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5-2010

Terre Haute Members Refreshed by Sabbath Seminars

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Recommended Citation

Peckham, Karen, "Terre Haute Members Refreshed by Sabbath Seminars" (2010). *Lake Union Herald*. 402.
<https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/luh-pubs/402>

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[LOCAL CHURCH NEWS]



Carl Bruggen, Jr.

One Sunday a month the Bloomington Church members serve dinner to more than 100 homeless from their community.

Bloomington Church members reach out to homeless

Indiana—A dinner served to the homeless people of Bloomington, Ind., has led a former Adventist to reconnect with his church. It all began when,

during one of the dinners, Kisha Miles, a Bloomington Church member and an Indiana University law student, invited the dinner attendees to the last night of the church's Easter evangelism meetings. A few of the dinner guests accepted her invitation. Among them was Donald Thomas, a former Adventist. He attended the meeting and has attended church services faithfully ever since.

Serving a dinner to the homeless the first Sunday of each month was initiated by members of Adventist Students for Christ (AS4C), students who attend Indiana University in Bloomington. The meals are served at Trinity Episcopal Church, which generously opens its doors each Sunday for various groups to serve the homeless.

This outreach has benefited from church-wide participation. Under the leadership of Miles and AS4C members, with assistance from Bloomington

Church members, meals are prepared and served during the school year (September through April). While the students are on summer break, Bloomington Church members, led by Mike Riley (head elder), provide the meals. The Pathfinders, under the direction of Teresa Mathis (Pathfinder leader), have prepared apple and peach pies, cookies and cakes decorated with Christian symbols.

A devotional talk and prayer are given before each dinner. In addition to the meal, guests are offered clothing, personal care items and Christian literature. The Bloomington Church family has enjoyed working together to provide this service to the homeless people in their community, and they rejoice that a former Adventist has returned to his faith.

Ann Jaramio, member, Bloomington Church

Terre Haute members refreshed by Sabbath seminars

Indiana—It was anything but just another Sabbath at the Terre Haute Church as members of the Lewis and Greencastle Churches, plus other guests, came together to celebrate a special event on Friday evening, Jan. 15, with Richard Davidson, Ph.D., chairman of the Department of Old Testament, and Jo Ann Davidson, Ph.D., associate professor of Theology, at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Mich. Drawing from their extensive knowledge and first-hand experience of traditional Jewish customs, obtained during a prolonged stay in the Holy Land, they presented a four-part weekend seminar entitled, "Sabbath: Day of Exquisite Delight!"

To open the Sabbath hours, those present were introduced to the joy and glory of the Sabbath. Attendees then celebrated this sacred gift from God



Jo Ann and Richard Davidson presented a four-part weekend seminar entitled "Sabbath: Day of Exquisite Delight!" for members and guests of the Terre Haute Church.

in a new way for most. The Davidsons invited those present to join them in their traditional welcome of the Sab-

bath. Woven throughout the ceremony were rich Hebrew customs. The seven-branched candlestick was lit; and then using scripture and prayer, blessings were exchanged between husband and wife followed by blessings upon the children. Next, attendees feasted on golden, braided Challah bread and sweet grape juice as they toasted the arrival of Sabbath.

On Sabbath morning the Davidsons shared more about the rich Sabbath blessings God wants to give humanity. They taught that Sabbath is a gift from God to be joyously shared with Him, rather than a day to just follow a bunch of rules to earn a blessing; it's meant to be a cherished period of time each week where individuals are privileged, rather than mandated, to rest from everyday burdens and responsibilities and to celebrate the birthday of God's creation and the God-given institution of the family. Those present explored Psalm 92, a love song for the Sabbath, which gave a new insight into the Sabbath as a criti-

cal piece of a relationship with Him.

After a delicious fellowship meal, the seminar concluded with practical suggestions, based on Biblical principles, to make the Sabbath a special day that families not only love but long for, rather than seeing it as just a boring 24-hour period to endure, as families count down the minutes before they can get back to life as usual.

More details on the Jewish culture and their celebration of the Sabbath revealed just how much the Sabbath still means to them. For example: The

days of the week are not called by name. Instead, they are referred to as “Six days before Sabbath, five days before Sabbath,” and so on; Traditionally, the Jews celebrate the Sabbath by using only their best tableware and decorative items, such as fine silver and crystal to commemorate the royal significance of this God-given day; and Jews may be found singing for hours after the sun has set, relishing the Sabbath as long as possible.

Many of those who were privileged to attend this event came away with a

refreshing joy for the Sabbath, spawning new family traditions for celebrating this special gift. They also have a deeper appreciation for God’s unfathomable love and the blessings He wants to share if we will not only keep but celebrate this day with Him.

If you would like to have the Davidsons present the Sabbath seminar in your church, you may reach them at 269-471-2861, or davidson@andrews.edu.

Karen Peckham, communication leader,
Terre Haute Church



Nearly 100 came to the opening night of a prophecy seminar held at Hacker's Lanes in Frederic, Wis. There some made a decision to commit their lives to Jesus and join the fellowship of believers at the Seventh-day Adventist Church. From left: Larry Peterson, Chris Saunders, Kathie Saunders, Elaine Duren, Gary Duren, Wally Petz, Janice Petz and Curtis Denney, pastor

Prophecy seminar held in bowling alley, amazing results

Wisconsin—On Oct. 9, 2009, Curtis Denney, pastor, began a prophecy seminar at the Hacker’s Lanes Banquet Center in Frederic, Wis. Hacker’s Lanes? A bowling alley? Yes! In a small town like Frederic, population 1,260, Hacker’s Lanes was the only place big enough to accommodate the large crowds Frederic Church members were hoping and praying for. And they were not disappointed.

Opening night nearly 100 people came through the door; this included children, teenagers, young families

and 70-year-olds. There were even a couple of retired pastors and a computer programmer. Church members were there, too—praying, supporting and getting acquainted with the visitors.

Of course, all this took careful planning, beginning with a church business meeting, budgeting, three months of prayer warrior training for church members, much-anxious searching for a meeting location, 18,000 brochures in the mail and lots of prayer.

After 31 days and 28 messages, Frederic Church members rejoiced to see eight precious individuals baptized with a number of others continuing to study. Chris and Kathie Saunders told me that when they got the brochure in

the mail, they were immediately interested. Chris, although not an Adventist at the time, had attended an Adventist school in seventh and eighth grade, and he was somewhat familiar with Adventist beliefs. Both Chris and Kathie were concerned about end-time events and were searching for truth.

Wally and Janice Petz received the invitation to the series in the mail, looked at it a couple of times, laid it aside, took it to their church and asked their friends what they thought, and finally decided to go. Once that decision was made, the Petzes were there every night but three. Janice said, “God put enough curiosity in us to keep going. We’ve gone to other studies, but this was different, clearer. We were astonished. He explained it so we could understand it.” When I asked Walter and Janice if they were glad they came, they replied, “Amen!”

Gary and Elaine Duren met in Hutchin, Minn., and were married in 1964. Gary, a member of another faith, and Elaine, a Seventh-day Adventist, decided to raise their children to know God but to make their own choices. Now, 45 years later, Gary and Elaine decided to come to the prophecy seminar. Elaine wrote, “It was with lots of help from God and my mother that led us to our decision to be baptized and join the church.”

Ron Wood, teacher/principal, Frederic
Seventh-day Adventist Elementary School