

1-2003

# Divine Intervention

Stephanie Wines  
*Andrews University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/luh-pubs>



Part of the [English Language and Literature Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Wines, Stephanie, "Divine Intervention" (2003). *Lake Union Herald*. 732.  
<https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/luh-pubs/732>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Lake Union Herald at Digital Commons @ Andrews University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Lake Union Herald by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Andrews University. For more information, please contact [repository@andrews.edu](mailto:repository@andrews.edu).



# Divine Intervention

BY STEPHANIE WINES

I can remember the scene as if it were yesterday. Our Village Church pastoral staff in Berrien Springs, Michigan, had assembled once again for the regular Monday meeting, with Larry Lichtenwalter, church pastor, leading out in worship. After the concluding prayer, he looked around expectantly at each of us and said he had an exciting announcement to make.

Our circle of “hands and feet for Jesus” didn’t respond with much life. Most of us couldn’t hide our droopy eyelids or slouched positions. Undisturbed by his lifeless crew, Pastor Larry proceeded to notify us that our pastoral staff would be conducting an evangelistic series in a year. His eyes were wide with excitement, and a wide smile spread across his face. A few grunts of “great” and “wow” echoed around the circle, not matching even half of his enthusiasm. Little did we realize what we were in for.



A large Hope for the Homeland banner was displayed outside the Village Church, inviting people to come to the meetings.

That was a little over a year ago. Now we are at the end of our *Hope for the Homeland* evangelistic series, not only seeing miracles happen, but wishing it wasn’t over. The lifeless bodies of last year have been incredibly transformed into batteries of energy. When you see the power



Stephanie Wines (right) serves as row hostess at the Village Church in Berrien Springs, Michigan.

of God working around and through you, there’s an irresistible urge to share with others and a spark that can’t be squelched.

Before the series began, I’d volunteered to be a row hostess. Basically the duties of a row hostess consist of getting to the meetings 45 minutes early, sitting in the same general area, welcoming people to the meetings, and handing out registration cards, bulletin announcements, coupons, etc. I was glad to be a hostess, because I really enjoy getting to know people personally; however, I hadn’t caught a vision of how God was going to use me, so I’d been pretty nominal in my attitude toward the whole series. About a week into the meetings, I tangibly understood God’s purpose for me.

I’d seen them come to a couple of meetings the week before, but thought nothing of it. That night, as I watched this mother-daughter pair walk up to the front and sit down, something hit me. Or maybe it was more of an impression from the Holy Spirit. I felt compelled to welcome them once the meeting was finished. After the benediction, I made my way up to the front of the church and introduced myself to this little family. The mother introduced herself as Barbara, and her daughter as Jessica. We didn’t chat long before Barbara mentioned she needed to pick up her younger daughter, Faith, from downstairs and get the girls home and into bed.

The next few weeks I kept an eye out for Barbara and Jessica, but the few times I saw them come, they had disappeared by the time I could get to them.

In a pastoral meeting during the fourth week of the series, Bayani Pastrana, our pastor in charge of evangelism, gave me another half-dozen interests to visit. As I scanned down through the last names, I recognized one

of them was Barbara's and Jessica's. That Thursday, I made an evening visit to see how they were enjoying the meetings. Jessica came to the door with a big smile on her face. I asked how she'd been doing, and she replied that she was doing well and was really happy to see me. And before I even asked, she said she liked the "religious" meetings she'd been coming to with her mom. Barbara wasn't home from work yet, so I left two tapes and said I'd look for her and her Mom that weekend.

Sunday night I saw Jess and her mom sit down a few rows ahead of me. As the evening progressed, I thought I saw Barbara get out a tissue, but wasn't sure. Afterward, I walked to where they were sitting and sat down by Barbara. She had been crying and was blowing her nose. We embraced, and then she said she really wanted to know more about the Bible. The Holy Spirit was at work on her heart, and it was wonderful to see! Our head elder, Primod Gaikwad, was sitting behind her and had been talking with her before I arrived. In response to her desire to know more about Jesus, he suggested the three of us get together and do Bible studies.

Since that evening, Barbara and I have been meeting regularly to understand who Jesus is and what He teaches in the Bible. She is desperately wanting to know Him more and follow Him completely—whatever it takes.

What a thrill to see God change other people's lives. But perhaps even more amazing is to see how God can reignite my own heart and tired soul, and to understand that if we are willing, He is faithful to complete the good work He's begun in us.

---

*Stephanie Wines is an Andrews University English major.*

## Prayer Ministry: Evangelism's Power Source

BY KAREN PEARSON

At the Village Church in Berrien Springs, we had great expectations as we prepared and prayed for our *Hope for the Homeland* meetings. As prayer ministries leader, the cry of my heart was for the Holy Spirit to descend with power and to envelope not just our church, but the entire village.

In the months leading up to the campaign, a question kept repeating in my mind: "What is the essence of evangelism; what lies at the core of sharing Christ?" If I was going to coordinate the prayer ministry, I needed to be able to answer that question.

One morning, while wrestling in prayer for answers, I found the following statement: "The followers of Christ are to labor as He did. We are to minister to the despairing, and inspire hope in the hopeless" (Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 350). The words on the recently printed flyers came to mind: "Out of tragedy rises *Hope for the Homeland*." These words were being seen on billboards and flyers and heard on radio and TV stations across the nation by millions of Americans.

Before we knew it, opening night arrived. Flowers filled the front of the sanctuary. The church looked lovely. Each volunteer had been trained and knew exactly where to be, and what to do. I looked at the huge screen. It had been found in answer to prayer. The cameras, the projector, the lighting—all provided by the Lord in the most incredible 11th-hour answers to our prayers. As the music began, I slipped away to the prayer room where I joined the volunteers who had already started praying.

In the days and weeks that followed, the church witnessed amazing answers to prayer. We prayed for our entire village, and night after night people stopped by before the meeting began and shared with us how God was working in their lives and in their homes.



*Karen Pearson, right, led out in the Village Church's prayer ministry during Hope for the Homeland. Harry Miller, left, was also part of the prayer group.*

We prayed for victory over sin, and strength to overcome temptation. We wept over the lonely, hurting ones and rejoiced as we saw lives surrendering to Jesus. We discovered that it is impossible to bring others to Jesus, without drawing closer to Him yourself. Evangelism is not a spectator sport. I have come to believe that prayer and encouragement lies at the heart of all genuine evangelism.

The campaign is over, but as long as we are held prisoners in this sin-wracked world, there will always be a need to share the hope that is within us.

---

*Karen Pearson is the Andrews University advancement administrative assistant.*