MISSION STATEMENT
To faithfully chronicle the work and progress of the church in the Atlantic Union territory and inform, instruct, and inspire our church members.

DEPARTMENTS
Editorial 3
Adventist Education 7
Youth Talk 8
Quoi de Neuf? 24
¿Qué Está Pasando? 25
Positions of Our Faith 26

NEWS
Bermuda 9
Greater New York 10
Atlantic Union College 12
New York 14
Atlantic Union 17
Northeastern 19
Northern New England 20
Southern New England 22

INFORMATION
Bulletin Board 28
Classifieds 29

DEADLINES
July 2010 May 14
August 2010 June 11
September 2010 July 9

The GLEANER deadline schedule is available online at www.atlantic-union.org/gleaner4.html.

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The cover story in this issue features an article written by Pete Saunders, associate communication director for the Bermuda Conference. It is his personal story about God’s goodness to his family as they chose to remain faithful to Him in spite of their many challenges. Our regular features include: Adventist Education, Positions of Our Faith, and Youth Talk. The cover photo was taken by Kageaki Smith.
The health message of the Seventh-day Adventist Church has often been called the “right arm” of the gospel, and rightly so, since it acts as an entering wedge to open doors for the spreading of the gospel.

Ellen White, one of the church founders of the Adventist movement, wrote this many years ago: “Let it ever be kept before the mind that the great object of hygienic reform is to secure the highest possible development of mind and soul and body. All the laws of nature—which are the laws of God—are designed for our good. Obedience to them will promote our happiness in this life, and will aid us in a preparation for the life to come.”—CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE AND BIBLE HYGIENE, p. 120.

The Adventist health message, which teaches ways of wellness and longevity, has recently come into the spotlight of the media and the film industry. In 2005 the NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC magazine carried a major story entitled The Secrets of Living Longer in which Seventh-day Adventists in California were cited as being among the longest-livers in America.

Dan Buettner, the author of the story, and a guest on CNN’s Anderson Cooper 360 and ABC’s Good Morning America, concluded with three keys—a plant-based diet, regular exercise, and a social network of family and friends—as the basis for a long and healthy life.

Now a movie has just been released called The ADVENTISTS. It is a documentary film about abiding faith, cutting-edge medicine, and longer, healthier life. It is described as a fascinating new documentary that explores the body-mind-spirit connections of Seventh-day Adventists. The film chronicles the history of the Adventist faith and investigates the reasons why Adventists are among the longest-living people in the world.

Independent filmmaker Martin Doblmeier suggests in the movie that Adventists today have just as much faith as early members, and are committed to living responsibly and to positively impacting those around them while they wait for the Second Coming. That impact is largely rooted in the church’s emphasis on healthy living, Doblmeier’s film concludes.

He also emphasizes Adventists’ commitment to Sabbathkeeping. “I was really moved by the Sabbath culture in the Adventist Church. Adventists are not simply sitting around being lazy on Sabbath—they’re out there helping people and impacting their communities,” Doblmeier said.

The response to the film from the Adventist community has been “gratifying,” Doblmeier said, adding that he hopes those without a background in the Adventist Church find the film a “balanced and positive portrayal” of the church’s impact in the United States.

Indeed, this is a film worth seeing and has already aired on public television. Screenings will also be held twice daily, June 27 to July 2, at the Church’s General Conference Session in Atlanta, Georgia.

My friends, I’m impressed to say to you that God in his compassion has blessed His people with a marvelous message of health, healing, and longevity. We are stewards of this blessing of His. Let us continue to take full advantage of this marvelous gift from heaven—the gift of “health-gevity” and longevity.

Donald G. King is president of the Atlantic Union Conference and chairman of the Atlantic Union College Board of Trustees.
How many of us who receive blessings from God give Him thanks? Based on the story of the 10 lepers healed by Jesus Christ, we could conclude that the answer is 10 percent.

There are so many things for which I am thankful. My son, Dakari, has cerebral palsy. This was due to a lack of oxygen during childbirth.

The only way to deal with cerebral palsy and to help him learn to walk and communicate is through constant therapy (i.e., physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, etc.). He travels annually to Children’s Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts, for checkups and treatment. In 2009, he received Botox injections to aid him in walking and developing his motor skills. He was also evaluated by specialists at the Augmentative Communication Program. They concluded that he would benefit significantly from having a communication device. Even though he is three years old, he still communicates by pointing and mainly babbling. The communication device would enable him to communicate more effectively in various social settings, including school and church.

During the time we were trying to figure out how to take care of this need for Dakari, I accidentally submitted my tithes (through online banking) twice on two separate occasions. The discussion with Annesa, my wife, went something like this:

Pete: “I need to talk with the treasurer about getting this money back. We really need it.”

BY PETE SAUNDERS
Annesa: “Hmm. I know we need it, but we have survived without it. Just let it stay.”

Pete: (Becoming uneasy and not believing my ears.) “Are you sure?”

Annesa: “Yes. I mean, the Lord has blessed us so much, this is a little way of showing our appreciation.”

Pete: (Reluctantly.) “OK.”

About two weeks later:

Annesa: “Sweetie, how do you feel about us doubling what we are currently giving the Lord?”

Pete: “What?”

Annesa: “Think about it. When we accidentally [doubled it], we survived, and almost didn’t miss it.”

Pete: “But sweetie, we need the money for all the stuff we have to get for Dakari.”

Annesa: “I know, but the Lord is still blessing us.”

Pete: (Less reluctantly this time.) “OK. We’ll do it.”

Annesa: “Are you sure? Don’t say yes if you’re going to do it grudgingly. It has to come from the heart.”

Pete: “I’m sure. As you say, the Lord has done a lot for us, so why not.”

My wife is a very wise and virtuous woman. I (almost) hate to admit this but at least 90 percent of the times when I have gone against something she said, we’ve ended up losing money or worse. Thankfully, now in our fifth year of marriage, I have learned to listen to and go along with my wife (most of the times). It is called women’s intuition.

I am glad this was one of the times I went along with her because God literally threw open the floodgates of heaven and poured out so much blessing that we did not have room enough for it. Almost immediately after our decision to double the amount we return to the Lord, I was compelled to check an investment account. I knew

we had no money in it because of how poorly that investment did. When I saw the balance of the account, I was stunned. Not only was it much more than I had expected, but the balance was 10 times what our double tithing was going to be.

The following day, two work colleagues who are close friends of mine promised to do whatever they could to help with getting the device for my son. One immediately started baking little goodies and selling them. Later that week, they opened an account called Dakari’s Fund and deposited the proceeds from the bake sales.

My wife and I didn’t expect this outpouring of blessings from the Lord. Throughout the week, the investment account kept growing. We eventually withdrew the money and paid our tithe—the largest tithe we have ever paid. During that same week, I received a call from the minister of music for my church who informed me that his department would be hosting a concert with proceeds going toward my son’s device. On the Thursday of that week, we decided to fast and thank the Lord for His blessings toward us.

Amazingly, that same day my boss approached me and shared that his boss was proposing doing something more significant for my son and wanted to know if I was OK with it. Imagine the thoughts and questions swirling around in my head. How much more, Lord? Are You trying to teach us something?

The next day, I was surprised by my work colleagues with a check for my son’s device. Some very special coworkers solicited support on his behalf. The check in itself was a big deal but not the biggest. My head, heart, in fact, my entire body started to hurt and my emotions went on a roller coaster ride when I realized that the amount of the check I received from my work colleagues was 10 times the tithe we paid from the investment account. The tears wouldn’t stop flowing. I drove home in tears asking the Lord why. Are you for real, God? Why are you doing this amazing thing for my family? I certainly do not deserve this. Why? I was so confused!

I really could not believe what had transpired in literally less than two weeks. When my wife got home and

Give God thanks for everything! This includes things we don’t usually consider as blessings.

at www.atlantic-union.org
Find a way to bless others. In fact, go out of your way to bless somebody else.

I shared with her all that transpired, she, too, was overcome with emotions. We tried to make sense of it all.

These are the 10 things we have concluded:

1. Men—listen to your wives (especially if she is a godly woman).
2. God owns everything!
3. God doesn’t need our money or anything else, for that matter.
4. Because God owns everything, giving to Him or to others shows that we acknowledge His supremacy.
5. Believe God—every single word.
6. Give God thanks for everything! This includes things we don’t usually consider as blessings.
7. Pass the blessings along. Find a way to bless others. In fact, go out of your way to bless somebody else.
8. The Bermudian community [and probably where you live] is filled with caring individuals who will not hesitate to help those in need.
10. It pays to obey God.

We are so thankful for the assistance and support we have received in providing our son with an opportunity to experience what so many of us take for granted, the ability to communicate. God’s blessings toward all of us are innumerable. Daily, moment by moment, we receive physical and spiritual blessings.

I encourage you to count your blessings, name them one by one, and it will surprise you what God has done. Be a part of that 10 percent of those who thank God for all the mercies and kindness He has shown.

Pete Saunders is the associate communication director for the Bermuda Conference. E-mail: peteasaunders@gmail.com, Blog: fatheringhappiness.blogspot.com
The Nicest Work

In Testimonies, vol. 3, p. 269, Ellen G. White states that, “To deal with minds is the nicest work in which men ever engaged,” and I couldn’t agree more. What could be more rewarding than partnering with the Holy Spirit to do work that will transform a sullen child into one who is happy, selfless, and secure? What could compare with the joy of having a child who has been withdrawn come running to you, throwing his arms around your waist in a full-blown hug? What would one trade for the ecstasy of seeing the light of understanding go on in a mind struggling to understand a difficult concept? And who wouldn’t exchange an executive salary for the thrill of hearing a youth’s testimony to the power of Jesus in his or her life? These are some of the reasons that Adventist teachers get up long before the crack of dawn, work a 10-hour day without as much as a lunch break, buy classroom supplies with their own slim resources, and live and breathe “school” around the clock. It is a calling, and not an easy one, but one that makes the teacher rich indeed.

Adventist teachers use tools uncommon in most other settings to accomplish these eternally significant achievements. Already mentioned is the Holy Spirit, without whom nothing would be accomplished. What a delight it is to grow in the art (science) of listening to the Counselor, and to then teach this critical skill to the children in our care!

Redemptive discipline and systematic character development are two more essential tools. A teacher who sees herself accurately knows of the abundant grace which God has extended and is able to respond to students’ failures in a comparable manner. Redemptive discipline helps a child process his infractions in a spiritual context and ultimately returns him to a peaceful relationship with his fellow human beings and with God. Such an approach is deeply respectful and does not rely on bribery or control with stickers or other rewards. Redemptive discipline and systematic character development empower students to make right decisions, even when they are not overseen by adults. Systematic character development is based on a clear understanding of the titanic battle for the souls of our children and responds with intentionality. In White’s words, “There is a science of Christianity to be mastered—a science as much deeper, broader, higher, than any human science as the heavens are higher than the earth. The mind is to be disciplined, educated, trained; for men are to do service for God in ways that are not in harmony with inborn inclination. Often the training and education of a lifetime must be discarded, that one may become a learner in the school of Christ... Old and young are to form habits of thought that will enable them to resist temptation. They must learn to look upward. The principles of the Word of God... are to be understood in their bearing on the daily life. Every act, every word, every thought, is to be in accord with these principles”—Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, p. 20.

Every day Adventist teachers go toe to toe with the devil. To do so in one’s own strength would be foolhardy. To do so in cooperation with the Holy Spirit is the nicest work which God has ever given to humans.

Kim Kaiser is the associate superintendent of schools for the New York Conference.

What could be more rewarding than partnering with the Holy Spirit to do work that will transform a sullen child into one who is happy, selfless, and secure?
What’s the greatest experience you’ve ever had?
Chances are that Christ’s been a large part of it. I’ve been asked this a few times in my life and one of the first things that comes to mind is South Lancaster Academy’s first From Our Hearts Series in 2007.

As a freshman in high school, this was my first sermon. Thankfully, God led me to preach about peace, which was especially comforting when in front of about 100 people! He definitely lured me out of my comfort zone in order to touch the lives of others.

Though I was not aware of it, God was using this experience to lead me to other greater experiences. He opened many doors in my spiritual life, and He definitely gave me the confidence to accept His many plans for me because of this experience.

Last summer, our chaplain, Jonathan Niño, asked me if I would like to lead out in this year’s series. I was flattered, humbled, and excited all at the same time and gladly accepted the offer. To add to the excitement, we now have three locations for the meetings instead of last year’s two: the College, Village, and Leominster churches.

Psalm 77:12 says, “I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.” That’s what the From Our Hearts Series is all about: sharing what God has done in our lives. We, students at South Lancaster Academy, want to allow God to use us to touch many lives.

This year’s series is entitled “I Surrender.” We like it, because in order to truly follow Christ, we must completely surrender to Him. It’s a challenging and joyful task, all at the same time.

Some of the sermons for the nine meetings this year are about surrendering our life, desires, distractions, unimportant things, and our time, as well as sermons about martyrs, and the end times. Another nice thing about the series is that all talents and gifts are put to use. SLA students are leading with skits, song service, opening and closing prayer, scripture reading, special music, technology, greeting people, advertising, stage backgrounds, and just general support through their presence and prayers.

Because the series had already begun when this issue was printed, there may be only a week or two left in the series by the time you read this (see schedule for May on the left). So, “thank you” to those of you who have already attended, and if you haven’t already, come with open hearts and be blessed with testimonies of God’s love from our hearts.

— Eric Morris, senior, South Lancaster Academy
Why I Sing . . .

Following my birth on December 1, 1972, I was sent home to die within nine months. I was born with tricuspid atresia, a condition in which the tricuspid valve is not formed in the heart, resulting in decreased oxygen flow in my bloodstream. My lips were blue and the prognosis was not good. Bermuda didn't have the facilities to support correction or treatment of the condition, but, I have a praying family—a family related by blood and a family united by Christ, the Midland Heights Seventh-day Adventist Church family and the Bermuda Conference family.

God took me through open heart surgery in Boston, Massachusetts, to receive an artificial heart valve when I was 10 years old, and He didn't leave me there. I married in 1998 and in 1999 God defied man's odds and allowed me to give birth to a baby girl, albeit she was 3 months premature (she has her own testimony).

In 2006, I received a pacemaker and had my enlarged heart cut down to size. God did not stop there. He sent an Adventist doctor to care for me for a short while. I was blessed. God has never failed me yet, He will always come through. At my last checkup in October 2009, the doctors were astonished at my progress and overall well-being. They asked, Why does she look younger each time we see her? Why does she look relaxed and serene? Why is her health stable and improving each visit? I had one word—God! I believe God, I believe in God.

The Bible, in Psalm 150:6 says, “Let everything that has breath praise the Lord,” and I do. I can’t help myself. With each medical visit to Boston, God has placed someone in my path to witness to. I recall that one routine visit when I was 16 turned into a month-long hospital stay. God had a young man minister to me by giving me a single month-old daisy. That daisy stayed strong my entire 30-day stay and I was able to pass it on to the next patient when I was discharged. That was God speaking, as only He can.

Recently, I specifically prayed and asked the Lord to allow me to witness to someone, and He allowed me to witness to my doctors and another patient, although I didn't realize it until much later. God is good!

Please, do not be discouraged. God won't fail you. I could go on and on about His love, goodness, and unchanging hand, but I want you to know that I never would have made it, never could have made it, without God. When I look back over it all, He was there for me and He brought me through. He was the one I held on to. God has a great work in store for me, just as He has for you. Seek His face. Be blessed.
—Julia Clarke, member, Midland Heights church

“He’s Been Faithful to Me”

Bermuda Conference Camp Meeting • Bermuda Institute/Southampton Church Complex

June 17–19

Adult
Leslie Pollard
Vice President
Loma Linda University

Young Adult
Willy Ramos
aka Ghetto Preacher

J. Boykin
Saxaphonist
California

Jeffrey Brown
President
Bermuda Conference

Kenneth Manders
Executive Secretary
Bermuda Conference

Derek Furbert
Treasurer
Bermuda Conference

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Atlantic Union Gleaner, May 2010 9
During the fourth Adventist Youth Evangelism and Leadership Congress, the Greater New York Conference Adventist Youth Ministries Department unveiled four awards and one medal to be presented to kids, teens, young adults, and adults in recognition of their commitment to different areas of ministry within their local churches in the Greater New York Conference.

Prior to the unveiling of the awards, there was much discussion by the members of the conference's Adventist Youth Ministries Council that combines the AY coordinator's advisory, the Pathfinder coordinator's advisory, the instructor's advisory, and the events team. As the awards were unveiled, it was made clear that only God deserves the honor and the glory for the great things He accomplishes through His people. It was also made clear that it is healthy and appropriate to recognize the hard work, dedication, and commitment of individuals who allow God to use them to build His church and to serve others as we await His second coming.

The Be the Bridge Award (Pin) will be presented to a child, teen, young adult, or adult who has demonstrated the ability to bridge a gap with other generations (youth and adults), among ethnic groups, with the community outside the church, with non-Adventists, and between genders.

The Evangelism Award (Pin) will be presented to a child, teen, young adult, or adult who actively participates in any role for the entire duration of an evangelistic project of any kind for at least one week.

The Small Group Award (Pin) will be presented to a child, teen, young adult, or adult who is actively involved in a small group (whether leading or attending) for six months or more.

The Soul-Winning/Star on My Crown Award (Pin) will be presented to a child, teen, young adult, or adult who leads or is instrumental in leading someone to Christ through baptism.

The Felix Hernandez Medal of Courage and Service (Medal) is the highest award presented to anyone in GNYC Adventist Youth Ministries. It will be presented to one individual in the conference each year. Adventurers, Pathfinders, teens, young adults, Master Guides, adults (active in any of the youth ministries of the conference), and pastors who are a living example of courage and service (in and outside the church) are eligible to receive this medal.

These awards are meant to serve as a reminder of the work God has done through our young people. They are also an affirmation to the recipients and a reminder that our church highly values the earnest efforts and dedication of, as well as the results produced by young people working in partnership with the Holy Spirit and the adults of the church.

—José Cortes, youth ministries director, Greater New York Conference
The worldwide traveling Bible will be in the Greater New York Conference on June 2. The Bible is one-of-a-kind, written in more than 66 languages, one language for each book. Lebanon, Dubai, Mexico, Jamaica, and the Arctic are just a few of the places the traveling Bible has visited as part of the Follow the Bible tour, a Seventh-day Adventist-sponsored event traveling the globe. This 12” x 18” Bible is a symbol of intercultural Christian solidarity and consists of 1,500 pages. Readers can view Deuteronomy in Japanese, Joel in Haitian Creole, Matthew in Indonesian, and other books in other languages.

The Greater New York Conference Youth Department is working on several initiatives for June 2. The entire day will be Hope Through the Bible Day in the conference. The goals to be accomplished on that day include: (1) finish writing the entire Bible by hand at different locations throughout the conference, (2) distribute thousands (10,000) of Bibles in the boroughs and areas of Greater New York, (3) celebrate the Hope Through the Bible Rally at the Grand Concourse Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Bronx with youth, Pathfinders, Adventurers, and adults representing each church in the conference.

The journey for the Bible began in the fall of 2008 in the Philippines and it has traveled to the 13 divisions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The journey climaxes at the opening session of the General Conference Session in Atlanta in June 2010.

For more info on the worldwide traveling Bible, visit: www.followthebiblesda.com.

—José Cortes, youth ministries director, Greater New York Conference
If you will be entering your first year of college in the fall, come earn up to 5 credit hours before the semester begins! Take courses in algebra, art, business, medical terminology, physical education, and/or religion. Several activities are included such as trips to Boston and other local attractions.

Contact us at: 978-368-2235 or goauc@auc.edu

Ask for more information about the Summer Ignition Program

ATLANTIC UNION COLLEGE
338 Main Street, P. O. Box 1000, South Lancaster, MA 01561
www.auc.edu
Clarence “Chip” Ates began work at Atlantic Union College (AUC) as senior vice president of Academic Affairs in December 2009.

Ates spent the past four years as executive vice president for NorthWest Arkansas Community College, in Bentonville, Arkansas. Northwest Arkansas, a comprehensive public community college that serves more than 6,600 college-credit students and 7,000 non-credit students, is the second largest and fastest-growing community college in Arkansas.

Ates provided leadership for five of the college’s learning divisions and two of its satellite learning centers.

His responsibilities and accomplishments at NorthWest included:
- Budget development and administration of $15.3 million (07-08), 54 percent of the total college budget;
- Student Learning (Academic Affairs): five academic divisions plus distance learning;
- Learner Services (Student Affairs): enrollment management, student development, marketing, and recruiting;
- Information Technology;
- Regional Technology Center, career and technical center serving area high schools;
- Adult Education Center;
- Corporate and Community Development (July 2006 thru February 2007): business and industry, apprenticeship programs, personal enrichment;
- Increased fall student enrollment by 17.7 percent. Increased spring student enrollment by 22 percent;
- Established two new associate degrees and 10 new technical certificates;
- Developed online Retail Management Program (and secured nationwide enrollments);
- Established NWACC’s Career Pathways Program; enrolled 200 students in the program in the first year;
- Established new partnership with North West Technical Institute via new LPN/ADN link nursing program;
- Expanded evening and weekend course offerings for working adult students;
- Expanded online offerings: increased class sections by 31 percent and enrollment by 70 percent.

In 2003, Ates was awarded a Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Administration at the The University of Texas, in Austin, Texas. He holds a Master of Science degree in Student Personnel and Guidance from Oklahoma State University, in Stillwater, Oklahoma. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Oakwood College, in Huntsville, Alabama.
Lockport Members Enjoy Snow Weekend

Members from the Lockport Seventh-day Adventist Church in Lockport, New York, got up at 3:00 a.m. on a Sabbath morning in February to travel to Saranac Lake, New York, in time for Sabbath School and church. Even though it was an extremely busy time for them, a snow weekend was difficult to pass up.

At this conference-sponsored event, they were blessed with uplifting music led by David Damon, a member of the Chateaugay Seventh-day Adventist Church in Chateaugay, New York. Bill Wood, Atlantic Union Conference youth ministries director, presented the Sabbath message. The Saranac Lake Seventh-day Adventist Church treated the group to lunch.

On Saturday evening, the group opted to take the car ride to Titus Mountain to go tubing. On the tubing hill, the group raced by themselves, in pairs, and in groups of four. They also met other people from the community who joined in the fun.

Before going to bed, discussions were held about the ski hill options for the next morning. Big Tupper Ski Hill got the vote. Upon arriving at the hill, the lift tickets were picked up, skis rented, and the group was on the hill before all the lifts were open. From all accounts, it was a great, action-packed, spiritual weekend with like-minded people in the Adirondack Mountains, thanks to the Saranac church. A special thanks to John Livergood, the church’s pastor, his family, and all the good cooks.

—Alex Acre, member, Lockport church

Hafner Celebrates 90th Birthday

Members of the Roosevelt Seventh-day Adventist Church in Pennellville, New York, encircled Ethel Hafner to celebrate her 90th birthday on February 27. Hafner was presented with an 8” x 8” cake topped with 90 candles! It took four people to light the candles, each one garnering a corner of the cake to get the candles aflame at the same time! And yes, it did set off the smoke alarm, but the cake, ablaze with glory, was successfully placed in front of Hafner, who “lit up” with joy! Her church family prays for continued blessings from God for many more years of health and happiness!

—Donna Vesta, communication secretary, Roosevelt church

Springs of Living Water

North Country Women’s Retreat
May 14-16, 2010
Camp Cherokee, Saranac Lake, NY

Guest Speaker:
Charlotte Thoms
Women’s Ministries Director, Atlantic Union Conference

Fees:
$60.00 (includes room and meals)

For More Information:
315-469-6921 ext. 29
Youth Ministries Department, New York Conference
Westvale Church Hosts the Master’s Touch Chorale Concert

On Saturday evening, March 6, the Master’s Touch Chorale, directed by Warren Ottey, presented a musical concert at the Westvale Seventh-day Adventist Church in Syracuse, New York.

The Master’s Touch Chorale, a choir of 36 dedicated Christians, founded in 1993, represents 27 churches from 16 denominations. Six members of this group are from the Westvale church.

During a special part of the program, Parkview Junior Academy students from the second to sixth grade joined the singers for one of the selections.

—Joan Payne, communication secretary, Westvale church

“Would Show Jesus”

New York Conference Camp Meeting • Union Springs Academy, Union Springs, New York

English Camp Meeting
June 11–19

June 11–12
David Smith
President
Union College

June 12
Concert
Barbara Black
Washington State

June 13–17,
Weekday Mornings
Mark Black
Layperson
Spokane, Washington

June 13–17, Weeknights
Shawn Brace
Pastor
Northern New England Conference

June 18–19
Jerry Page
President
Central California Conference

June 19
Concert Artist
Mark Trethewey
Washington State

William Miller Camp Meeting
William Miller Home and Chapel
Whitehall, New York
July 31

Don Pate
Pastor
Southern New England Conference

Native American Camp Meeting
Camp Cherokee
Saranac Lake, New York
August 13–15

Stan Rouse
President
New York Conference

Carlyle Simmons
Executive Secretary
Atlantic Union Conference

Hal Thomsen
Assistant to the President
North American Division

at www.atlantic-union.org

Atlantic Union GLEANER, May 2010
The world session of the Seventh-day Adventist Church will bring an international flavor to Atlanta, Georgia. This session gathering will be representative of the more than 25 million-strong Adventist families from around the globe, and will meet under a theme of “Proclaiming God’s Grace.”

The session, to be held June 23 through July 3, is primarily a business meeting for the global church family. “Denominational leaders are elected, church business is attended to, and policy decisions are often made. Because the core “business” of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ, that challenge will permeate activities at the Atlanta 2010 convocation,” says General Conference president Jan Paulsen.

Organized by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, the top administrative body in the church’s worldwide system, the quinquennial world session will be the 59th for the denomination since its first General Conference Session in 1863.

Daily attendance at the event is expected to average more than 35,000 people. On the two weekends, more than 70,000 are expected to attend.

Some 2,000 voting delegates from all over the world will gather at the Georgia Dome in downtown Atlanta to participate in meetings that will determine many of the church’s administrative actions for the next half decade. They will receive reports on the church’s growth in those parts of the world where the Christian message is “reaching the unreached,” and have the opportunity to meet fellow believers and church workers from other lands.

Participants of such world convocations have often favored the international evening programs, which feature reports from all over the world. These reports will be translated into 15 different languages, as well as into American Sign Language for the hearing impaired.

Other special events associated with the session will aim at creating a global awareness and sensitivity to the world community, which is a part of the Adventist mission to the world. In addition to these special events, there will also be a major exhibit hall to include such things as church supplies, children’s ministry materials, religious books, kiosks representing the various universities and colleges of the Adventist Church, a large variety of Christian music, and much more for session attendees to visit and see.

Organizers are planning to use the media to bring the Atlanta 2010 event to viewers of Adventist Television Networks and other communication delivery organizations, including Adventist World Radio. Regular reports will available to delegates of the session and church believers around the world through the church’s weekly magazine, ADVENTIST REVIEW, and the worldwide press coverage of the Adventist News Network.

The meetings are open to the public. More information can be found at www.gcsession.org.

Taking a look back, an estimated 40,000 people attended Sabbath services in the Edward Jones Dome at the 58th Adventist Church world session in St. Louis, Missouri, in 2005.

American Sign Language for the hearing impaired.

General Conference Communication Department

Atlantic Union Conference Delegates

Donald G. King, Atlantic Union
Carlyle C. Simmons, Atlantic Union
Leon D. Thomassian, Atlantic Union
Jeffrey Brown, Bermuda
Malcolm Clarke, Bermuda
Richard A. Marker, Greater New York
Trevor Patton, Greater New York
Lillian Mitchell, Greater New York
Jintaek Kim, Greater New York
Stan Rouse, New York
Pamela McKinney, New York

Trevor H. C. Baker, Northeastern
Myrtle Pickett, Northeastern
Abraham Jules, Northeastern
Valtricts Binns, Northeastern
Carmelo Benjamin, Northeastern
Mike Ortel, Northern New England
Cliff Gleason, Northern New England
Frank Tochterman, Southern New England
Gil Pina, Southern New England
Angela Walton, Southern New England
Dare2Do Youth and Young Adult Congress

The Atlantic Union Conference Youth Ministries Department, in conjunction with the youth departments of the six local conferences, is gearing up for the “Dare2Do” Youth and Young Adult Congress in Hartford, Connecticut. The Atlantic Union usually holds a youth congress event every five years. This year, things will be a bit different. Plans are underway to hold two events simultaneously, in two locations within close proximity of each other—one for youth and the other for young adults.

The “Dare2Do” Youth Congress will take place on October 14-17, 2010, at the Hilton Hotel, 315 Trumbull St., Hartford, CT 06109. This is a retreat for local church youth 13 years and older, youth leaders, and anyone with a passion for youth ministries. For more information on this event, visit: www.atlantic-union.org/yc2010.html. All those attending must register through PlusLine at www.plusline.org/events.php. Look in the alphabetical listing for the “Dare2Do Youth Congress.”

The “Dare2Do” Young Adult Congress will take place on October 15-17, 2010, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, 50 Morgan St., Hartford, CT 06129. This is a retreat for collegiate young professionals. For more information on this event, visit: www.atlantic-union.org/yac2010.html. All those attending must register through PlusLine at www.plusline.org/events.php. Look in the alphabetical listing for the “Dare2Do Young Adult Congress.”

“Since January 2009 youth directors in the Atlantic Union have been working together to ‘Inspire, Equip, and Deploy’ youth in the northeast to make disciples, instruct, and baptize,” says Bill Wood, Atlantic Union Conference Youth Ministries director. “We have done so using various methods, including Youth Ministries Intensives (YMI)—one-day, cross-conference, specialized youth training events, short-term mission trips, evangelistic meetings, and more.

“The two events in October 2010 will be the culmination of the efforts to help prepare our youth, young adults, and youth leaders to finish God’s work in this vast territory and to prepare them for what lies ahead.”

Musical Artists Needed for the Unionwide Youth Congress

The search is on for outstanding musicians, soloists, choirs, or groups who would like to participate at Atlantic Union Conference Youth Congress on October 14-17, 2010. To secure a copy of the application and the music guidelines, visit www.atlantic-union.org yc2010.html; e-mail the Atlantic Union Conference Youth Ministries Department at: youthministries@atlanticunion.org; or call (978) 368-8333 ext. 3016. Applications must be received by August 1, 2010.

Education Department Launches THE BUZZ

In February 2010, the Atlantic Union Conference Office of Education launched THE BUZZ, a newsletter created for the early childhood community. The newsletter has two main purposes:

1. It serves as a resource for early childhood providers.

2. It is intended to be an avenue for sharing information from the various early childhood centers in the Atlantic Union. It is a forum that allows centers to share stories, give advice, suggest resources, and tell others about techniques that work for them.

The newsletter is published once each quarter. Marlene Alvarez, assistant director for Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) in the Atlantic Union, is the editor. Articles and other material may be submitted to her via e-mail: earlychildhood@atlanticunion.org.

The newsletter is available in PDF format online at www.atlantic-union.org/education6.html.

“No higher work was ever committed to mortals than the shaping of character. Children are not only to be educated, but trained as well; and who can tell the future of a growing child, or youth? Let the greatest care be bestowed upon the culture of your children. One child, properly disciplined in the principles of truth, who has the love and fear of God woven through the character, will possess a power for good in the world that cannot be estimated”—CHILD GUIDANCE, p. 163.

Ednor A. P. Davison, GLEANER editor

at www.atlantic-union.org
About 800 young people gathered at the Stamford Hilton Hotel in Stamford, Connecticut, on January 14–17 to attend Northeastern Conference’s annual Youth Ministries Convention. Since its inception more than 16 years ago, this premier youth event has a consistent attendance of youth from the states of New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island.

The theme for the 2010 convention, “United By Design,” caught on like wildfire among the youth. Both the music and lyrics of the theme song, composed by Robert Allison, a member of the Mount Vernon Seventh-day Adventist Church, served to engrave the theme in the minds of each delegate.

An “all star” team of Adventists were presenters at the convention. They included James R. Doggette, Madison Mission Seventh-day Adventist Church pastor, who presented the keynote message on Sabbath; Ron Whitehead, Lake Union Conference youth ministries director, who delivered the main address for the Master Guide Investiture Service; Bill Wood, Atlantic Union Conference youth ministries director, who delivered the charge for the Adventist Youth Leaders Investiture; Dwain Esmond, INSIGHT magazine editor, whose spellbinding seminars received rave reviews; and Joel Johnson, Allegheny West Conference youth ministries director, whose talent for drama ministries with both human subjects and puppets was in great demand.

More than 1,000 youth attended the Sabbath service. Music was presented by the praise team “One Praise” from Atlantic Union College. After Doggette’s soul-stirring message, young people pressed forward to surrender their hearts to the Lord and make a commitment for service in 2010. A prayer was offered for the people of Haiti. The young people gave more than $5,000 when a special offering was collected for Haiti.

An Adventist Youth Leaders Investiture was held, with 17 new leaders invested. There was also a Master Guide Investiture service, with 99 new Master Guides invested, making it one of the larger Master Guide Investiture services at the convention in recent years.

The convention ended with a call for unity among leaders. In the opening address Nigel Lewis, Northeastern Conference youth ministries director, reminded leaders that the infilling of the Holy Spirit brings about a unity that will empower and resurrect their ministry. Likewise, in his closing charge, Philip M. Wesley II, Northeastern Conference associate youth director, challenged leaders to work together, as “two are better than one.” It was definitely a rich spiritual experience.

—Kristia Beaubrun, public relations director, and Ritha Pierre, correspondence secretary/staff writer, Franco-Haitian Youth Federation, Northeastern Conference
The Women of Hanson Place Make a Statement

The women of the Hanson Place Seventh-day Adventist Church in Brooklyn, New York, made a statement by wearing red on Sabbath, February 6, to heighten awareness that heart disease is the number-one killer of women.

A Healthy Heart Symposium was held on Sunday, February 7, under the leadership of the women’s and health ministries teams, led by Elies Whitfield, Muriel Bernard, and Jennifer Renaud.

Speaking at the symposium was Triponia Artienda, M.D., an assistant attending physician of internal medicine and cardiology at Lutheran Medical Center and New York Methodist Hospital in Brooklyn.

Artienda explained heart disease, what people need to know about it, and how and why heart disease risk factors are important. She encouraged the women to discuss this serious but preventable disease with their physicians so they may make right choices for their heart health.

In her presentation, Theresa Brereton, M.S., R.D., C.D.N., a member of the Hanson Place church women’s ministries team, a registered dietitian, and the nutritional manager for the Visiting Nurses of New York, provided steps to prevent and lower risks of heart disease. She encouraged the women to improve dietary habits by limiting the consumption of saturated fats and whole dairy, chips, cookies, fried chicken and fries, egg yolks, organic meats, salt and sugary desserts, and by increasing the consumption of soluble fibers, such as grains, nuts, oatmeal, corn, apples, pears, and root vegetables.

Monica Charlotin, D.P.T., who provides neurologic and orthopedic interventions at the Lutheran Medical Center, spoke on how to incorporate exercise for a healthy heart.

Exercise, she pointed out, helps decrease triglycerides, control weight, increase HDL, control blood sugar and increase heart rate. Not only did she speak about the benefits of exercise but she engaged the audience in doing some simple exercises.

This segment of the program ended with a personal testimony by Carolyn Mounter, R.N., wife of Melvin Mounter, the church’s pastor, who had heart surgery some years ago.

The Healthy Heart Symposium, moderated by Elvie Philbert, R.N., was a success, and those who attended pledged to pay more attention to their heart health.

Participants also had the opportunity to meet with medical personnel for blood pressure, diabetes, and cholesterol testing, and to ask their personal medical questions. They were also served nutritious healthy-heart foods made of fruit, grains, and nuts.

Thanks and appreciation for a job well done were expressed by Milton Haynes to the women’s ministries team.

—Maureen O. Burke, communication department staff, Hanson Place church

Northeastern’s Clerks and Treasurers Discover What’s Possible

The Northeastern Conference hosted its annual clerks and treasurers workshop at the Stamford Hilton Marriot Hotel in Stamford, Connecticut, on the weekend of February 5–7. According to members of the treasury staff, this year’s convention attendance was much larger than in previous years, and the worship service added much to the program.

This event is held each year to train clerks and treasurers to do an effective job at managing the Lord’s property and holdings. The speakers and presenters included A. Keith Morris, pastor of the Calvary Seventh-day Adventist Church in Bridgeport, Connecticut; Paul Douglas, General Conference Auditing Services director; Stafford Byers, pastor of the Bethesda Seventh-day Adventist Church in Amityville, New York; Judith B. McCoy, Resource and Concepts president; and Daniel Honore, Northeastern Conference stewardship director.

The theme for this year’s program was “Discover What’s Possible.” The breakout sessions included: What Is the Role of the Church Clerk?; Your Communication Style; Keeping Up Appearances; Balancing Acts; Task Management Church Policies and Procedures; Treasury 101; Internal Controls and Auditing; Church and Tax Laws; Risk Management and Loss Control; and E-Giving and Planned Giving.

Comments about the training included the following: “They provided us with a wealth of informative material,” to “I left the workshop with a new appreciation for what we all have to do,” and “This workshop inspired me to reach higher heights and sacrifice more for the cause of Christ.”

—Silas McKinney, associate stewardship and planned giving director, Northeastern Conference
Concord Church Youth Baptized

Garrison and Kendall Littell were baptized on February 13 at the Concord Seventh-day Adventist Church by Cliff Gleason, the church’s pastor. It was a time of great joy for all who gathered to recognize and support the children who publicly decided to follow Jesus. Friends and family shared their hopes and dreams for Garrison and Kendall through prayers, music, stories, and words of strength and encouragement.

Garrison and Kendall have had opportunity to work shoulder to shoulder with many of the mentors that came to support them, through various programs within the conference. It is a worthy tribute when children want to follow those who guide them and lead them to the feet of Jesus.

God be praised for people who are willing to work with the “twigs” to help them become strong “branches.”

—Karen Littell, member, Concord church
We Shall Behold Him

Northern New England Conference Camp Meeting • Pine Tree Academy, Freeport, Maine

June 18–26
Weekend Speakers

English
June 18–19
Lowell Cooper
General Vice President
General Conference

July 25–26
Elizabeth Talbot
Senior Pastor and Professor
United Kingdom

Hispanic
June 19
Samuel Romero
Hispanic Ministries Director
Carolina Conference

June 26
Wilbert Hernandez
Pastor
Northern New England Conference

Indonesian
June 19 and June 26
Evening Meetings
June 20–24

Jerry Arnold
Senior Pastor
Collegedale Community Church

Seminar Presenters

Jay Neil Jr.
Physician
Eastern Maine Medical Center

Joe Watts
Adventist Community Services
Response Depot Manager
Texas

Larry Blackmer
Vice President of Education
North American Division

Kitty Johnson
Member
Northern New England Conference

Paul Richardson
Reconnecting Ministries Coordinator
North American Division

Cliff Gleason
Pastor
Northern New England Conference

Herman Bauman
Retired Pastor
Arizona Conference

Marsha Matino
Member
Northern New England Conference

Collette Pekar
Associate Pastor
Northern New England Conference

Christie Hodson
Member
Northern New England Conference

Karen Lewis
Lay Bible Worker Training Program Director
Rocky Mountain Conference

Mark Harris
Pastor
Northern New England Conference

Arnet Mathers
Pastor
Northern New England Conference

Octavian Poenaru
Pastor
Northern New England Conference

Rick Kuntz
Evangelist
Northern New England Conference

Shawn Brace
Pastor
Northern New England Conference

Harry Sabnani
Youth Ministries Director
Northern New England Conference

Ed Goodman
Teacher
Northern New England Conference

Mike Ortel
President
Northern New England Conference

at www.atlantic-union.org
Did the Adventist Education System Fail?

As parents and teachers converse with me, two main topics are discussed: academic skills and success in life. There are those who feel that a strong academic program should be the whole school focus. Then there are those who believe that, as a church school, academic strength is important, however, the primary focus of the school is introducing students to Christ. Every parent’s desire is for their child to be successful. The question is, “How do you define success?”

About 12 years ago, while at another school, I taught a student named Joe. Joe arrived at the school for his sophomore year by a rather circuitous route from the public school system in Houston through Advent Home* in Tennessee. As the year progressed, Joe fit into the Seventh-day Adventist school life quite well. However, he was not a strong student and frequently needed additional time or tutoring.

By the time he started his senior year, I was very familiar with his academic ability. What occurred that year was viewpoint changing for me and many of his classmates. The religion classes were handled by the teaching faculty, as we did not have a full-time chaplain. I was teaching senior Bible to a class of about 30 students. It was fun and a challenge to me and the students in the class. One of the class requirements I established was that each student had to conduct class worship. This was designed to illustrate the practicality of daily worship to each student. There were lots of creative ideas, ranging from music and drama to the reading of a devotional. One thing was evident as the first semester moved along—Joe did not want to do worship. Finally, the last chance arrived for Joe. I told him this was it; he had to do one the next class period. He acquiesced and agreed.

When the big day arrived, Joe was uneasy, but went ahead and started the worship. What transpired was a testimony of Joe’s life up to the point when he was placed in Advent Home. Joe’s father was in jail in Mexico. When his father was at home, whether he was drinking, using drugs, or not, he routinely beat Joe’s mother until finally Joe was large enough to effectively protect his mother. At that point Joe defended his mother and took the brunt of his father’s beatings. Joe told of fearing for his life, his brother’s life, and his mother’s life until the day his dad went to jail. He then told of the struggle he had in his neighborhood with other unsavory influences. During the whole testimony, tears streamed down his face. This was truly an emotional time for him. During the worship, you could hear a pin drop. I believe the students in the class did not have any idea of his background and were stunned. The atmosphere immediately became more nurturing toward Joe. Joe had accepted Christ.

During that same year, early in the first semester, Joe and Juanita, his girlfriend (and eventual bride), came to me seeking advice. They were in serious danger of failing English that was being taught by a new teacher not familiar with their learning situation. After listening to their concerns, we made a trip down the hall to see the teacher. I stepped into her office for a private conversation. “Will failing these two students, making them repeat English IV help them to improve their skills the next time through?” I asked. (That is, if they were to elect to retake the class.) “Or would it be better to modify the approach now to allow for success?” The teacher answered that repeating probably would not improve their skills and a modified approach made more sense. A plan of action was made and both of the students graduated from high school the next May.

Today, Joe and Juanita are married and living in Houston. Both are gainfully employed, contributing members of society, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

So I ask the question again, How do you define success?

—Ron Huff, principal, South Lancaster Academy

This article originally appeared in the school’s newsletter, June 2009. Used with permission.

* Advent Home Learning Center, Inc., specializes in working with troubled teens to get their lives back on track. (www.adventhome.org)

Sabbath Seminars Provide Outreach Opportunities

The Framingham Seventh-day Adventist Church began the year with a variety of Sabbath afternoon seminars designed to enhance its members and encourage opportunities for the community to visit the church.

The first one, held on February 20, started with a “Revival Through 40 Days of Scripture Memorization.” It was designed to show the easiest way to memorize helpful passages of Scripture. The focus for this session was scriptures about the Holy Spirit. Hiding the Word of God in your heart is one of the key components of personal, as well as corporate, revival.

The next seminar on March 20 was called “Know Your Temperament and Tame It.” This seminar helped participants discover their temperaments and learn to build on the positive side and tame the negative side. You can have a Spirit-controlled temperament—all for the glory of God.

A “Bible Marking Seminar Part I” was the third seminar held on April 3. This seminar helped participants to become better acquainted with their Bibles.

Two more seminars are scheduled for this summer, “Easy Method on How to Give Bible Study” and a repeat of the “Revival Through 40 Days of Scripture Memorization” in preparation for an evangelistic series in September. This time around we will look at texts that are helpful for witnessing “boldly” through the power of the Holy Spirit.

—Van Saito, pastor, Framingham church

www.framinghamboa.org
“Proclaiming God’s Grace”

Southern New England Conference Camp Meeting • Campground, South Lancaster, Massachusetts

**English Camp Meeting**

**June 19**

Hyveth Williams  
Professor  
Andrews University Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

**Hispanic Camp Meeting**

**July 10**

Liz Enid Polanco  
Evangelist  
Puerto Rico

**Portuguese/Cape Verdean Camp Meeting**

**July 17**

Luis Goncalves  
Evangelist  
Brazil

**Haitian Camp Meeting**

**July 24**

Nicolas Louis  
Pastor  
Southeastern Conference

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**Foxboro Church Members Empowered for Evangelism**

Foxboro Seventh-day Adventist Church members have had several meetings with Bible worker Tom Giampa, a graduate of the Amazing Facts Center for Evangelism, to learn effective witnessing techniques.

Giampa not only taught those who attended what to do or say, but what not to do or say—which is equally important.

If they utilize what they learn in the program, they will have several positive benefits. First and foremost they will be able to develop a deeper, more intimate, personal relationship with God. They will also be planting seeds for God to nurture. Lastly, they will receive the joy that comes from knowing they are sharing our Savior. The Savior is the one thing that gives us hope, gives us happiness beyond measure, keeps us sane in an insane world, and carries us through the darkest of days.

—Excerpts from article written by Paula Daniel in the February 2010 Foxboro church newsletter.

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The Haitian Lay Symposium was held at the Shekinah Haitian Seventh-day Adventist Church in Norwich, Connecticut, on December 5, 2009. More than 300 members attended the training. “It was an exciting time equipping the laity for church and community ministry with Louis Métellus, Atlantic Union Conference Haitian Ministries vice president, as the main speaker,” said Emmanuel Joseph, coordinator.

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La session mondiale de la Conférence Générale de l'Eglise Adventiste du Septième Jour apportera une saveur internationale à Atlanta, Georgia. Ce rassemblement de la session sera représenté par plus que 25 million de familles Adventistes fortes de toutes les contrées du globe, qui se renconteront sous le thème “Proclamer la Grace de Dieu.”

“La grâce est une force puissante, vivante qui nous change, et nous anime,” a dit le président de la Conférence Générale, Jan Paulsen. “Quand la grâce de Dieu atteint notre vie—et celle de notre église—il est impossible de continuer avec les affaires habituels. Elle ouvre nos yeux aux besoins qui sont autour de nous; Elle nous oblige à aller dans nos communautés. En nous concentrant sur ce thème, nous reconnaissions que l’expérience de la grâce est absolument centrale dans la vie de chaque croyant, et nous nous demandons: ‘Comment pouvons-nous en tant qu’Adventistes du Septième Jour refléter plus clairement sa profondeur, sa largeur et sa puissance transformante?’”

La présence moyenne quotidienne à cet événement est estimée à 35,000 personnes. On espère avoir plus que 70,000 assistants durant les deux weekends. Environ 2,000 délégués de suffrage de partout dans le monde seront réunis au Dôme de Georgia dans le centre ville d’Atlanta pour participer aux rencontres qui détermineront des actions administratives de l’église pour la prochaine demi-décennie. Les participants de telles convocations ont souvent favorisé des programmes vespéral international dans lesquels ils présentent des rapports de partout dans le monde. Ces rapports seront traduits en 15 différentes langues, y compris le Langage Gestuel Américain pour les sourds.

D’autres événements associés à cette session viseront à créer une consciencisation globale et sensible à la communauté du monde, laquelle fait partie de la mission Adventiste au monde. En plus de ces événements spéciaux, il y aura une salle d’exposition comprenant des choses telles que: fournitures de travail pour l’église, matériels pour le ministère des enfants, livres religieux, un kiosque pour représenter les divers lycées et universités de l’Eglise Adventiste, une variété de musique chrétienne et beaucoup plus pour les assistants de la session à visiter et à voir. Les organisateurs ont l’intention d’utiliser les médias pour amener l’événement de 2010 aux téléspectateurs du Réseau de la Télévision Adventiste et autres organisations de livraison de communication, inclus La Radio Mondiale Adventiste. Des rapports réguliers seront disponibles aux délégués de la session ainsi qu’aux croyants de l’Eglise de partout dans le monde à travers les revues hebdomadaires de l’église, ADVENTIST REVIEW, et le reporting mondial de la presse du Réseau des Nouvelles Adventistes.

Les réunions sont ouvertes au public. Pour de plus amples informations, visitez le site www.gcsession.org.

—Département des Communications au niveau de la Conférence Générale
“Proclamando la Gracia de Dios”
Quincuagésima novena Sesión de la Asociación General, junio 23 – julio 3

La sesión mundial de la iglesia adventista del séptimo día traerá un sabor internacional a Atlanta, Georgia. Esta sesión será representativa de las más de 25 millones de familias adventistas alrededor del mundo y se unirán bajo el lema “Proclamando la Gracia de Dios.”

“La gracia es una ponderosa fuerza viviente; que nos cambia y nos anima,” dijo el presidente de la Asociación General Jan Paulsen. “Cuando la gracia de Dios alcanza nuestras vidas — y la vida de la iglesia — es imposible continuar como antes. Abre nuestros ojos a las necesidades que hay alrededor nuestro; nos mueve a salir a nuestras comunidades. Al enfocarnos en este lema, estamos aceptando que la experiencia de la gracia es absolutamente central en la vida de cada creyente y nos preguntamos: ¿Cómo es que nosotros como Adventistas del Séptimo Día podemos reflejar más claramente su profundidad, anchura y poder transformador?”

La sesión que se estará llevando acabo desde el 23 de junio hasta el 3 de julio es primordialmente una reunión administrativa para la familia de la iglesia global. “Líderes denominacionales serán elegidos, los negocios de la iglesia serán discutidos y decisiones acerca de pólizas son muchas veces hechas. Porque el centro de los “negocios” de la Iglesia Adventista del Séptimo Día es la proclamación del evangelio de Cristo Jesús, éste será el desafío que impregnará todas las actividades en la convocación de Atlanta 2010,” dijo Paulsen.

“Difícilmente serán discutidos el crecimiento de la iglesia en lugares donde el mensaje cristiano está alcanzando a muchos. Tendrán la oportunidad de conocer creyentes y trabajadores de la iglesia de otros países. Los adventistas trabajan en 201 de los 230 países y áreas reconocidas por las Naciones Unidas, y se comunican en más de 880 idiomas por medio de las publicaciones y trabajo verbal. Los adventistas del séptimo día operan la quincuagésima novena Sesión de la Asociación General, junio 23 – julio 3

Los participantes de estas convocaciones mundiales han favorecido los programas nocturnos internacionales, los cuales presentan reportes de todo el mundo. Estos reportes son traducidos en 15 idiomas diferentes, al igual que son traducidos para aquellas personas que tienen deficiencias auditivas.

Otros eventos especializados están programados con la sesión tratarán de enfatizar la sensibilidad global y comunitaria; lo que es parte de la misión adventista al mundo. Además de estos eventos especiales, habrá un pasillo de exhibiciones los cuales incluirá materiales para las iglesias, materiales para los departamentos infantiles, libros religiosos, representaciones de las universidades y colegios de la iglesia adventista y una gran variedad de música cristiana y mucho más para los participantes de la sesión.

Los organizadores planean usar los medios comunicativos para llevarles el evento de Atlanta 2010 a los televidentes por medio de la red de televisión adventista y otros medios de comunicación como la radio mundial adventista. Reportes regulares estarán disponibles para los delegados de la sesión y los miembros de la iglesia por medio de la revista Adventist Review, y la red de noticias adventistas.


—Departamento de Comunicaciones de la Asociación General
Statement on Ethical Considerations Regarding Human Cloning

For a number of decades, the prospect that new members of the human family might be produced by cloning was considered farfetched. Recent advances in genetic and reproductive biology, however, indicate that techniques for this prospect come the Christian responsibility to address profound ethical issues associated with human cloning. As Christians, with firm belief in God’s creative and redemptive power, Seventh-day Adventists accept the responsibility to enunciate ethical principles that emerge from their faith commitments.

Cloning includes all those processes by which living plants or animals are replicated by asexual means—methods that do not involve the fusion of egg and sperm. Many natural processes are forms of cloning. For example, microorganisms, like common yeast, reproduce by splitting into two daughter cells that are clones of the parent cell and each other. Cutting a twig from a rose bush or grapevine and propagating it into a complete plant also creates a clone of the original plant. Similarly, many simple animals, such as starfish, can regenerate complete organisms from small parts of a predecessor. Thus the biological principle of cloning is not new.

The new technique is known as somatic cell nuclear transfer. The essence of this method is to take a cell from an existing individual and manipulate it so that it behaves like an embryonic cell. Given the proper conditions, an embryonic cell can proliferate and generate a complete individual. At present, this cellular reprogramming is accomplished by putting a complete adult cell inside a larger egg cell whose nucleus has been removed. The egg that is used in this process serves the role of an incubator, providing an essential environment to reactivates genes of the adult cell. The egg contributes to the offspring only the small amount of genetic material associated with its cytoplasm, not its nuclear genetic material, as occurs in sexual reproduction. The altered egg must then be implanted in an adult female for gestation.

Biologists have developed this technique as a tool for animal husbandry. By this means, they hope to create a herd of valued animals that are genetically identical to a selected individual. The potential benefits from this technology, including the expectation of products for treating human diseases, are of great interest to researchers and to the biotechnology industry. However, the same technological capacity could be used for human reproduction and thus raises serious ethical concerns.

First among these concerns is medical safety. If the current technique of somatic cell nuclear transfer were to be used in humans, ova would need to be obtained from donors. Most of these would perish because of cellular manipulations during early embryonic growth in the laboratory. Others would be lost after implantation, spontaneously aborted at various stages of fetal development. In this respect, sensitivity to the value of embryonic and fetal life would be similar to the development of other methods of assisted reproduction, such as in vitro fertilization. There would likely be an increased risk of birth defects in children brought to term. At present, concern about physical harm to developing human lives is sufficient to rule out the use of this technology.

However, even if the success rates of cloning were to improve and the medical risks were diminished, a number of major concerns would remain. For example, is there anything intrinsically problematic with creating an individual who is not produced through fertilization of an egg by a sperm? Further study is needed to resolve questions regarding the essential nature of procreation in God’s design.

Another of the most often expressed concerns is that the dignity and uniqueness of a cloned person may be jeopardized. This risk includes the psychological harm that might be experienced by an individual who would be what some have called the “delayed identical twin” of the individual who provided the initial cell. Do existing persons have the right to exercise such a level of control over the genetic destiny of a new individual?

Concern also exists that human cloning might undermine family relationships. Commitments to both the unitive and the procreative functions of human sexual relationships might be diminished. For example, the questionable practice of using a gestational surrogate may, at times, be considered. The use of a donor cell from an individual other than the married couple may introduce problems of relationships and responsibilities.

An additional major risk is that cloning could lead to expedient uses of those who are cloned, with their value assigned primarily on the basis
of their utility. For example, there could be a temptation to clone individuals to serve as sources of transplantable organs. Others have worried about the deliberate creation of subservient individuals whose autonomy would be violated. Egotistical or narcissistic individuals might be inclined to use the technology in order to “duplicate” themselves.

Finally, the financial costs of cloning would likely be considerable, even after significant technological improvements. If human cloning were commercialized, conflicting interests might add to the risk of abuse.

While this is only a partial list of potential risks and misuses of human cloning, it should be sufficient to give pause to Christians who wish to apply the moral principles of their faith to the matter of human cloning. Still, it is important that concerns about the abuses of a technology not blind us to the possibilities of using it to meet genuine human needs. The possibility of human cloning, even if remote, motivates this statement of relevant Christian principles.

The following ethical principles are intended to apply to somatic cell nuclear transfer, if that technology is ever applied to human beings. The rapid pace of progress in this field will require periodic review of these principles in light of new developments.

1. Protection of vulnerable human life. Scripture is clear in its call to protect human life, especially those lives that are most vulnerable (Deuteronomy 10:17-19; Isaiah 1:16, 17, Matthew 25:31-46). The biological technology of cloning is ethically unacceptable whenever it poses disproportionate risk of harm to human life.

2. Protection of human dignity. Human beings were created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26, 27) and were thus endowed with personal dignity that calls for respect and protection (Genesis 9:6). Cloning may threaten human dignity in a number of ways and must thus be approached with resolute moral vigilance. Any use of this technology that undermines or diminishes the personal dignity or autonomy of human beings must be rejected. This moral prohibition applies to all human cloning that would value human life primarily for its utilitarian function or commercial value.

3. Alleviating human suffering. It is a Christian responsibility to prevent suffering and to preserve the quality of human life (Acts 10:38; Luke 9:2). If it is possible to prevent genetic disease through the use of somatic cell nuclear transfer, the use of this technology may be in keeping with the goal of preventing avoidable suffering.

4. Family support. God’s ideal plan is for children to develop in the context of a loving family with the presence, participation, and support of both mother and father (Proverbs 22:6; Psalm 128:1-3; Ephesians 6:4; 1 Timothy 5:8). Any use of somatic cell nuclear transfer as a means of assisting human reproduction should thus be within the context of the fidelity of marriage and support of stable family life. As with other forms of assisted reproduction, the involvement of third parties, such as surrogates, introduces moral problems that are best avoided.

5. Stewardship. The principles of Christian stewardship (Luke 14:28; Proverbs 3:9) are important for all types of assisted human reproduction, including the possibility of somatic cell nuclear transfer, which is likely to be very costly. Married couples seeking such assistance should consider the expenses involved in terms of their exercise of faithful stewardship.

6. Truthfulness. Honest communication is one of Scripture’s mandates (Proverbs 12:22; Ephesians 4:15, 25). Any proposed use of cloning should be informed by the most accurate information available, including the nature of the procedure, its potential risks, and its costs.

7. Understanding God’s creation. God intends for human beings to grow in their appreciation and understanding of His creation, which includes knowledge regarding the human body (Matthew 6:26-29; Psalms 8:3-9, 139:1-6; 13-16). For this reason, efforts to understand the biological structures of life through ethical research should be encouraged.

Given our present state of knowledge and the current refinement of somatic cell nuclear transfer, the use of this technique for human cloning is deemed unacceptable by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Given our responsibility to alleviate disease and to enhance the quality of human life, continued appropriate research with animals is deemed acceptable.

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To view the entire statement, visit: www.adventist.org/beliefs/statements/main_stat38.html.

This statement was voted during the Annual Council of the General Conference Executive Committee on Sunday, September 27, 1998, in Iguacu Falls, Brazil.

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1 There may be future situations in which human cloning could be considered beneficial and morally acceptable. It is possible, for example, to imagine circumstances in which cloning may be contemplated within the context of marriage as the only available means of reproduction for a couple who cannot participate in normal procreation. In other cases, potential parents may be carriers of defective genetic alleles, and they may wish to avoid the risk of giving birth to a child with a genetic disorder. The use of somatic cell nuclear transfer might assist such parents in having a child who would be free of genetic disorder. Of course, many of the concerns about personal identity and dignity would still remain, even in the context of family fidelity. As with other forms of assisted human reproduction, potential blessings of somatic cell nuclear transfer must be weighed against the risks.
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Eastern Daylight Savings Time

- 5-15. Details: www.auc.edu, adp@auc.edu, (978) 368-2300.

OUT-OF-UNION

Amateur Radio Operators—The quinquennial business and fellowship meeting of the Adventist Amateur Radio Association International will be held June 27 at 2:00 p.m., in room B-317 (building B), in connection with the General Conference session in Atlanta. All radio amateurs are welcome to attend. Visit us during the session in the exhibit area, booth 1738, Adventist World Aviation. Jim Hofler, KW8T, secretary-treasurer, www.aarai.org.

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<tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>President</th>
<th>Donald G. King</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vice President, Haitian</td>
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<td>Dioniollio Oliver</td>
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<td>Dioniollio Oliver</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shepherds</td>
<td>Lois King</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stewardship</td>
<td>Leon D. Thomasson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust Services/Inner City/Loss Control</td>
<td>Leon D. Thomasson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Ministries</td>
<td>Charlotte L. Thomasson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Ministries/Pathfinder/Adventurer</td>
<td>William Wood</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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