THE GOOD OLD-FASHIONED WAY TO REACH PEOPLE

BY LES MCCOY

We live in a fast paced, technological world that causes many to ask, “What is the best way to reach people for Jesus and help prepare them for His coming?”

A recent Larry King Live round table discussion featured the topic, Warriors for God. One panelist said that reaching people with the Gospel is “a confrontation done one person at a time, one on one.”

His answer perfectly describes the approach taken by our student literature evangelists. We call it the “good old fashioned way.” Ellen White says, “Let every worker in the Master’s vineyard, study, plan, devise methods, to reach the people where they are.”

—Evangelism pp. 122–123.

Last summer, our students canvassed more than 400,000 homes in Florida. Thousands of books were sold and hundreds of Bible studies given. In addition, more than $200,000 in scholarships went toward students’ Christian education.

Keeping these students on the front lines of evangelism costs money. Right now, we are looking for help to keep them working during the upcoming December 14 through January 11 winter program. Funds are needed for rental vans, gas, food, and book inventory.

Your contributions will make an impact in many ways:

• $1,500 sponsors one van to transport students into neighborhoods.
• $1,000 for food will keep the students nourished.
• $500 will sponsor one student for the entire program.
• Any dollar amount will help our young people share the Gospel.

May God bless our students and your gifts. Thank you for your support to God’s work and for sending your gift, marked “Student Winter Program” to: Florida Conference, 655 N. Wymore Road, Winter Park, FL 32789.
Major Leaguer Signs “Contract” With Florida Conference

By Martin Butler

Félix and Mercy Millán made a major league decision when they asked the Florida Conference Planning Giving and Trust Services department to prepare their last will and testament. The Clermont Church members finalized the legal documents October 2.

Signing important papers isn’t new to Félix. He inked contracts with the Atlanta Braves, the New York Mets, and Japan’s Yokohama Taiyo Whales. During his baseball career, this most valuable player was selected to four all-star teams, won two Gold Glove Awards, played in the World Series, and was the first foreigner to win a batting crown in Japan.

While Félix was in The Big Apple with the Mets, Mercy became an Adventist through the influence of a friend in Puerto Rico. Five years later in Japan, Félix came under conviction to join his family in keeping the Sabbath. After 15 years in the majors, Félix hung up his cleats, but not until many Japanese friends heard the Advent message.

Settling in Florida, the Milláns met with a handful of Spanish believers in Ft. Pierce where Félix and Mercy helped plant the Treasure Coast Spanish Church that thrives today with 227 members. Moving inland, they joined a group of Spanish-speaking members who meet in the Clermont Church. Their vision of another church plant is the shared goal of the growing Spanish congregation.

Churches that would like to receive a Planned Giving and Trust Services department DVD with Félix’ story and others, or host a Planned Giving weekend, may call (407) 644-5000 x251.

Members who would like to learn about a last will and testament, revocable living trusts, unitrusts, gift annuities, depositing money in the Southern Union Revolving Fund (SURF) at 4.5% interest, and other programs may receive free information by calling the same number. Information can also be viewed and downloaded at http://plannedgiving.floridaconference.com/

A Full Week of Camp Meeting 2008

“Inspirational preaching, Bible study, seminars, fellowship, times of prayer, and miracle stories that show how God is working through His people in Florida Conference will be recaptured in the 2008 Camp Meeting experience,” says Florida Conference President Mike Cauley.

Renovated classrooms on the Forest Lake Academy campus will provide fresh surroundings for seminars. Week-long campers who prefer dormitory lodging will enjoy the newly renovated rooms.

This year, the Hope Channel network will carry only the first Sabbath programming of Florida Camp Meeting starting with the 11:00 a.m. service.

To be refreshed and revived by the high experience planned for people of all ages, plan to attend Camp Meeting in person, May 23–31, 2008, on the Forest Lake Academy campus. Watch for details and announcements in your church.
Mike Cauley in the introduction to his sermon that brought Camp Meeting 2007 to a close. Excerpts from his defining message follow:

Ellen White predicted that before Jesus comes, the Church will be brought to a point of finishing the work through young people. “With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Saviour might be carried to all the world!” —Review & Herald, May 16, 1912, p. 5.

We’ve got to find a way to grab hold of the opportunity to make good on God’s promise through Ellen White. We must find a place in this Church for young people in their teens, 20s, and 30s. They need to take the torch.

This same age group was passionate about the adventist movement when it began. J.N. Andrews was 22 when he served on the Publishing Committee. Ellen White was 17 when she had her first vision. Uriah Smith was 21 when he joined the publishing work. James White was 21 when he began to preach the advent doctrine.

Those young kids in the early Adventist Church were so on fire for God. There was a new emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit. God gave the Spirit of Prophecy because it was a manifestation that He was at work. God wanted to reveal precious truth to His people. It was something that ignited the hearts of young people.

Early Adventists wanted to make a difference. They wanted God to change hearts and lives and see people restored out of their brokenness. Their leaders had no recognized formal leadership status. James and Ellen White were just kids.

This was the climate out of which the early Adventist Church was born, and this is what the Church will be when the work is finished. This Church will complete its work by rekindling its passion that came from being a movement where everyone was engaged in the mission.

In the early Adventist movement, Joseph Bates was in his 50s. “Father Bates,” as the young people called him, was like a dad. He was a mentor to them. The Church needs older folks to mentor and love the kids. We older folks need the kids with their energy and enthusiasm.

So, how do we get back to that fervor; that dynamism of being a movement? We have to go after young people. Tap into their zeal.

In many countries around the world today, young people are leading. They’re in the forefront of evangelism. This isn’t the case in North America where the average age of a Seventh-day Adventist is 58 or 59. The average age among the public in the United States is 36. Friends, we are on the verge of a crisis in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In Florida, we have anesthetized ourselves to the reality that we aren’t growing because we’re blessed. We live in a place where folks come to retire and where people from the Islands and from Central and South America have found a good place to live. Praise God for them, but don’t be blind to the fact that we are not doing so well at reaching kids.

Do you realize that a young person who graduates from our academy and walks across the stage to get their diploma has a 50% chance they’ll never be back. We have to do better than that.

Today, there is a growing spiritual hunger in our world that seems even more intense among young people. Millennials, as this group is called, have a different bent than Baby Boomers or GenXers. They prefer rules over rebellion, family over fragmentation, standards and belief in things that count over just letting life go to pot around them. Born somewhere between 1980 and the early 2000s, these 80 million Millennials under age 25 are greater in number than Baby Boomers.

So, what is the message these young people need to hear? What is it we need to do as a Church to get them ready for the coming of Jesus? What is the message that God is calling us to give with a clarion call?
They need to hear that God is a loving God and that they are loved by Him more than they can comprehend. Before Jesus comes, the entire world will be illuminated with a manifestation of this truth about God. Ellen White said, “By the revelation of the attractive loveliness of Christ, by the knowledge of His love expressed to us while we were yet sinners, the stubborn heart is melted and subdued, and the sinner is transformed and becomes a child of heaven.” —Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p. 76. And “...the last message of mercy to be given to this world, is a revelation of His character of love.” —Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 415.

God is calling us to empower our kids to be missionaries to broken people, to people who have holes stuck in all kinds of places in their face, and we wonder, “how in the world did you ever get to that place?” They don’t add up to you and me, but those kids need Jesus. They’re looking for something.

The challenge for Millennials in our Church is to, “Go preach. Go share Jesus with somebody. Go start a Bible study. We’re praying for you, and we’re going to help you love the lost because we don’t know how to do it. We’re looking to you to help us figure that out.”

We have a society of Millennials who are hungry for the gospel. I’m going to ask the Conference Executive Committee to begin church plants that will reach kids under 25. I’m going to ask for help in figuring out how to become churches in the biblical, New Testament sense like those in the early Adventist movement that met in public places and in homes. That was church, and we need to redesign what it means to be a church.

We must take church to the people. I’m tired of talking about buildings. I’m ready to talk about sharing the gospel with somebody in a restaurant. Why not have a bible study at the Waffle House?

People say, “Well, Mike, now that means you’re going to turn everything upside down.” I don’t like to make people upset, but folks, we need to band together to make a difference for the Kingdom. We’ve got to enfranchise Millennials. We have got to bring those kids, not to a place of entertainment, but to be fully committed disciples. We need to give them the Church.

We’ve got to see our kids grow to spiritual maturity. They’re going to make some blunders if we give the Church back to them, but look what happened when God gave the early Adventist Church to a group of teens and 20-year-olds.

Today, we must bring the spirit of the past into the future. Go after young people. Tap into their zeal. Empower them. Raise the standard of what it means to be a Seventh-day Adventist Christian always growing in grace, because being a disciple of Jesus is a school from which you never graduate.

God wants us to understand we have a short time to get ready for Jesus’ second coming but, most of all, to be attentive to sharing the gospel with the millions of people who need to know Him. He wants us to empower our youth and become missionaries with them to the culture in which He has placed us.

Pray with me for the Spirit of God to fill us and help us be willing for God to move in our lives in extraordinary ways. Share the word of God wherever you go, and pray for our army of youth so the message of a crucified, risen, and soon coming Savior might be carried to all the world.
In thirty years of youth ministry here in Florida Conference, I have never heard a sermon preached by an administrator like the one our president delivered this year at Camp Meeting. The following are some reactions and thoughts:

Let me say, the Youth/Young adult department’s vision and mission is “To Empower & Equip” young people in the local church to reach others for Christ. Empower is the vision. Equip is the mission. Empower means ownership. Equip means, among other things, training, resources, and ideas.

It is important to say that I feel all of our youth ministries—children, camp, education, Pathfinders, and youth/young adults—are 100% behind our president and his vision to reach young people.

While there are still too many churches that just want to see young people but not let them be heard, there are churches that defy the national statistics of North America. The average age of some of these churches is no more than 35.

It’s not rocket science to figure out that churches with a younger average age are not stuck in an institutional rut. Church to them is the people themselves. Young people are doing everything. They teach, preach, run the sound system, plan service opportunities, meet at a restaurant for Bible studies, and invite their non-churched friends to join them. They are very relationally driven.

Yes, in some of these churches the music is different, the dress is different, and the preaching style is different. Yet, the one common denominator that ignites them all is the passion and love they have for others. Isn’t that what Jesus said would be the identifying mark of His disciples?

When our president says, “We need to give them the Church,” please understand, that involves ownership. They may change it a little. They may do things a little different.

One of our youth leaders in Florida was called by God to prepare supper for some kids in her neighborhood who were not only disenfranchised by society, but by their own families as well. None of them had direction in their lives. They had never been to any church.

One day God spoke to our youth leader and, now, a year later, all 25 of these young people come to her house on Friday evenings for supper. They are learning about Jesus. They are becoming a family. They are loving each other and learning to be church, in a house.

Throughout Florida, we have Pathfinder leaders who are younger than 20 and Camp workers in their teens who are leading kids to Jesus. Sabbath school leaders and teachers in their teens and twenties are accepting the mantle of leadership. There are young people in our church schools and in public schools who reach out to their classmates.

In fact, the public school system is a huge mission field because 60–70% of our college-age students are in secular universities. I cannot tell you how little money we spend trying to equip, empower, train, and engage them in the mission of the Church. We simply need to do more.

Even so, young people with small amounts of money and large amounts of faith are leading drama ministries, clown ministries, street ministries, homeless ministries, Friday night “apartment” Bible studies, surf ministries, and mission trips to places with no Adventist presence. There are young people preaching, teaching, and fully engaged in the mission of the Church.

How does this happen? Short answer, they are invited and allowed to do so—even trained. In other words, somebody gave them the Church just as our president challenged us to do. To this I say, Hallelujah! Let us start praying now that God leads the way.

Yes, we may be required, as our president suggests, to rethink evangelism or, at the very least, broaden its informationally driven definition to include relationally driven approaches. It will mean more than simply holding meetings or lectures. It will include skateboards, small groups, surfing, the internet, home churches, and many other venues where kids connect.

Remember, Jesus was on the street and in the marketplace far more than in any building. Learning the language of this generation means we have to intentionally “hang out” with them. It may seem at first that their style of worship looks too entertainment-oriented. Some might be tempted to say, “It’s not the way we do it,” or “I don’t like that.”

Please, don’t be too quick to judge. It’s about methodology and not theology. In most cases, these kids are expressing their excitement and joy of the gospel their way. Please, myself included, let’s resist the temptation to criticize. Let us, as our president says, learn their language.

I am excited. I believe, one way or another, God’s prophecy will be fulfilled. He is, at this very moment, raising up an army of youth. They are being trained, and they are moving toward the kingdom.

Let’s help them. Cheer for them. Love them. Join them.
Bruce and Chalbert Murphy invited their friends, Bill and Theo Dell Waters, to attend two series of evangelistic meetings at their church in Greenville, North Carolina. During both series, they gladly drove the 40 miles, five nights a week, so this young couple could hear the gospel story. As a result, the Waters were baptized.

The year was 1947. Bill had returned from World War II to start a new life with his lovely bride. That fall, their son Bill was born. Today, this son and Sunshine, his wife, serve in full-time evangelism for Florida Conference.

“I’m so thankful the Murphys shared the Three Angels’ Messages with my parents,” says Bill. “As a result, Sunshine and I have shared these same precious truths with thousands since 1970. In addition, Mark, our son, is a soul-winning youth pastor, and Wendy Ottati, our daughter, is a fruitful witness in her community.”

The Murphys’ legacy of nurture and support to God’s work continues today in Florida Conference. “Our church members fell in love with the Waters and their cheerful and spiritual approach to soul winning,” says Pastor Schleif. “When we set up a five-year plan for growth in our church, I thought, ‘maybe I should keep driving.’ When the Corvette in front of me turned into the parking lot, I decided, ‘if these people drive Corvettes, they must be okay.’ So, I came on in.”

Jane and Mike Driscoll were among the Bradenton Church’s happiest members when Gertude Renew, Jane’s mother, decided to become a Seventh-day Adventist on profession of faith. For most of her life, Gertrude stood by her husband, John’s, side as he pastored in The Church of God of Prophecy.

Richard Crane, right, a retired Salvation Army evangelist, and Pat, his wife, tell Bill Waters how they came under conviction to be baptized.

Vonna Faulks who also received a brochure in the mail, testified, “On opening night when I saw the Bible Prophecy Made Simple signs in front of the church, I thought, ‘maybe I should keep driving.’ When the Corvette in front of me turned into the parking lot, I decided, ‘if these people drive Corvettes, they must be okay.’ So, I came on in.”

Bruce and Chalbert Murphy, right, influenced Bill and Theo Dell Waters, below, to join the Church in Greenville, North Carolina. Years earlier, Bruce and four of his brothers came into the Adventist Church with their parents as a result of evangelistic meetings held in Wilson, North Carolina, by Carlyle B. Haynes.

“Evangelism is the best investment any person or church organization can make,” they testify. “Only heaven will reveal the final results.” One meeting that stands out ended August 25 in the Bradenton Church. Here, they were inspired by the tireless efforts of Pastor Brad Schleif and Sheryl, his wife, who had worked with the Waters 30 years ago in a series of meetings in Mason City, Iowa.

“It is clear the Lord was working in our church, and we are elated,” Brad testified before sharing the story of Richard and Pat Crane who received a brochure in the mail and were among those baptized.

Richard, a retired pastor/evangelist for 20 years with the Salvation Army who baptized more than 1,000 people in his career, said, “Now that I know about the Sabbath, I wish I could go back and start over.”

Bill and Sunshine Waters’ Bible Prophecy Made Simple series in the Bradenton Church resulted in nearly 50 new members. “These are the friendliest Christians we’ve ever met,” testified Garry Smith II after he was baptized with Rachel, his wife, and their son, Garry III.
Fiscal year 2006 marked the second consecutive positive year for the Florida Conference as it relates to financial operations. We hope this summary helps you better understand how your tithes and offerings are being managed, and we thank you for your interest in your conference’s finances.

How was 2006 for the Conference as it relates to finances?

2006 was a good year for Florida Conference. For the second year in a row, the Conference experienced a gain from its regular operations, after experiencing operating losses the previous five years. For the first time in several years, the Conference was operating in 2006 with a completely balanced budget. We ended 2006 with an operating gain of approximately $4 million.

Gain/Loss from Regular Operations

What are the key factors that contributed to the positive operations for 2006?

Tithe: The Conference experienced a modest tithe gain of 2.6% in 2006 over 2005. This tithe increase benefited operations by approximately $800,000 as compared to the budget and helped allow the Conference to end the year with a positive bottom line.

Health Care Costs: Savings in health care costs totaling more than $1.3 million were a primary factor in the positive operations for 2006. This represented more than a 20% decrease in health care costs. These savings were, at least in part, the result of a new contract with Blue Cross and Blue Shield entered into by the North American Division that allows greater discounts for medical services.

Trust and Will Maturities: The Conference operations benefited from more than $500,000 in unrestricted maturities for various ministries of the Conference. It should be noted that it is our Conference practice to distribute 20% of all unrestricted maturities to the church from which the gift originated if the church was not otherwise remembered by the donor. These distributions amounted to $48,000 in 2006. This is in addition to more than $367,000 that was received by churches and other Florida Conference entities through specific trust and will maturity gifts during the year.

Conference Departments: The departmental directors continue to do a wonderful job administering their operating budgets. The overall programming costs for Conference operations came in under budget once again.

What is the operating debt situation for the Conference?

As reported in previous years, between December 2003 and mid-2004, the Conference borrowed $9 million to fund operating shortfalls. As of 2006 year end, the balance owed was $3.7 million. This represents having paid more than $3 million toward the 2006 year end balance of $6.8 million. We continue seeking ways to eliminate this debt as quickly as possible.

How are Conference reserves?

Conference operating reserves have steadily increased over the past five years. At year end 2002, reserves were almost at $0. They now stand at 87% of the amount recommended for Conferences in the North American Division working policy.

It is important that the Conference continue to move toward the 100% level to provide the financial stability to face the ebbs and flows inherent in today’s economic environment.

What does the 2007 budget look like?

Florida Conference is operating with a fully balanced budget for the second consecutive year. This means that the 2007 budget is balanced based on a tithe income equal to the amount received in 2006, in harmony with North American Division policy. Unfortunately, due to the lower tithe increase in 2006, we were unable to incorporate any more of
impossible to balance the 2008 operating budget without significant adjustments to operations.

2. Cost of living salary adjustments. In 2006, the Conference took the first small step in implementing the cost of living adjustments in accordance with the denominational salary plan. Even so, we are still well behind in this area compared to where we need to be. Florida has experienced tremendous increases in housing, real estate tax, and insurance costs during the past several years. It is important that we continue actively addressing this issue in the coming years in order to attract and retain good employees and to allow our employees to adequately manage their financial obligations.

3. Debt reduction. One of the primary financial goals of Conference leadership is to completely liquidate the operating debt incurred in 2003 and 2004 as quickly as possible. We have made significant progress in the past two years to reduce this balance. This is being accomplished primarily through the sale of properties that are not integral to Conference operations and by using some of the funds received from operations. The elimination of this debt will help improve the Conference’s cash flow and will free up additional funds for various ministry and staffing needs.

4. Operations of related entities. A high priority of the treasury department continues to be monitoring the operations of our related entities. We are interested in seeing all of our churches, elementary schools, academies, and other organizations functioning well financially, both for the success of their ministries and mission, as well as for the overall financial stability of the Church body as a whole. We recognize that property insurance premium increases have placed a strain on many local entities’ budgets. We are doing all we can to keep these costs as low as possible. It is vital that each entity stay current with all of its accounts and remittances to the Conference to ensure the health of the entire system.

5. Assisting churches purchase land and buildings. One of the issues that continues to take much of our administrative time and energy is addressing many of our congregations’ desire to possess their own church home. This has become increasingly difficult for many congregations due to the high cost of real estate in Florida. How to deal with this issue within denominational policies and in a manner that does not put the church in financial jeopardy is a major challenge. We must continue to research creative and financially responsible ways that can strategically address this growing problem.

What financial challenges still face the Conference during 2007 and beyond?

The Lord has blessed in many miraculous ways in the past several years as we have sought to address the Conference’s financial challenges. Even so, there are still some significant challenges that we continue to work on as we look to the future.

Following are the most urgent financial issues with which we will continue to wrestle during the next few years:

1. Minimal tithe increases. The Conference is currently facing a significant challenge in the area of tithe income. The 2.6% tithe increase in 2006 was not enough to keep pace with the inflationary increases in expenses. So far in 2007 (through August), the year-to-date tithe for the Conference is just under the 2006 level at this same point in the year. If the tithe were to stay flat during the last half of the year, it will be nearly impossible to balance the 2008 operating budget without significant adjustments to operations.

I wish to thank you, our constituents, for your faithfulness to our Lord, Jesus Christ, and His church. It is only as God works through you in your dedicated efforts and financial support that His body advances in the mission He has given it.

I also thank you for your prayers for all aspects of the Lord’s work, including the Conference operations. These prayers are much needed and appreciated. We regularly pray for the churches and members around the Conference.

Finally, it is important that we acknowledge God’s hand in leading us to this point. There clearly are challenges before us, and we currently do not have solutions for all of the obstacles that are in our path. It is now, more than ever, that we must recognize how God has led us in the past and place our complete trust in our Lord that He is able to continue leading us in the road ahead.

I am reminded of the beautiful picture we are given in Revelation 1 of Jesus standing in the midst of His churches, ever ready to attend to the needs of His people when they call on Him. What a comfort it is to know that Jesus is always with us, and He has promised to never leave or forsake us. Knowing this, we can move confidently forward together, proclaiming, “If God is for us, who can be against us?”
In a dusty market square on a small hastily built stage in Itumbe, Kenya, Bob Halstead opened his Bible and began to preach to an audience that numbered in the thousands. At the conclusion of 18 meetings, more than 500 people were baptized.

Any experienced evangelist would be thrilled with this large number; yet Bob, at 65, was preaching for the first time in his life. In fact, only two years before, this former United States government executive was not even a Christian.

Born in Fitchburg, Massachusetts, Bob spent most of his growing up years in Maryland and the District of Columbia. He excelled in school and in his work for the federal government.

In 1965, he married Edna Becker (better known to her friends as Sue) who was raised in a Seventh-day Adventist family and attended church schools. Even with an Adventist background, Sue became a woman of the world as she pursued her nursing career and later her own plant business.

In 1975, Sue became a Christian and knew that she must come home to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This decision started 20 years of persecution from Bob and 20 years of Sue praying for her husband while claiming the promise in 1 Corinthians 7:13, 16; “And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. …For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband?”

Reflecting on that period of time, Bob says, “I was a real jerk.”

Although Bob always felt that he was lacking something in his life, he did not feel it was Seventh-day Adventism. On the Sabbath, he planned everything he could think of to do such as golfing, hunting, and antiquing.

His Damascus road experience began with the sudden death of his mother. The night she died, Bob told Sue he needed to pray and asked her to pray with him. Later, he would watch Dwight Nelson’s message on the state of the dead.

By now, Sue was attending church about 30 miles away when Robert and Anita Folkenberg moved into their small community. Desiring to plant a new congregation, twelve people formed a nucleus and began looking for a place to worship. Bob, though still not a Seventh-day Adventist, wondered why he wasn’t asked to attend a planning meeting, so Sue let him come along. He sat against a wall and listened. When a discussion began about where to meet, suddenly Bob heard himself saying, “You can meet at our home.” He and Sue were both amazed at this dramatic turn of events.

Fridays found Bob moving furniture in the house to get ready for church. He found it difficult not to attend church when it was meeting in his own house. Soon, he was given the job of greeter and began welcoming people to church and parking their cars.

One visitor to the little company was a former pastor who had returned to the area. He took Bob under
his wing and began a small Bible study group with two other people in attendance.

“Idon’t believe that. Why are you doing it this way?” questioned Bob. Finally, the Lord impressed Bob that it was time to give his heart to Him.

One Sabbath afternoon, Robert Folkenberg, the director of ShareHim®, visited Bob and invited him to go on an evangelistic trip to Cuba. Bob just looked at him in amazement. The acceptance he felt in that request has remained with him. He was baptized on December 1, 2001. On January 6, he was in Cuba where he took pictures, watched several lay people pray, and thought to himself, “if I learn more, I can do this.”

Back at home, Bob helped to plant a church and was comfortable in his retirement when Robert Folkenberg said, “Okay, you’re going to work. You’re going to go and hold a campaign.” Bob picked a site in Kenya for next year’s trip but, a month before leaving, Sue was bitten by something and had blisters all over her body. Bob developed a respiratory problem that three different antibiotics wouldn’t kill. Working on a fourth prescription and a temperature of 102 degrees, they boarded the plane for Africa.

Later, on that little stage in Itumbe, Kenya, Sue thought of the miracle that had brought her persecuting husband to become a Seventh-day Adventist and now a preacher to thousands. As hundreds were baptized, she remembered hearing from the people of Itumbe about another miracle. Adventism had not made many inroads into the area prior to this evangelistic campaign. Then Sue realized why she and her husband had been afflicted with illnesses when they were trying to come to Kenya, but thankfully the Lord had prevailed.

Bob recently completed serving one year as lay pastor of the church in Homosassa, Florida. He has gone on numerous campaigns for ShareHim, and now serves as a coordinator for ShareHim overseas campaigns.

“It took me a long time to accept Jesus,” says Bob, but I want to be in Heaven on that great day, and take as many people with me as I can.”

* ShareHim is an evangelistic ministry sponsored by the Caro-

lina Conference that prepares and empowers lay members to preach around the world.

If your spouse is an unbeliever:
- Never give up.
- Don’t force the issues.
- Pray without ceasing.
- Find a church-related job for them.
- Accept them where they are.

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Festival de Otoño (Fall Festival) has gained a reputation during the past five years as one of the premier free music events in central Florida. This year’s November 10 celebration features guest artists Steve Green, Rudy Micelli, Beloved, and Advent Brass.

Created by the sons of two Argentinian Adventist pastors, Festival de Otoño takes an intentional approach to evangelism that proclaims the message of God’s love through music. Roly Rodríguez, general producer of the annual video streamed concert, says, “we have literally seen God transform hearts around the world.”

This year’s program is the first to feature music in both English and Spanish. Performers include well-known contemporary singer/song-writer Steve Green who was raised in Argentina by missionary parents. His 23 recordings in both English and Spanish have touched the lives of millions.

Festival de Otoño originated in 2003 at the Orlando Spanish Church where the event was held the first two years. Bursting attendance caused its relocation in 2005 to First Presbyterian Church of Orlando. Even greater numbers prompted a move in 2006 to The Life Center Church with a seating capacity of 1,800.

“We invite our Florida Conference church family to join us at the same location for this year’s fifth anniversary celebration of praise to God through music,” says Ronnie Karpiuk, executive producer of Festival de Otoño.