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While some students decided to use the fall break to catch up on assignments, visit family members, and enjoy the freedom from classes, a group of young missionaries traveled to Kalamazoo to further the mission of spreading God's love. These young adults are volunteers of the Greater Youth Movement program (GYM), an outreach initiative launched from the Harbor of Hope Church in Benton Harbor, Mich.

Prior to traveling to Kalamazoo, the team engaged in mission training. All participants were informed on the protocols and logistics of the trip. They also were introduced to the theme of the trip, "Greater Leaders." This helped to unify the members with the goals of the mission.

Led by Business major, Malek McIntyre, 15 students from Andrews University opened the Sabbath on Oct. 11, 2019, by commuting the hour drive to the Trinity Temple Church in Kalamazoo, where they were welcomed by the church pastor, Denry White, and his family. The students settled themselves in the church with their sleeping bags in anticipation of a spiritually uplifting weekend.

On Sabbath morning, the team was divided into three groups to visit three churches to promote the mission of GYM.

Those who remained at Trinity Temple jumped into the spirit of worship and led the congregation in songs of praise. That was not the only surprise for the members. The entire service was transformed into a day of music and community engagement. Choirs, local and traveling musicians as well as the GYM group provided musical selections throughout the day. Pastor White interspersed baby dedications with the singing and celebration



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▲ Students who traveled to Kalamazoo during fall break spent the weekend demonstrating love on the move. Among the activities they planned were: organizing worship services, praying with clients at a social services agency, and sorting donations at the Catholic Charities Center.

for family members in the surrounding community. This was one way the church could show their love to their neighbors.

The GYM team closed the Sabbath by spending the remaining hours of the day praying and singing with people from all walks of life who were seeking assistance from Kalamazoo Gospel Mission Center.

What surprised many of the students was how many clients at the Center had connections to Berrien Springs and, even more so, Andrews University. One lady, who requested prayers for a place to stay as the winter draws near, told some students how she had received an education from Ruth Murdoch to a Master's degree from Andrews University. For other students, they were blessed to hear interesting stories from the people they met. They were all more encouraged to continue sharing Christ to everyone they encountered.

On previous trips, GYM volunteers spent Sunday mornings fellowshiping with church members. This time, the group spent the day canvassing, as this is one of the main ways the movement is financially supported. Jeanelle Robinson, an Architecture graduate of Andrews University, shared that this was her first canvassing experience. "At first, it was

a bit daunting to think about going to people's private spaces, introducing ourselves and the ministry, and then asking for money," she said. "But then the experience turned out to be exhilarating because of the amazing encounters that only could be the Holy Spirit working through us as we interacted with the community."

The final day of the trip was spent at Kalamazoo Junior Academy, where the university students conducted an engaging worship service filled with songs, skits and discussion for the students and teachers.

Their final acts of kindness consisted of helping to renovate rooms and sort through donations at the Catholic Charities Center. They then canvassed one last time with Pastor White, once again praying with community members and inviting them to the Adventist churches in the area.

The volunteers of Greater Youth Movement have placed outreach at the forefront of their mission. They plan to undertake two more mission trips before the end of the year. ■

Michelle Greene is pursuing a Master's degree in Communication at Andrews University.