

WOMEN'S RETREAT 2026

EXPERIENCING



E L E V A T I O N

JANUARY 30 - FEBRUARY 1, 2026



Seventh-day Adventist Church
FLORIDA CONFERENCE

WOMEN'S
MINISTRIES

Welcome



A great big ALOOOOOHA and island greetings to you, my sisters in Christ! Welcome to the 2026 Women's Retreat, *Experiencing God in our Elevation*!

It was such a blessing to spend time with you in 2025, not only at our English and Spanish retreats, but throughout the year at our one-day retreats here at Camp Kulaqua, Orlando (twice), and Miami. Our sub-theme for the year, *Embracing God in our Storm*, had us exploring our journey with God as we navigated the storms in our lives. It was such a comfort to learn that we had sisters who were there to take our hands and walk the path with us. We also had a blast chasing each other and popping balloons, while trying to "protect our peace" (you had to be there to understand)!

With all the fun we've had, this weekend has been looked forward to with much anticipation! While the air outside is a little colder than we expected (okay, much colder), I know that the fellowship that comes with sisterhood will warm us, and the fire of His love will envelop us from the inside out!

Much has happened to my family and me since we last saw one another. One of the most heart-wrenching news to share is that I lost my mother last April; she was my mentor, my prayer warrior, and my best friend. Though I miss her with all my heart, I am comforted to know that she lived a full life of service in Christ and that we will be reunited in the earth made new! In other news, my husband Armando has had quite a year! He has had amputation after amputation (he is now a bilateral amputee), has coded twice, has been on a ventilator several times, has had a tracheostomy procedure . . . the list goes on. My husband has stared death in the face more than once . . . but GOD! My sisters, BUT GOD! BECAUSE OF GOD, and GOD ALONE, my husband is still with us today! The list of miracles could fill a book or two (yes, it's coming soon), and my tears could fill oceans, but my praise will continue to come forth! If you want to know more about our story, join us tomorrow afternoon for General Session III in the King Chapel, before the anointing service. Let me tell you that God has been my Constant, my Rock, my Shield, my Fortress, my Redeemer, my Tear Wiper, my Deliverer, my Hope Giver, my Everything!!!

My family has survived because we have been in the depths of three words, the three words that you will hear this weekend: *Surrender, Becoming, and Elevation*. When you Surrender to the One who created you, He will shape you to Become the you He saw before time began, and He will Elevate you to become the bearer of His testimony to all around you! I pray that this weekend will allow you to Surrender your burdens to His care, to Become like clay to be molded for His glory, and to experience Elevation in His divine purpose for you!

On behalf of the Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and the Women's Ministries Executive Team, thank you for choosing to join us this weekend. We have prayed for you, and you were meant to be here, "for such a time as this."



Jennifer Hernandez

*Women's Ministries Director
Florida Conference*



Program



Friday

2:00 – 8:00 PM	Registration Gym Rooms 1 & 2
5:30 – 6:30 PM	Dinner: Retreat Attendees Cafeteria
7:00 – 9:00 PM	General Session I Gym Praise & Worship - Endless Praise Worship Team Offering - La Verne Tavarez Testimony of Surrender: Yanira Palomo A Time of Surrender: Hadassah The Message - Pat Dion Walden - "Taken, But Not Forsaken" Theme Song - Endless Praise Worship Team Appeal - Pastor Jennifer Hernandez

Sabbath Morning

7:00 – 7:45 AM	Morning Devotional - Rachelle Wetmore King Chapel
8:00 – 8:45 AM	Breakfast: Retreat Attendees Cafeteria Breakfast: Women's Ministries Leaders & Pastor's Spouses Spring Chapel
9:00 – 9:30 AM	Morning Seminar Session I <i>Elevation in Health</i> : Yanely Jimenez Castellon Cafeteria <i>Elevation in Prayer & Spirituality</i> : Julie Cassell Gym Room 1 <i>Elevation in Identity & Self-Worth</i> : Edlyn Rahming Gym Room 2 <i>Elevation in Strength, Clarity & Connection</i> : Jen Sagadraca King Chapel <i>Elevation in Leadership</i> : Myrna Callison Spring Chapel
9:40 – 10:10 AM	Morning Seminar Session II <i>Same as Session I</i>
10:20 – 10:50 AM	Morning Seminar Session III <i>Same as Sessions I and II</i>
9:00 – 10:50 AM	<i>A Princess with Purpose Part I</i> - Jaleesa Sainvil Cypress Seminar Room <i>*Part 1 and Part 2 seminars cater only to our young ladies, ages 12-18 years old.</i> *
11:00 AM – 1:00 PM	General Session II Gym Praise & Worship - Endless Praise Worship Team Offering - Pastor Elisa Rahming Testimony of Becoming: Imelda Sheffield Figueroa A Time of Becoming - Esther The Message - Pat Dion Walden - "The Cost of Becoming" Theme Song - Endless Praise Worship Appeal: Pastor Jennifer Hernandez
1:00 – 2:00 PM	Lunch: Retreat Attendees Cafeteria



Program

Sabbath Afternoon

2:00 – 3:30 PM	<i>A Princess with Purpose Part II</i> - Jaleesa Sainvil Cypress Seminar Room <i>*Part 1 and Part 2 seminars cater only to our young ladies, ages 12-18 years old. *</i>
2:30 – 3:15 PM	Zoo is Open for Visitors
3:30 – 4:30 PM	General Session III King Chapel
4:30 – 5:30 PM	Anointing Service

Saturday Evening

7:00 – 8:00 PM	Banquet Gym
8:00 – 9:30 PM	International Talent Show

Sunday Morning

7:00 – 7:45 AM	Morning Devotional - Rachelle Wetmore King Chapel
8:00 – 10:00 AM	General Session IV Gym Praise & Worship - Endless Praise Worship Team Testimony of Elevation: Cathiana Brantley A Time of Elevation: Queen Esther The Message - Pat Dion Walden - "The Door God Opens" Theme Song - Endless Praise Worship Team Communion: Pastor Jennifer Hernandez & Pastor Michelle Aleman
10:00 – 11:00 AM	Baptism
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Brunch Cafeteria
	See you next year!

Please visit our prayer room in the A Frame any time during the retreat. The prayer room is a dedicated place to pray, worship, and connect with God.

Speakers



Pat Dion Walden | Keynote Speaker

Pat Walden, affectionately known as Dion, is a passionate woman of God and a Kingdom Difference Maker. She serves as an Elder at the Plantation Seventh-day Adventist Church in Plantation, Florida, and is the Founder and CEO of PDW Coaching and Consulting, where she equips individuals and leaders to walk boldly in purpose. Pat is also a John Maxwell Certified Leadership Coach, a sought-after speaker, and the author of the upcoming book, *unVAULTED: The Story. The Fire. The Sound*. With more than 25 years of corporate leadership experience, primarily in the pharmaceutical industry, Pat brings a unique blend of spiritual insight and professional acumen to every platform. Her life's mission is to lead, teach, and empower people to discover and maximize their God-ordained purpose and potential. Whether in a boardroom, sanctuary, or coaching session, her voice helps others step into alignment with who they were created to be. She is married to Joseph Walden, and together they have one son. They also joyfully sponsor four beautiful girls in Africa: Rehema (12) in Tanzania, Chaltu (11) in Ethiopia, Maria (11) in Uganda, and Sena (9) in Ethiopia. Investing in the next generation, especially the lives of young girls, is one of their greatest joys. Pat holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a concentration in Banking and Finance, and an MBA from Nova Southeastern University.



Rachelle Wetmore | Morning Devotional Speaker

Rachelle Wetmore was born and raised in Northern California. She and her husband Ken, along with their two children, have served in ministry in various capacities for their entire adult life. She has always valued having a relationship with Jesus and sharing God's heart with others. Rachelle believes that establishing healthy, connected relationships with God, family, and community is key to living a happy and fulfilling life.

Deeply inspired by the late Mr. Fred Rogers, she strives to stay present, really listen to people, and love them just the way they are, valuing each person's perspective and individual journey. Rachelle graduated from Southern Adventist University with a B.A. in Psychology with licensure to teach K-8 and earned an M.A. in Early Childhood Education from Northern Arizona University. With a background in education, Rachelle brings a unique perspective to working with children and families in ministry, bridging the gap between faith and everyday challenges. When not immersed in ministry, Rachelle enjoys being in nature, listening to music, kayaking, and spending time with her family. She is also an animal lover who adores her two cats and one very friendly dog.



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ABC Hours

Friday	10:00 AM - 5:30 PM
Saturday Night	6:30 PM - 10:00 PM
Sunday	10:00 AM – 3:00 PM



Seminars



Audrey Watson-Payne

Women's Ministries Leaders & Pastoral Spouses' Breakfast

Audrey Watson-Payne was born in Jamaica and later moved to New York City with her parents Kenneth and Daphne Binns and sister Karen. After completing high school in Silver Spring, MD, she joined the U.S. Army as a Cartographer and served for 20 years, retiring with distinction. While stationed at Fort Hood, TX, she met her husband, Bill; they recently celebrated 35 years of marriage. They have one daughter, Keanna Andrews, a fourth-grade teacher in Houston, TX, married to Randell, a chef and biomedical engineer. Audrey has lived in Germany, Texas, Hawaii (twice), Michigan, Colorado, and Maryland. She holds an associate degree in Administrative Office Systems and a bachelor's in Community Service. Currently, she works in the Retirement Benefits Department at the North American Division. Her hobbies include ironing, crocheting, crafting, enjoying the beach and hearing the waves. Her favorite scripture is Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."



Jaleesa Sainvil

A Princess with Purpose - Ages 12-18

Jaleesa Sainvil is a licensed mental health therapist who is passionate about helping young women grow emotionally, spiritually, and relationally. She believes that healing begins when we feel seen, heard, and supported. Jaleesa has spent many years walking alongside individuals and families through some of life's most difficult seasons. Her heart is especially drawn to supporting women and teens as they navigate identity, relationships, family dynamics, and emotional struggles. She is married to her best friend and ministry partner, Pastor Budry Sainvil and is the proud mother of two children, Jaielle and John. Jaleesa deeply enjoys using both her professional training and her personal life experience to create safe, uplifting spaces where girls can discover their worth, build resilience, and step confidently into God's purpose for their lives.



Yanely Jimenez Castellon

Elevation in Health | Cafeteria 1

Yanely Jimenez has dedicated her life to serving Christ through ministry and leadership. Raised in an active Adventist family, she has devoted more than 20 years to nurturing faith in children, youth, and families. She has served in multiple leadership roles, including as director of youth, Vacation Bible School, children's evangelism, and children's ministries, before being called to serve at Florida Conference in 2022. In her role as Associate Director of Family Ministries, Yanely focuses on equipping and supporting local churches across Florida. She is committed to empowering churches with the tools, vision, and confidence they need to make a lasting impact in their communities. Before entering full-time conference ministry, Yanely worked in finance until she felt God's calling to homeschool her children. Her years as a stay-at-home mom included family adventures and shaped her heart for family ministry. Yanely holds a bachelor's in Business Administration from the University of Central Florida. Above all, she treasures time with her family and finds her greatest joy in serving God and others.



Julie Cassell

Elevation in Prayer & Spirituality | Gym Room 1

Julie Cassell is a middle school Bible teacher at Forest Lake Education Center. She is married to Pastor Brad Cassell, and together they are blessed with three adult sons and two daughters-in-law. Julie is a Georgia native and holds a bachelor's in English Literature with a minor in Religion and a master's in Religious Education. The Cassell family has served in local churches across the Pennsylvania, Georgia Cumberland, and Florida Conferences. With more than 30 years of ministry experience, Julie has served in adult, women's, children's, and family ministries, including as Children's Ministries Director for the Pennsylvania Conference and as a contributor to NAD committees. She speaks and writes regularly, sharing her passion for God's Word with all ages. Known for a warm, creative classroom environment, Julie is especially passionate about helping others grow in their relationship with Jesus and love for Scripture. She also leads a vibrant social media ministry focused on artistic Bible journaling and creative faith practices. In her free time, she enjoys music, cooking, reading, journaling, and art.



Edlyn Rahming, CPA

Elevation in Identity & Self-Worth | Gym Room 2

Edlyn Shavon Rahming was born in Nassau, Bahamas, and is a faith-centered speaker, author, and personal life coach. She is the founder of Empowered Woman of Worth, LLC, where she empowers women to heal, reconnect with their identity, and embrace their God-given worth. In 2008, Edlyn founded Elite Financial & Consulting Services, LLC, where she provides auditing, accounting, business financial consulting, and tax preparation services. While she brings nearly 30 years of professional experience as a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), her true passion has always been helping others to recognize their value through God's unconditional love. Early in her adulthood, she recognized her God-given passion and calling to encourage, inspire, and uplift others. In 2007, Edlyn established the Ministry of Inspiration, through which she shares daily prayers, devotional messages, and Bible texts that continue to bless many. Her favorite scripture, Ephesians 3:20, reflects her deep belief in God to do exceedingly and abundantly above all that we can ask or imagine. Edlyn is the author of the book, *Embracing Your Self-Worth*, scheduled for release in Spring 2026. This book invites readers on a journey to create a healthier and happier relationship with themselves and others, rooted in faith, healing, and personal growth. She is currently pursuing her Master Life Coach Certification. Edlyn is the proud mother of her son, Shiloh, and resides in Orlando, Florida.



Jennifer Sagadraca, MHASI, RN

Elevation in Strength, Clarity & Connection | King Chapel

Jen Sagadraca is a healthcare and technology leader with more than 17 years of experience in clinical care, informatics, analytics, product strategy, and large-scale performance improvement. She began her career as a cardiovascular step-down nurse at AdventHealth and later moved into roles bridging clinical expertise with data-driven transformation, partnering with physicians and operational leaders to improve outcomes, efficiency, and care consistency across complex health systems. Jen holds a master's degree in Healthcare Administration with a focus on strategy and innovation. She established the Clinical Value Transformation Program at AdventHealth, first in Central Florida and later at the corporate level, aligning clinicians, analytics, and operations around high-quality, patient-centered care. She currently serves as Vice President of Product Strategy and Operations at Vizient, where she partners with product, data science, and technology leaders to clarify strategy, define outcomes, and build operating models that connect strategy to execution. In addition to her executive role, Jen is a certified instructor in the Women Empowered program through Gracie Jiu-Jitsu, teaching practical women's self-defense rooted in awareness, boundaries, and leverage. Whether in a boardroom or on the mat, she is committed to helping women build confidence, agency, and clarity under pressure.



Myrna Callison, PhD

Elevation in Leadership | Spring Chapel

Myrna Callison was born and raised in Hawaii and is the daughter of immigrant parents from the Philippines. She is the youngest of three children: an older brother, Remy, who resides in Tennessee, and an older sister, Melinda, who resides in South Carolina. Growing up, she watched her parents live out her love for God through service, ministry and hospitality. It was her parent's examples that led her to develop and grow and lead with respect, kindness and patience. After high school, she earned a Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy from Loma Linda University, a Master of Arts degree in Organizational Management from the University of Phoenix, and a PhD in Industrial and Systems Engineering from Virginia Tech. Her combination of occupational therapy experience and engineering provided her with a unique perspective on injury prevention and product design. Myrna also served in the United States Army for 25 years and retired as a Colonel in 2015. During her career in the Army, Myrna served as Staff, Assistant Chief and Chief of multiple Occupational Therapy Clinics throughout the United States and Europe. She also served as the 19th Chief of the Occupational Therapist Section, Assistant Chief of the Army Medical Specialist Corps, and the Occupational Therapy Consultant to the Army Surgeon General. She is married to Robert Callison and they have one daughter Jessica. They currently reside in Winter Garden Florida, where Myrna works in Guest Relations for Walt Disney World.



Testimonials

Thank you to Sister Dorhel and Pastor Jen, for the uplifting retreats we have experienced the past years. Pastor Jen allowed the Holy Spirit to guide her along and we experienced the power of the Holy Spirit. Praise be to God and thanks Pastor Jen. We look forward to another Spirit-filled experience on January 30 to February 1, 2026. We anticipate participating in the uplifting seminars and other activities for the weekend. Thanks again and may God's richest blessings be yours always.

Selma Bennett, Women's Ministries Director, Midport SDA Church

My name is **Maria Laidlow**. I have been attending the women's ministry retreat for the past three years. With each retreat, I always left feeling inspired and confident. Being at the retreat, I realized that I'm not alone in my battles, fears and struggles. Listen to the testimonial from other women, I have realized that through my pain, fears and battles, God is at my side.

Hello dear sisters in Christ, my name is **Carmen Mercado**, I had a biopsy two weeks before the Women Ministry Retreat and was diagnosed with the horrible sickness of cancer for the fifth time. I was diagnosed with Malignant Mixed Mullerian Cancer in my reproductive organs at that time, a very aggressive cancer. Needed surgery, possible chemotherapy and radiation. So, because I already had planned for this retreat, the only last thing left to do was to pray. And I did pray — my family, my friends, my church prayed, and here I am telling you, my testimony. During the retreat, God told me one more time to be still, and to allow Him to do His will on my life. Once more I trusted him, and once again I'm a cancer survivor for the fifth time. No Lymphoma, no bone cancer, no lung cancer, no melanoma and no uterine cancer will stop me serving my Lord. To God be the glory!

The 2025 Women's Retreat at Camp Kulaqua was a life-changing experience that truly touched my heart. Friday night began with a powerful message on transformation, using Romans 12:2 as our foundation. The six points shared — recognizing the need for transformation, seeing its value, understanding that it can be instant or take time, acknowledging its difficulty, trusting even when we can't see it, and celebrating its miraculous beauty — showed me how God can transform my life when I refuse to conform to the world. On Saturday morning, the speaker's message on "Grief That Empowers" reminded me that grief is not about forgetting but about learning, growing, and integrating loss into a deeper, more meaningful life. I realized that grief comes in many forms and that healing has no timeline, often requiring both spiritual and professional support. My favorite place throughout the weekend was the prayer room, where I found peace, healing, gratitude, and a sweet closeness with God. Sabbath afternoon's program challenged me deeply, especially the quote about the dangers of neglecting God's Word and the transforming power of Scripture. It made me recognize my need for deeper, more intentional Bible study to strengthen my walk with God. By Sunday morning, the final message beautifully tied everything together, reminding me that Jesus is the Author of my faith story. I left the retreat renewed, encouraged, and confident that the One who began a good work in me will surely finish it. - **Shorline Blanchard**.

The Florida Conference 2025 Women's Ministries Retreat was such a blessing. The love and care taken in every detail was evident. There was lots of love, laughter and even tears shared throughout the supportive environment that weekend. I especially loved the Prayer Chapel and the care that went into the detailed design. My blessings truly overflowed that weekend. One that stands out in my mind is my prayers that centered around our upcoming Women's Ministries program and the need for a piano player. I was especially looking for a young person as I wanted to be intentional about infusing the youth in our Women's Ministries. Because we serve a GOOD GOD and an AMAZING Father, who addresses ALL our needs; He saw fit to place a young lady who just happened to be a piano player at my table the night of the banquet. Coincidence? I think NOT! It was an answered prayer unfolding before my eyes, a connection was made, a bond formed and everything played out as God planned. Tampa First had a wonderful spirit-filled Women's Ministries Program that glorified God in Praise and Worship.

- **Gail Evans**, WM Leader Tampa First Church



My Journey to the Women's Ministry retreat last year was an exceptional and an amazing experience, one that I will never forget. It was a profound and spiritual journey which had a lasting impact on my life. I was transformed. I almost never reached. Along the way, many obstacles were placed in my path by the adversary, but I persevered and overcame. As Jesus said to Martha, "Martha, Martha, Mary has chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her." Friends who had promised to come along cancelled at the last minute but thank God an unexpected person decided to come. That person was mesmerized with the guest speaker and the healthy food that was served. She is not a vegetarian nor an SDA Christian but was greatly impacted by the three days program. It was a miracle that I chose that good part that had transformed our lives. - **Patricia Hines**

I was so blessed by the topic. I am the personal ministries leader in my church. God has transformed my life, to be more dedicated in spreading the word of God. Amen. - **Olive Fisher**

During Retreat 2025, one of our young ladies from the Royal Palm church listened intently as one of the featured women gave her testimony. Something about that particular story touched her deeply and she purposed in her heart that her life will never be the same. Two Sabbaths ago during our Women's Day celebration, this young lady testified of the transformation she's been going through this year, a change that definitely increased her spiritual growth and brought her closer to the Lord. She's learning how to include God in all her plans and ask for His direction in her future endeavors. Like the chrysalis, the transformation can be painful at times but she's looking forward to the end result when her character becomes like the character of Jesus. The young lady's name is Tatyana Clark. - **Sharon Roberts**

When I attended the women's retreat, heaven's doors were opened, and God did something life-changing for me. Since that retreat, I have been a different person — I know my Bible more, stay more connected with God, and have developed a deeper love for people, especially women. Before the retreat, I was going through severe depression, trauma, and even attempted to harm myself, feeling lost and without direction. I had not made God a priority in my life and found myself in a very dark place. But the Lord opened the door for me to attend this retreat, made a way for me to get there, and completely transformed me. It was one of the most powerful, joyful, and unforgettable experiences of my life, and it was all because of God. The retreat showed me how wonderful it is when women come together as one in God's presence. When we stay focused on Him and remain true to the Lord, our lives can have a tremendous impact on others. I am truly grateful for the opportunity to attend this retreat and will carry this experience with me for the rest of my life. - **Illia Paul**, University Seventh-day Adventist Church, Orlando, FL

My main takeaway from the Women's Retreat was realizing more deeply the power in the name of Jesus. Since the retreat I speak Jesus over my family, friends, and circumstances. How simple, yet how amazing!! - **Karen Smith**



Notes





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