. Executive Committee members from each region formed a subcommittee, concluding that Florida Conference would be better served if county lines defined the regions. The recommendation was received and implemented.

## SERVICES OF THE SECRETARIAT OFFICE

Secretariat is charged with the responsibility to oversee issues involving conference personnel, provide direction and leadership to those maintaining the official records of membership, employee service records, retirement applications, and employee licenses and credentials; and to safeguard the integrity of official minutes for Constituency Meetings, Executive Committee, and the Administrative Committee. The following is a summary of a few services offered by the Office of the Secretariat. Local church clerks and their training through e-Adventist Online Membership: Florida Conference ended the quadrennium with 64% of churches utilizing the North American Division e-Adventist reporting system. We are very grateful for the faithfulness and the hundreds of hours of ministry by our volunteer church clerks. It would be almost impossible for the Conference to maintain accurate membership records without them. Service records: Secretariat is responsible for maintaining service records for each employee. These records are used to qualify employees for retirement purposes. Locally hired workers from churches, schools, and other entities are now classified as employees of Florida Conference, and their service records are therefore processed according

to conference policies and procedures. Additional ministry functions of the Secretariat include Information Technology, Service Center, Human Resources, and Communication departments. Two areas that need greater support and development moving forward are Religious Liberty and Disabilities Ministry. Secretariat continues to develop these vitally important ministries.

Deep and sincere gratitude barely begins to express our thanks to all of you; our God-honoring members, dedicated pastors, office staff, locally hired employees, and volunteers. Through you, and because of your sacrificial love, faithful service, and love for all God's people, we move forward, move outward and upward, seeking and saving those for whom Christ gave all. Thank you for serving so well.

Let us be encouraged in the way God has led us for more than 124 years. We can rest in the confidence that "He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ," Philippians 1:6 NKJV. Therefore, let us submit our lives and plans to the Lord. Only through Him can we accomplish great and mighty things for His honor and glory as we move forward.



Elisa Rahming  
Florida Conference Treasurer

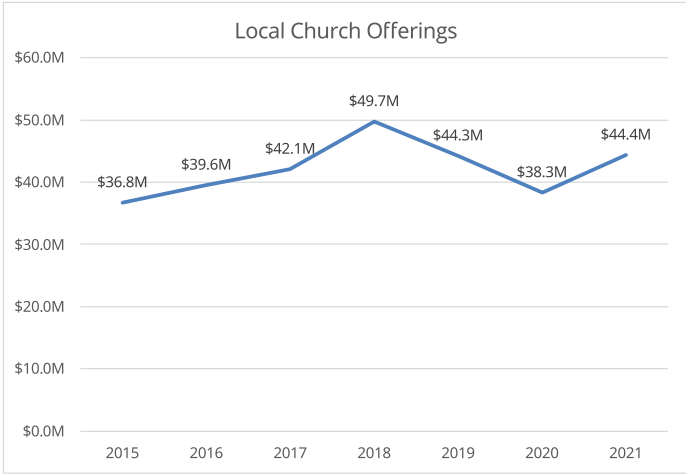
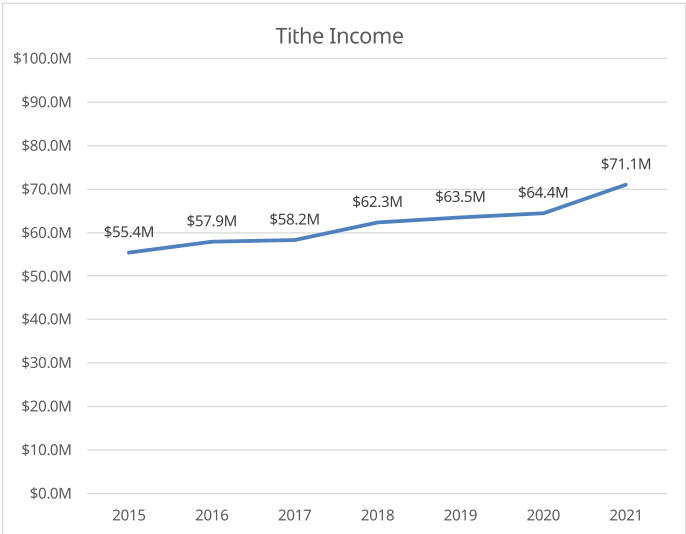
## Treasurer's Report

God has done amazing things in this last quadrennium (2016-2019) and the two years beyond (2020-2021). He has truly blessed us, and we can press on! Also, yes, you are hearing from a "new" Conference Treasurer. Duane Rollins, former Conference Treasurer, retired during this quadrennium, and our Executive Committee appointed me to that role. Duane Rollins paved the way for a firm financial foundation, and I have been blessed to serve in this capacity since January 1, 2018. I have seen God's hand in so many ways. Let me share with you several of those ways.

### TITHE AND LOCAL CHURCH OFFERING GROWTH

We have experienced consistent tithe and local church offering growth throughout Florida. This is amazing, and as a result, we have more pastors in our churches, more educators in our schools, and more fulfillment of the mission throughout our local churches and schools. Approximately 78% of the tithe dollar stays within the Florida Conference, and about 22% goes on up through the entities and into the world church for mission. An increase in tithe dollars means more funds for mission and ministry both here at home and abroad.

We believe that having an online and mobile giving platform in this quadrennium helped facilitate both tithe and local church offering growth. We hope that churches will continue taking advantage of the AdventistGiving platform paid for by the conference, union, and division. As of December 31, 2021, 81% of churches were utilizing AdventistGiving. While we've had the online giving platform for several years, the mobile giving platform was launched in 2018. We saw a year of giving and growth throughout the division, and Florida was no exception. In our pandemic years of 2020 and 2021, we also experienced amazing tithe and local church offering gains. In fact, in December 2021, we ended the year for the first time in a long time with double-digit gains of 10.4%. Amazing! God be praised! See charts below, starting with 2015 as a base year prior to the start of the quadrennium.

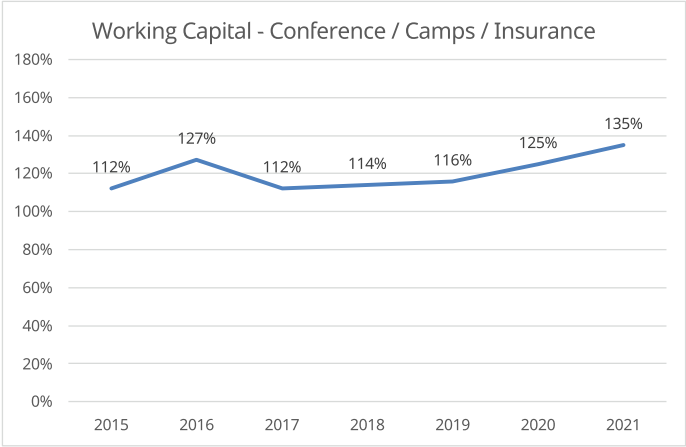
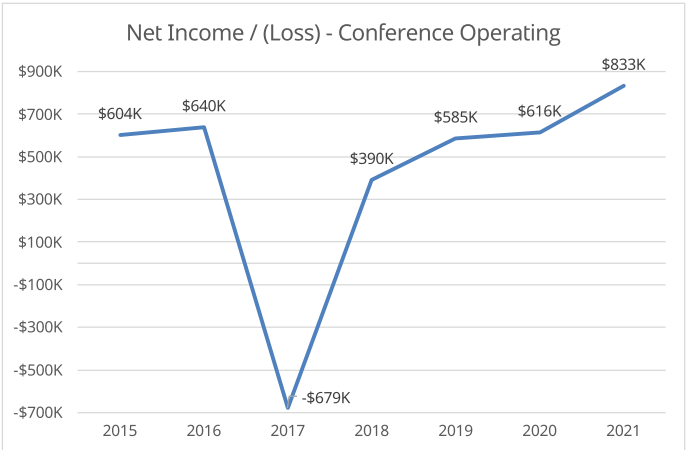


**OPERATIONAL RESULTS**

Early in the quadrennium, we experienced higher-than-budgeted healthcare costs and liability costs and premiums. As a result, we had negative budgets for a few years, with a strategic and timed recovery plan—four years being the most recent in 2018—and regular monitoring throughout the process. Thankfully, we were able to recover after the first year in our most recent plan of 2018 and continue to monitor and take precautions needed

to preserve and improve our firm financial foundation as God directs. In the last year of the quadrennium and beyond, we have been able to budget at break-even and with room for slowly but surely building up our reserves.

As a direct result of our consistent tithe gain in this quadrennium and the two years beyond— along with good cost management and conscientious leadership throughout the conference office from our directors and administrators and measures taken to address climbing healthcare costs— we've had operational bottom-line gains for each year except one. Expenses are trending upward as costs of living, healthcare costs, and other expenses increase. Still, these expenses are appropriately offset by the increase in both tithe and non-tithe contributions. We are experiencing operational bottom-line gains, and working capital continues to be positive and above the requirement. We are still mindful of our monetary constraints and the diligence and stewardship needed as we serve. See charts below.



**FUNDS FOR EVANGELISM**

Near the end of this quadrennium in 2019, we were able to commit an annual total of \$1 million for evangelism to benefit our local churches. We remain firm to this commitment for the future, demonstrated in a 2022 budgeted amount of \$1.4 million. We are also committed to supporting evangelism in our schools through Christian education and other endeavors.



## THE ACADEMIES

We now have a third conference academy, North Tampa Christian Academy (NTCA). Praises be to God. While much has been shared earlier on this amazing accomplishment, I will share how God led us throughout the project from a financial perspective. While much of the groundwork occurred in the prior quadrennium, such as property purchase, permitting, etc., construction began and was completed in this quadrennium. After much prayer, collaboration with AdventHealth, and skilled leadership, the school began in August 2018 with an on-budget enrollment count of 220. In total, more than \$25M has resulted in a state-of-the-art conference school from kindergarten through grade 12, where innovation, a 21st-century curriculum, and learning are key. Their first year resulted in a bottom-line gain, praise God. We continue to work towards the successful operation of this school.

Our other two academies, Forest Lake Academy (FLA) and Greater Miami Adventist Academy (GMAA), continue to operate in the black. FLA became an official day school near the end of this quadrennium by closing the dormitories in the 2018-2019 school year. While some thought this might have a detrimental effect on the operations and enrollment of the school, operations are still going strong. Enrollment for the 2019-2020 school year surpassed the prior year's enrollment with 423 students.

Starting with the 2021-2022 school year and continuing for ten years, Orlando Junior Academy (OJA) is now primarily governed, operated, and subsidized by the Florida Conference in collaboration with any area churches that are financially supportive of their student members. This was an unconventional step to continue the legacy of Christian education as provided by OJA to the Orlando area, and God is blessing.

## FORMER WALGREENS BUILDING PURCHASE

In 2003, we sold undeveloped property contiguous to Forest Lake Academy to the developer of Walgreens for \$1.53M. Fifteen years later, in 2018, we got the opportunity to purchase this now-developed property back for \$1.85M. The building was well maintained and is now the future home of the Innovation Lab, which will provide a STEM environment for hands-on lessons for our students across Florida. What a blessing!

## CHURCH AND SCHOOL TREASURERS

We have held yearly training seminar sessions for church and school treasurers. We know it is important to appropriately equip the leaders in our churches and schools who are handling and stewarding God's funds, and we will continue to do our part. To this end, we broadened our church treasurer bonus program in 2017 to incentivize service with excellence. In this program, an annual bonus of \$500 is given once some of the church treasurer duties that are critical to the financial success of an entity are accomplished. These duties include completing bank reconciliations, regularly reporting to the

board, timeliness of submitting the pass-through tithes and offerings to the conference office, preparing the necessary tax forms for contractors and vendors (1099s), and being current on insurance premiums or working towards a payment plan. We have also been encouraging our churches to assemble Finance Committees that can then aid the church and treasurer in strategic and long-term financial planning and operation. Many of our churches now have Finance Committees, and most of our schools have had Finance Committees for some time now.

In addition to the many blessings and ways we've seen God's hand, we've also seen Him leading in some of our more challenging areas that have given rise to opportunities. Here are a few:

## SOUTHERN UNION REVOLVING FUND (SURF)/BANK LOANS CEILING

Just about every year of the quadrennium, we were bumping dangerously close to the North American Division's debt ceiling policy for our global debt load throughout the sisterhood of churches. We managed to stay within policy every year, but we watched it closely, knowing that one big church or school project could easily take us over the edge. Thankfully, we saw the fruit of adjustments made early on, such as reducing the loan amortization period from 18 years to 15 years, changing the tithe income qualifier from the average of 3 times tithe to 2.5 times tithe, and encouraging churches and schools to pay down as much and as early as possible. In addition, since our debt ceiling is based on conference tithe figures—150% of the three-year average—with the increase in conference tithe comes an increase in our debt ceiling. Thus, for the two years after the quadrennium and into the future, we're not bumping as close to the top of the ceiling anymore. However, it is still something we continue to monitor and watch closely.

## COST OF LIVING SALARY ADJUSTMENTS

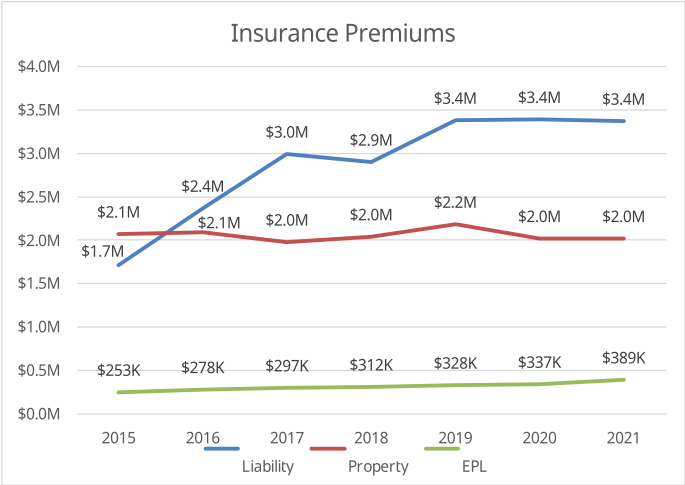
Cost of living allowances for our workers, as enabled by the North American Division policy and based on the Economic Research Institute (ERI) data for each area, is so important. It helps create salary equity among all of our workers, no matter where they live. Each year this is reviewed in conjunction with budget preparation. We started implementing ERI/cost of living allowances for our workers in 2009, and every year we aim to increase the percentage of implementation until we get to 100%. At the beginning of the quadrennium, we were 50% implemented, and at the end of the quadrennium, we were 70% implemented. And now, well into 2022's budget, as of July 1, we are budgeted to be 100% implemented for the first time. We got there, and we're thanking God for the progress over the many years!

## SUING OURSELVES

We have seen an uptick in lawsuits and claims against our sisterhood of churches in this quadrennium. Unfortunately, many of those claims are from within, from

our members. This has increased liability costs, premiums, and deductibles, hence the need for us to build reserves for deductibles. See our chart on insurance premiums.

We now have deductibles for liability insurance, and we've had deductibles for property and employment practices insurance for some time. In addition, we are encouraging our churches, schools, and entities to build reserves for deductibles as the entity where the claim originates will be primarily responsible for the deductible. We are doing our best to navigate this challenge and want you to know that, should incidents occur, we are committed to ensuring that our members are made as financially whole as possible. We want to move away from this phenomenon where we, as church members, are ultimately suing ourselves.



Amidst the blessings and challenges, we press on with our eyes on the prize, with our eyes on Jesus. We know that this is His church, we are His people, and He remains faithful.

As we look to the future, Treasury strives to be the gold standard of a financial platform for ministry throughout Florida Conference, where lives are changed. With a strong and healthy financial platform, ministry can be much more fruitful. Our mission is to build and strengthen the financial foundation throughout Florida Conference, the office, churches, schools, and entities. By God's grace, we will get there.

We are thankful for our leaders in the office and the field. We couldn't have accomplished as much as we have without working together in such a dedicated and committed manner. Thank you for allowing God to use you here in Florida for His glory. By fulfilling His calling on your life, many throughout Florida Conference are eternally blessed.

And we are thankful for you, all of our members of the sisterhood of churches that make up Florida Conference. Thank you for your faithfulness in good Christian stewardship; in giving of your time, talents, and treasures. God is forever faithful to us and delights in our faithfulness to Him. Thank you for walking together with us in this journey as God leads. "Let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart," Galatians 6:9. Praises be to God today and always. Let us press on!

**Legal notice for  
Florida Conference Constituency Meeting**  
October 9, 2022

Notice is hereby given that the 72nd Regular Constituency Meeting of the Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will be held on Sunday, October 9, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. (registration begins at 9:00 a.m.) in the Forest Lake Academy Gymnasium, 500 Education Loop, Apopka, FL 32703. This Constituency Meeting is called for the purpose of electing Officers and Executive Committee members for the ensuing term and the transaction of such business as may properly come before the meeting.

Delegates chosen to the Organizing Committee shall meet at the Regional Orientation and Organization Meetings. All delegates are to attend their Regional Orientation Meeting as well as the Constituency Meeting. The Regional Orientation and Organization Meetings are an official part of the Constituency Meeting process and will be held as indicated adjacent to this notice.

*Allan Machado, President*      *Tim Goff, Executive Secretary*

**Legal notice for  
Florida Conference Constituency Meeting**  
October 9, 2022

The regular meeting of the members of the Florida Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists, a Florida corporation, will be held on Sunday, October 9, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. (registration begins at 9:00 a.m.) in the Forest Lake Academy Gymnasium, 500 Education Loop, Apopka, FL 32703, for the purpose of electing the Association officers and Board of Trustees for the ensuing term and for consideration of such other matters as may properly come before the meeting. Only those members present who are duly elected and accredited delegates of the Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists shall be entitled to vote at their Regional Meeting and at the Constituency Meeting.

All delegates are to attend their Regional Orientation Meeting as well as the Constituency Meeting. The Regional Orientation Meetings are an official part of the regular meeting process and will be held as indicated adjacent to this notice.

*Allan Machado, President*      *Phil Bond, Executive Secretary*

## Florida Conference Regional Orientation and Organization Meetings for the 72nd Regular Florida Conference Constituency Session

**North Region**—July 31—10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Jacksonville Southpoint Church  
3208 Herring Rd., Jacksonville

**East Region**—July 31—4-6 p.m.

Spring Meadows Church  
5783 N Ronald Reagan Blvd., Sanford

**Gulf Region**—August 1—7-9 p.m.

Tampa First Church  
822 W Linebaugh Ave., Tampa

**Central Region**—August 2—7-9 p.m.

Forest City Spanish Church  
7601 Forest City Rd., Orlando

**Miami-Keys Region**—August 7—10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Miami Temple Church  
9175 SW 44th St., Miami

**Broward Region**—August 7—4-6 p.m.

Ambassador Church  
3245 W Oakland Park Blvd., Lauderdale Lakes

**Treasure Coast Region**—August 8—7-9 p.m.

West Palm Beach First Church  
6300 Summit Blvd., West Palm Beach

**South West Region**—August 9—7-9 p.m.

Port Charlotte Church  
2036 Loveland Blvd., Port Charlotte







Seventh-day Adventist Church  
FLORIDA CONFERENCE

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