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The Youth Ministries departments of the Atlantic Union and its six local conferences co-sponsored a “Dare2Do” Youth Congress held on the weekend of October 15-16. It was the culmination of a series of activities occurring over a three-year period geared toward encouraging youth and young adults to be inspired, equipped, and deployed to finish God’s work in the Atlantic Union territory. Read more about the events beginning on page 4. Other features include: Adventist Education, Positions of Our Faith, and Youth Connections. The “Dare2Do” graphic on cover was designed by Ornan Anthony from AdventSource.
The Gift May **Be Small, but . . .**

While I stood in the checkout line at the grocery store recently, I noticed two women with full shopping carts standing on either side of me. One was already at the register and the cashier was ringing up her order. As I waited for my turn, my eye caught the viewer with the price of the woman's order. In that instant, I remembered there were two coupons in my wallet worth $5.00 off the next purchase of $75.00 or more, and they were going to expire soon. It seemed wasteful to throw them away. The thought crossed my mind, *Why not give them to the woman at the register? She surely could use them.* I opened my wallet, took them out, and handed them to her. The expression of gratitude and surprise on her face was priceless as she took the coupons.

As it turns out, in order for her to use both coupons, the bill had to total $150.00 or more. Her order didn't quite reach $150.00. She took one coupon and handed the other back to me. Still thinking it would be a shame to waste it, I turned to the woman behind me, leaned over her shoulder, handed her the coupon, and let her know she was welcome to use it since I could not. Her expression was also priceless. At that moment, it seemed as though I had handed both of these women something worth more than $5.00.

I walked away that afternoon with a feeling of satisfaction, not only because of what I did, but also because of the priceless look on their faces. It wasn't much, but it was evident from their expressions that they valued the gift they received.

We live in a nation where many people today seem to prefer to receive than to give—Adventists included. We tend to do our giving at a predetermined time of the year—birthdays, anniversaries, weddings, Thanksgiving, and Christmas—rather than at random intervals. The person we are giving to is usually a family member, friend, or someone we know well. For some, there is very little giving beyond that circle.

I believe now would be a good time to reflect on our giving habits to see if we need to make any changes. In a few weeks many people will get caught up in that annual custom of giving gifts during the holiday season. The mad dash began around the Thanksgiving holiday. Some of us wait until the last minute and pick up anything, just so that we have something to give those we know. I suggest that you *change that habit. Do something new and different.* Instead of giving to familiar people, give to those you don't know. We would all be in a better place if we practiced acts of kindness throughout our lives rather than at preset times. There would be untold blessings poured out on people we don't know because we chose to share our blessings. *The gift may be small, but love is all.*

It could be something as simple as sharing a coupon, giving a hug, praying with someone, or it could be something more tangible, such as donating groceries or donating time to work with a child, a family in need, an elderly person, or with a community organization. The possibilities are endless!

Don't wait for the holidays to roll around to give. Let it become a way of life for you. Find someone to do some practical thing for, every now and then. It will not only make your day, but it will put a smile on the face of the person receiving the gift and make the world a better place, one random act of kindness at a time. ¶

*Ednor A. P. Davison is the editor of the Atlantic Union GLEANER and assistant to the president for communication in the Atlantic Union Conference.*

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**We would all be in a better place if we practiced acts of kindness throughout our lives rather than at preset times.**
The Atlantic Union Dare2Do Youth Congress held on the weekend of October 15-16 was the culmination of a series of activities occurring over a three-year period geared toward encouraging youth and young adults to be inspired, equipped, and deployed to finish God’s work in the Atlantic Union territory.

The event, co-sponsored by the Youth Ministries departments of the Atlantic Union and its six local conferences, did not occur without some challenges. The most significant challenge was the cancellation of a larger event planned for Hartford, Connecticut, and having to replace it with two events on a smaller scale at the Machlan Auditorium on the campus of Atlantic Union College (AUC) in South Lancaster, Massachusetts, and at the Church of the Advent Hope in New York, New York. Although many were disappointed that the event did not occur at the original venue, the Lord worked it out so that hundreds of youth and young adults could receive a blessing.

It is estimated that about 700 people attended the two-day event at AUC, and there was a full crowd for the one-day event at the Church of the Advent Hope. The speakers at AUC were James Black, North American Division youth ministries director; Manny Cruz, North American Division associate youth director; and Dudley Francois, student spiritual leader at AUC. Sam Leonor, a chaplain at La Sierra University, was the featured speaker at the Church of the Advent Hope.

Many relevant growth opportunities (workshops) were offered at AUC on Sabbath afternoon. Three different tracts were presented using the theme “Inspire, Equip, and Deploy,” which has been the Atlantic Union Conference Youth Ministries’ main focus for the past three years. Each growth opportunity challenged the
youth and young adults to take what they learned and “Dare2Do” something great for Jesus.

The day also included several outreach and community projects.

One unique ministry was the Drive-Through Prayer outreach. Young people held up signs at various intersections in the Lancaster area inviting people to pray. Many participating in the event indicated that they were excited about the response they received.

More than 100 copies of the The Great Controversy in paperback were handed out door-to-door with an invitation to sign up for a free Bible study. Seventeen people indicated an interest in receiving Bible studies.

Musical selections were presented by South Lancaster Academy Vocé choir, the Atlantic Union College BCU choir, and several students.

Steve Varro, a Christian illusionist, shared many gospel illustrations through illusions. Several people indicated that the spiritual lessons brought out by Varro’s unique ministry were a highlight of the weekend for them.

An inspiring drama presentation on the great controversy was presented by youth from the Boston Spanish Seventh-day Adventist Church.
day Adventist Church in Dorchester, Massachusetts. “This was the best event ever held at AUC since I have been a student there,” says Francois.

Following the events, a debriefing session was held on the campus of AUC. As a result of this session the Atlantic Union Conference Youth Ministries department has been asked to plan and coordinate an event each year at the college inviting youth and young adults throughout the union to attend.

Efforts by the Atlantic Union Youth Ministries department will be ongoing to ensure that the youth and young adults will continue to be “inspired, equipped, and deployed” to “Dare2Do” something in their churches and communities to help advance God’s work in the Atlantic Union.

Bill Wood is director for the Youth Ministries, Pathfinder, and Adventurer departments in the Atlantic Union Conference.
Delegates from the Northern New England Conference met at Pine Tree Academy in Freeport, Maine, on Sunday, October 31, for the thirty-sixth regular constituency session. One of the first items on the agenda was a vote to accept the Dover Indonesian Seventh-day Adventist Church, located in Somersworth, New Hampshire, into the sisterhood of churches.

The delegates voted to reelect Mike Ortel as president and Randee Reynolds as treasurer. In addition, Arnold Schnell, pastor of the Dexter and Bangor Seventh-day Adventist churches in Maine, was elected to serve as the conference's executive secretary. Schnell is replacing Merlin Knowles, who accepted the invitation of the Montana Conference's executive committee to serve as president of that conference.

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All department directors were reelected—Trudy Wright, education; Lynn Ortel, communication; and Harry Sabnani, youth ministries. Throughout the day, the delegates received reports from the administrators, department directors, academy principals, and Parkview Adventist Medical Center. They also discussed and voted changes to the conference's constitution and bylaws.

One important action voted by delegates was to authorize the construction of a new conference office building and heritage center in Freeport, Maine, to be completed in two phases and as finances are available. A design advisory team consisting of constituents from the Northern New England Conference will be appointed by the executive committee.

As the new term begins, Ortel says, “Unity is the name of the game. My ultimate goal is unity, oneness, togetherness, and connectedness with God and each other.”

His vision going forward is to “continue what has been working in the past, which is reflected in the conference’s theme: “CoNNECted to God and Each Other We Can Make a Difference.”

He shares the following with the members:

- “Do not let Satan cast his hellish shadow between brethren. Press together; in unity there is strength.”—The Ellen G. White 1888 MATERIALS, p. 904
- Unity is strength; disunity is weakness and defeat. (TESTIMONIES, vol. 6, p. 293)
- In unity there is life and power. (SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF GOD, p. 286)
- If Christians were unified, moving forward as one, they would move the world. (TESTIMONIES, vol. 9, p. 221)
- Satan seeks and plans to destroy unity. (THOUGHTS FROM THE MOUNT OF BLESSINGS, p. 48)
- Satan works constantly to prevent unity. (TESTIMONIES, vol. 5, p. 620)
- Union with Christ and each other is our only safety in these last days. (TESTIMONIES, vol. 8, p. 240)
- “When we become one in Christ.” Ortel goes on to say, “then there will be a Holy Ghost power that will overtake us. This blessing (the grace of God) will produce true godliness that leads to revival and reformation.”

The Northern New England Conference has more than 5,221 members worshiping in 60 churches and five companies and 12 elementary schools, two academies, and one health care institution.

Ednor A. P. Davison is the editor of the Atlantic Union GLEANER and assistant to the president for communication in the Atlantic Union Conference.

at www.atlantic-union.org
Recently I attended the annual 180 Symposium, a youth and young adult ministries summit sponsored by the Center for Youth Evangelism and Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan. This three-day event, attended by youth professionals from around the North American Division and the world, is a “think tank” for youth ministries. The special emphasis this year was the development of a “theology of youth ministry” and the formation of several models of youth ministry that can be used in churches.

Do you have a basic theology of youth ministry that guides you? Let me share one that might give you some guidance. It is based on Ephesians 4:11-16. Take some time to read the passage. Space does not allow a complete explanation, so I will highlight a few major points.

**Youth ministry must first begin with God as the lead youth leader** (verse 11). It was God who gave gifts to man. It is He who has given us the talents and abilities to work with youth. Nothing can be accomplished in youth ministry without Christ being the head youth leader.

**Be intentional about forming a Youth Council** (verse 11). God gives individuals as His gifts to the church. Of course this verse does not give a complete list. Each type of individual listed is important to youth work. Youth leaders don’t have all the skills necessary. A team approach to youth ministry is imperative. As you build your team, look for individuals who have skills that you don’t have. Recruit a variety of individuals who can lend their special talents to the youth group.

**“Equipping of the saints”** (verse 12). The New International Version uses the phrase “God’s people.” We need to recognize who owns youth ministry.

The youth do not belong to us. Although God has given us this responsibility, they are God’s children. They belong to God, and recognizing that should help us realize the importance of what we are doing. God has given us the youth to care for, to nurture, and to make disciples; this should be our focus. What an awesome responsibility.

This phrase also gives us our first emphasis, and that is to promote a servant attitude. We, as leaders, should model servanthood, and as we model, the youth will follow. The second principle in this phrase is not only to minister to them but to minister with them. These verses give emphasis to the fact that we must help the youth find their talents and then give them opportunities to use those talents.

**“We all come to the unity of faith”** (verse 13). Almost everything you read today about youth ministry deals with the importance of developing relationships. Building relationships is the way that we can all come to this unity. Building relationships means loving the youth and accepting them for who they are. Jim Burns, a noted youth ministry specialist, says, “Relational youth ministry starts with relational youth staff.”

**Youth ministry must be relevant** (verse 16). It must meet the needs of the youth who live in the twenty-first century. Issues that were important 10 to 15 years ago are really no longer relevant today. As we program and plan youth ministry, we must meet the actual needs of the youth, relying on the Holy Spirit to guide us.

Study also Matthew 28:18-20. We recognize these verses as the Great Commission, but within that commission you will also find some very important principles for youth ministry. God bless you as you develop a theology of youth ministry that will give you a focus and direction as you guide the youth.

Bill Wood is director for the Youth Ministries, Pathfinder, and Adventurer departments in the Atlantic Union Conference.
"Choices" Give Teens a Major Boost

The Devonshire Seventh-day Adventist Church in Devonshire, Bermuda, sponsored an event called "Choices" that is aimed at lifting up the youth in the community. It is a program designed to inspire and motivate young people to get along with themselves and others. Ryan Simpson, the church’s pastor, and Steve Case, president of Involve Youth, hosted the event held at the gymnasium of the Berkeley Institute in Pembroke, Bermuda. “Everything we did revolved around choices,” says Simpson. “There are many roads, but only one choice to be made. So we are not telling them what the choice is, but we are encouraging them to make good choices.”

The gymnasium was transformed into a game arcade based on the four “Fs”—Fun, Food, Faith, and Fellowship. It included activities, food, team-building, fellowship, and decision-making. An average of 75 youth participated nightly. They took part in the meal and games that included football, table tennis, basketball, pool, and Wii activities. A short worship service and team-building session followed. “We just let them talk about their issues,” says Simpson. “They have tough decisions to make, but have established relationships with each other as well as with trusted adults.”

Damon Hendrickson, pastor of the Midland Heights Seventh-day Adventist Church in Hamilton Parish, Bermuda, says, “It’s an awesome program. You’ll be hard pressed to find a week-long event and find this amount of participants of this age group with no negative incidents. It deserves applause.”

The program was open to everyone, but registered participants were treated to great food and a program to keep young people inspired to continue doing good.

—Adapted from STREAMS OF LIGHT, a Bermuda Conference newsletter, p.10

**Coming Again!**

By Celia Musson-Nzabalinda, D.D.S.

As the earth shakes to and fro the message is proclaimed
As the winds and whirlwinds blow they speak the same refrain
Coming again! Coming again! I hear it loud and clear
The signs are there so all will know the time is almost here.
The earth is reeling from the blows that sin has sent its way
And all who are by sin enthralled are shaken by the sway
But those who wait upon the Lord stand firm and fast and sure
For they know soon will come a time when sin will be no more
Though ice caps melt, though waters rise and islands disappear
They only tell what must be told. The end of time is near.
Coming again! Coming again! The rocks cry out the song.
Coming again! Coming again! They say it won’t be long.
So though the winds of strife and stress make all around you fall
Stand firm in faith and just hold on. You can withstand it all
Coming again! Coming again! Say it, and make it plain.
Let the whole world hear the words. JESUS IS COMING AGAIN!

—Poem written by a Hamilton Seventh-day Adventist Church member during the hours Hurricane Igor passed over Bermuda.
Greater New York Conference Sponsors a Summer Literature Evangelist Student Scholarship Program

With the vision of sharing the gospel of Jesus and forming leaders in North America, specifically in the New York area, the Greater New York Conference Publishing Department has established a Literature Evangelist (LE) Student Scholarship Program. This is a new way of doing literature evangelism in New York using books and literature to evangelize with the strength and energy of the young people.

The leaders of the LE program include Tania Collado, coordinator; Nigel Francois, assistant leader and trainer; and 16 junior leaders. The students worked for 50 days during the summer. They visited about 2,260 homes every day. This totals more than 112,800 homes visited. They prayed with people and brought them the message of the love of Jesus and the health message.

Thousands of people asked for Bible studies. More than 30,000 books were delivered by the students to the families in New York.

One day, a female student visited a house where a woman answered the door. As the student introduced The Great Controversy book, the woman said she was having so many problems that she could not buy the book. The student asked the woman if she wanted her to pray for all her problems. She accepted, and the student prayed and left. A few minutes later, while the student was presenting the books to a gentleman on the street, the woman came to her crying and saying, “I’m so sorry, but I need the book.” She asked for the price and bought the book. God impresses people through sincere prayer.

“The Lord calls upon our youth to labor as canvassers . . . to do house-to-house work. . . . Christ calls for young men who will volunteer to carry the truth to the world. . . . May the Lord move upon many of our young men and women to enter the canvassing field as canvassing evangelists”—Colporteur Ministry, p. 19, 20.

The students lived in four mission houses. A mid-term retreat was held with the objective of recognizing God’s power and to get closer to Him. A Communion service was held and students renewed their vows and reconsecrated their lives to serving the Lord.

The program ended with a spiritual retreat called “LIGHT.” The students strengthened their relationships with Jesus and they praised and thanked God for all His blessings. All the students finished their work and were ready to go back to their schools with great enthusiasm. Many of them said this was a very spiritual experience that has changed their lives and they promised to return next year.

—Jose Dominguez, publishing director, Greater New York Conference

Beulah Temple Members Help Meet Community Needs

Adults and children at the Beulah Temple Seventh-day Adventist Church in Brooklyn, New York, have responded to the Lord’s admonition, “Freely ye have received, freely give” (Matthew 10:8). Over the past months the members have been engaged in different activities to help meet the needs of the less fortunate.

On Sunday, August 22, it was harvest-time at the church when the members brought their homegrown produce and homemade goodies for sale. Those who were unable to grow anything brought purchased items to add to the sale. The money raised from the sale was placed in a special “Brothers-Keepers” fund to help the poor and needy.

The following Sunday, August 29, the children’s ministries department distributed back-to-school supplies to more than 70 children from the Bayview Housing Project. The supplies included backpacks, notebooks, filler paper, pens, pencils, rulers, crayons, erasers, sharpeners, and pencil cases.

By faith, the Beulah Temple members will be engaged in these activities annually as the church seeks to reach out to the spiritual and other needs in the community.

—Gillian Semple, communication leader, Beulah Temple church

Thirteen-year-old Jessica Benjamin shared tomatoes that she she grew specifically for the harvest celebration.
The Victory Seventh-day Adventist Church in Bronx, New York, was the host of a prayer vigil on Monday, September 20, held at the request of the Clergy Coalition and Joy Christian Fellowship Church. Joy Christian Fellowship lost six of its members, including the pastor, Steven Siciliano, in a tragic motor vehicle accident on Saturday, September 18. More than 700 individuals, including Jamaica's Deputy Prime Minister Ken Baugh, attended the service.

The incident had the potential of setting the community on fire but, due to calm leadership and outreach headed by the mayor, disaster was averted. In addressing the church members, Pontieri thanked the church for its presence and work in the neighborhood. He called on the people of the village to be united and to love and treat one another with respect.

The church's Adventist Community Services director, Diane Schmidt, and its pastor, Steven Siciliano, presented the mayor with a plaque thanking him for his leadership and dedication in the community. The mayor stayed for the worship service. Orley Anderson, the first elder of the Riverhead Seventh-day Adventist Church in Riverhead, New York, offered the pastoral prayer, and David Willis, pastor of the Brownsville Temple Seventh-day Adventist Church in Brooklyn, New York, presented special music which prompted the mayor to say, “That was beautiful.” Pastor Siciliano preached the third of a five-part series entitled "In Search of the Gospel.” The mayor stayed after the service and spoke with the members and guests.

The Victory Seventh-day Adventist Church in Patchogue, New York, honored the mayor of Patchogue Village, Paul Pontieri, Jr., during their Community Guest Day on September 4. The mayor was honored for his hard work and dedication in developing the Patchogue area into a vibrant community where businesses are seeing increased growth and families are once again putting down roots and establishing homes.

The mayor was also commended for his immediate response and actions after an incident that occurred in November 2008 when Patchogue resident, Marcelo Lucero, an Ecuadorian, was killed. The incident had the potential of setting the community on fire but, due to calm leadership and outreach headed by the mayor, disaster was averted. In addressing the church members, Pontieri thanked the church for its presence and work in the neighborhood. He called on the people of the village to be united and to love and treat one another with respect.

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The Victory Seventh-day Adventist Church in Patchogue, New York, honored the mayor of Patchogue Village, Paul Pontieri, Jr., during their Community Guest Day on September 4. From left are Ernst Pierre-Pierre, elder; Samantha Armstrong, elder; Mark Armstrong, first elder; Steven Siciliano, pastor; Mayor Paul Pontieri, Jr.; and Nate Desire, elder, holding his daughter, Natalie.

"In Search of the Gospel.” The mayor stayed after the service and spoke with the members and guests.

“Off the pavement and rolled several times before coming to rest upside down on the grassy center median. The van had 14 passengers; the Victory church. Several clergymen and community leaders and a representative from the community police department addressed the audience. One of the clergymen, Robert Reid, lost his mother and his uncle, Bishop Simon, in the accident. They all pledged their support to the bereaved families and Joy Christian Fellowship.

The media was allowed to cover the prayer vigil. Those present included 1010 WINS and Channels 2, 4, 7, 11 and Bronx 12. An offering was collected in support of the families.

At the close of the service Marks promised the bereaved families and the mourning church that Victory church would be available to assist in any way possible in the coming weeks and months.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church extends its condolences to the families of this tragic accident.

—Rohann Wellington, communication director, Greater New York Conference

“Marks promised the bereaved families and the mourning church that Victory church would be available to assist in any way possible in the coming weeks and months.”

—Mark Armstrong, communication director, Patchogue church

Patchogue Seventh-day Adventist Church members honored the mayor during their Community Guest Day on September 4. From left are Ernst Pierre-Pierre, elder; Samantha Armstrong, elder; Mark Armstrong, first elder; Steven Siciliano, pastor; Mayor Paul Pontieri, Jr.; and Nate Desire, elder, holding his daughter, Natalie.

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at www.atlantic-union.org

Atlantic Union GLEANER, December 2010

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Music Department Now Accepting Applications!

The Atlantic Union College Music Department is now accepting new music majors for spring semester starting in January 2011!

The Music department offers two degrees: the Bachelor of Arts in music, which is easily combined with a second major or pre-professional program, and the Bachelor of Music, a professional degree with two tracks, music education and performance.

AUC music students participate in the extensive artistic life of the greater Boston and Worcester communities. Working together, faculty and students create an atmosphere within which intellectual, spiritual, social, and artistic development can take place.

Non-music majors, church members, area residents, and children of all ages are invited to register for private and group lessons, and participate in individual and group music opportunities.

Well Prepared for Grad School

David Chavannes graduated with a Bachelor of Music Performance in the Spring of 2010. Today, he is a graduate student studying for a master’s degree in Choral Conducting and Piano Performance at the University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas. He was also awarded a teaching assistantship in the Choral Division.

“I am well-equipped for graduate study because of the top-notch training I received at AUC. Moreover, I was nurtured at AUC. My professors and the staff of the Music department were always supportive of me and encouraging. I feel my years of study at AUC really put me in good stead for future study in a larger academic environment, and for future musical growth in the ‘real’ world.”

Developing Practical Skills

Francisco Fernandez, left, practices conducting skills in conducting class.

Pictured is Scott Christie playing the timpani. All music education majors take seven methods courses to develop rudimentary skills on piano, voice, brass, woodwind, string, percussion, and fretted instruments.

—Carol Swinyar, director, Thayer Performing Arts Center, and administrative assistant, Music department

Music Department Information
(978) 368-2100, www.auc.edu

Photos: Carol Swinyar
Adapted from the original text:

John Livergood grew up in the Seventh-day Adventist faith. He stopped attending church at the age of 14, only to embrace faith in Jesus Christ almost 20 years later. Because of the Adult Degree Program (ADP) at Atlantic Union College, he was prepared to leave his career in construction and build a career as a pastor.

**Life Decision**

In 2000, Livergood began attending the Attleboro Seventh-day Adventist Church in Attleboro, Massachusetts. He became serious about his faith, began to ponder his future, and decided to become a pastor. “Pastor Whitford Shaw encouraged me to return to school,” he said. “He told me about ADP at AUC. I didn’t know about it until then. I decided to pursue a degree in religion.”

He needed 30 additional credits to obtain a major in religion when he enrolled in 2004. “ADP gives you credit for previous course work, so I got to count my work at Johnson & Wales,” he said. “All I needed were the core courses for religion.”

**Adult Degree Program**

Livergood balanced the Adult Degree Program with his construction work, church responsibilities, and family duties. He and his wife, Debra, have five children. “It took me about three years to complete the program,” he said. “I took a year off when my wife and I had twins.”

“ADP was challenging,” he says. “I’m in a master’s program now and it is not as tough as ADP was. ADP gave me discipline.” Livergood said his time at AUC prepared him well for his current role. It also fueled his faith.

Today, the family lives in Saranac, New York, and Livergood pastors six area churches in the New York Conference.

—John Weeks

**AUC Briefs**

Atlantic Union College continues to develop its community engagement specialty, its curriculum, faculty, students, and spiritual life. Here are some highlights:

- Atlantic Union College offers accredited, specialized, quality education for a diverse student body.
- Enrollment is strong, with an eight percent increase over the last academic year.
- Enrollment has not only grown, it has exceeded projections for each of the past five semesters since becoming a community engagement college.
- The Fall Week-of-Prayer concluded September 25.
- “The Week-of-Prayer brought me closer to God,” said a male student. “He got me out of a bad home environment and into a Christian environment. He even got me registered when there were large obstacles. Being here is the only hope for my future.”

—Cindy Kurtzhals, public relations director, Atlantic Union College
Union Springs Academy Welcomes New Staff

Who’s Cooking in the Kitchen?
Norman Tagalog, a native of the Philippines, grew up in the mission fields of Uganda, Kenya, and Cote d’Ivoire. He attended French language school in Paris, and high school in Africa, Singapore, and the United States, graduating from Auburn Adventist Academy in 1991. He received an associate degree in culinary arts, and completed an internship in vegan cooking at Weimar College. He served as president of the Adventist Food Service Association. His career spans 12 years, with jobs including catering, teaching, internships, and Executive Sous Chef. He has served as the food service director at Holbrook Indian School in Arizona since 2006.

Residence Halls
The assistant girls’ dean is Andrea Tagalog, wife of the cafeteria director. The new assistant boys’ dean is Fabio Ayala. He is also teaching Spanish classes.

Mathematics Department
Wayne Edwards and his wife, Angela, come from the Waldwick Seventh-day Adventist School in New Jersey, where Wayne was the principal. He has more than 20 years of experience teaching math, as well as computer technology and physics. His education includes an A.S. degree in mathematics, a B.A. degree in liberal arts and secondary education, and a master’s degree in administration. It is his desire to use his experience to ensure that faith and learning are integrated in the classroom, and to help determine the direction and quality of excellence in the school.

English Department
Loralee Muhlenbeck is the new English teacher. She has taught English for 26 years, both at the elementary and academy level. Four of those years were spent at Union Springs Academy, which she considers the best experience in her long and varied career. She has also served as a principal, library and ESL programs supervisor, and functioned as associate superintendent of schools in the Kansas-Nebraska Conference. Muhlenbeck has two master’s degrees in education, one in curriculum and instruction, and one in administration.

Making Music
Sarah Strickland grew up in Union Springs. She has a bachelor’s degree in music from Andrews University, and is in the process of obtaining her master’s degree in conducting. She teaches band, choir, piano, and strings, and also helps with the bell choir. She has a passion for working with people of all ages as minister of music, teacher, and facilitator, providing each individual the opportunity for personal expression in music.

Managing the Money
Rebecca Runnals is the new business manager. She has a Bachelor of Arts in accounting, with eight years of experience, and has served on the K-12 board and personnel committee for four years. She and her husband, Richard, have four daughters, ranging in age from five to 11 years.

Union Springs Academy Veterans
Along with the new staff there are eight returning staff members:

• John Baker has taught at USA for nine years and this will be his seventh year as principal.
• Esther Baker is the secretary and has worked at USA for seven years.
• Steve Fraker has worked for USA for 15 years and is in charge of campus maintenance.
• Tim Raymond teaches Bible and history and coaches soccer. This will be his sixth year at USA.
• Sue Walter has worked at USA the longest of any staff—a total of 23 years! She is the girls’ dean.
• Randy Quillin is the boys’ dean and teaches health and gymnastics. This will be his third year at USA.
• Adam Littell teaches science. This will be his third year at the school.
• BJ Taylor is the assistant cafeteria director, also in his third year.

Principal John Baker sums it all up by saying, “I am most excited about the experienced team of teachers that we have this year!” Check out the USA Web site at myusaacademy.org.

—Sarah Bailey, junior, Union Springs Academy

Management of the Money
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Along with the new staff there are eight returning staff members:

• John Baker has taught at USA for nine years and this will be his seventh year as principal.
• Esther Baker is the secretary and has worked at USA for seven years.
• Steve Fraker has worked for USA for 15 years and is in charge of campus maintenance.
• Tim Raymond teaches Bible and history and coaches soccer. This will be his sixth year at USA.
• Sue Walter has worked at USA the longest of any staff—a total of 23 years! She is the girls’ dean.
• Randy Quillin is the boys’ dean and teaches health and gymnastics. This will be his third year at USA.
• Adam Littell teaches science. This will be his third year at the school.
• BJ Taylor is the assistant cafeteria director, also in his third year.

Principal John Baker sums it all up by saying, “I am most excited about the experienced team of teachers that we have this year!” Check out the USA Web site at myusaacademy.org.

—Sarah Bailey, junior, Union Springs Academy

Managing the Money
Rebecca Runnals is the new business manager. She has a Bachelor of Arts in accounting, with eight years of experience, and has served on the K-12 board and personnel committee for four years. She and her husband, Richard, have four daughters, ranging in age from five to 11 years.
Baptism Highlights in New York Conference

Vienna Church Baptisms
July 10 was a special day for the members of the Vienna Seventh-day Adventist Church in Blossvale, New York. Following the church service, the church family traveled a short distance to the home of church members Robert and Ann Wielt. Once there, Laura and Shawn McCormic were baptized by Gordon Edgerton, the church’s pastor. It was a privilege to see the young couple wash away past sins and come up in a new life. After the baptism, the members returned to the church to celebrate Edgerton’s 84th birthday with a dinner.

—Lois Edgerton, pastor’s wife

Baptism at a Watering Hole
A watering hole made years ago to provide a water source for fire trucks became the scene for unusual activity on Sabbath, September 4. What was a swimming hole to Laura Perry 30 years ago is now the place of new birth in Jesus! Perry was baptized by Ray Felt, former Baptist pastor and now church elder of the Easton Seventh-day Adventist Church plant in Easton, New York. Assisting him was his son-in-law, Cliff Hurd, along with his daughter, Janet Hurd. This event gathered the attention not only of God and church members, but several of Laura’s family members who do not attend the Adventist Church.

One of the members chosen as a spiritual guardian was given the honor of throwing a rock, with all the members’ initials on it as witnesses, into the watering hole. This symbolized the burying of past sins by the sinking rock. This baptismal event began and ended with the members singing Hebrew songs while being accompanied on fiddle by Ray Felt and Janet Hurd.

—David Harriss, pastor, Easton church plant

Baptisms and Christ in Focus Week
“Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents”—Luke 15:10 (NKJV). When people are baptized, someone usually says something along the lines of this verse, showing how much God rejoices when people turn their lives over to Him. I can imagine a lot of joy in heaven during “Christ in Focus” week this year, because not only one student was baptized, but two. Yamaris Velez and Sarah Rodriguez were both baptized at the end of this week of spiritual emphasis at Union Springs Academy in Union Springs, New York.

On Friday night, Yamaris planned for her baptism to be a part of vespers, along with inspiring music, and a talk from the speaker. At the call for anyone not baptized to stand, three students stood. You could feel God’s Spirit in the room, and see the effects on many faces. “After coming out of the water, I finally experienced what the true meaning of joy is,” says Yamaris.

On Sabbath afternoon it was Sarah’s turn, and she decided to have her baptism at the park at Cayuga Lake. “I wanted to get baptized in the lake instead of the church because it symbolized not only life in Christ, but also that God will take down the walls that I place in my life,” says Sarah. Many of the students and staff stood to say how Sarah has impacted their lives, and how God shines through her example. Her father, Angel Rodriguez, secretary and ministerial director for the New York Conference, baptized her with the sun shining on the water behind them, and several students stood for rebaptism.

Along with all the “Amen’s” and smiles I could just imagine the “joy in the presence of the angels” over the individuals who were committing their lives to God.

—Sarah Bailey, junior, Union Springs Academy

Sarah Rodriguez was baptized at Cayuga Lake by her father, Angel Rodriguez, secretary and ministerial director for the New York Conference.

Yamaris Velez, was baptized by Tim Bailey, pastor of the Union Springs Academy Seventh-day Adventist Church, at the end of this week of spiritual emphasis at Union Springs Academy.
Adventist Education vs Public Education: Weighed in the Balances

The following interaction occurred between a public school educator and a Seventh-day Adventist educator:

Public School Educator: What is the big difference between a public school education and a Seventh-day Adventist education?

Adventist Educator: It’s the presence of Jesus on each of our school campuses.

Public School Educator: What does Jesus have to do with school? He belongs in heaven . . . and in church, but not in school.

Adventist Educator: That’s the whole point. Adventist schools are designed to put Jesus Christ at the center of the school program. Jesus Christ is the lifeblood of each of our schools. What makes our schools special is the power of the Holy Spirit at work in the lives of each of our students. He is present in each classroom, on the playground, and in our classroom reading circle. In other words, His presence is felt daily in our school program.

On a personal level, when students are confronted with special challenges, teachers pray with the students, and students feel the presence of Jesus during the morning worship, Weeks-of-Prayer, and in all school activities. The Holy Spirit is there to convict students when they do wrong. In one scenario, a student took money off of a teacher’s desk. The students in the classroom and the teacher prayed about it, and the Holy Spirit helped convict the student of his misdeed, and he felt genuinely sorry for his action. (A wonderful victory in this student’s character development!) In addition, Bible classes and Adventist service activities, such as neighborhood clean-ups and sending get-well cards to shut-ins, teach students about how they should live.

The power of the Holy Spirit helps students maintain Adventist standards of deportment. Through the Greater New York Conference K-12 system of education Discipline Code, students are taught to abide by the principles identified in Philippians 4:13 (NIV): “I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength,” and in Ellen G. White’s book EDUCATION which says, “Godliness—godlikeness—is the goal to be reached” (p.18).

Summation
What a difference Jesus makes in the Seventh-day Adventist system of education. We are thankful for our teachers who are called to Adventist service. We are thankful that the Holy Spirit transforms students’ hearts, and that Jesus Christ helps our students deal with the daily challenges they face. There is a big difference between attending an Adventist school and a public school. The Adventist system of education is distinctively different from any public school. Our goals are different; our teachers are different; our curriculum is different; our methodology is different; our context is different; and therefore, our product—the wonderful boys and girls that we educate—are different.

What makes our schools special is the power of the Holy Spirit at work in the lives of each of our students.

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Praise God for Adventist education! By David A. Cadavero

David A. Cadavero is the Greater New York Conference superintendent of schools.
It's been a long time coming! Delay after delay for one or more reasons plagued the process, but now, thankfully, the dream has become a reality. On August 20 and 21, more than 275 people attended the special weekend event for the dedication of the new Hiram Edson Farm Visitor center at the theological birthplace of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Since that cold day of January 26, 1989, when Adventist Heritage Ministry (AHM) purchased 17 ½ acres of the Hiram Edson farm near Port Gibson, New York, the desire to be able to share, at this very site, the understanding of the biblical message of how God deals with sin has been a constant driving force.

Weekend activities began on Friday evening at the Bay Knoll Seventh-day Adventist Church in Rochester, New York, as worshipers were greeted by costumed re-enactors portraying Adventist pioneers—Rita Hoshino as Ellen White, Dennis Farley as James White, and Richard Walton as J.N. Loughborough. AHM president Thomas Neslund, along with Stan Rouse, president of the New York Conference, and Carlyle C. Simmons, executive secretary of the Atlantic Union Conference, were present to welcome the guests who had come from surrounding areas as well as from distant places.

James Nix, AHM board chair and director of the Ellen G. White Estate, shared many pioneer stories as he led the congregation in singing some of the favorite hymns of James and Ellen White, Charles Fitch, Joseph Bates, Uriah Smith, and, of course, Hiram Edson.

Though rain threatened on Sabbath, August 21, all three services were well-attended, and well-planned programs filled the day. Sabbath School and the worship services were held at the Bay Knoll church, an afternoon dedication service was held at the Edson Farm. Once again, congregational singing of early Advent hymns set the tone for the service. Costumed re-enactors spent some time “remembering” those early days when the disappointed believers were searching for meaning in the things they were learning from their diligent study of the Scriptures.

Rouse reminded those present that, “Our job is to finish this work begun by the pioneers. What a privilege we have to live where this work began. May this make us better able to remember what God has done in the past so we may be better able to move forward into the future.”

The hymn, “Bless This House,” sung by William Fagal, AHM board secretary and associate director of the Ellen G. White Estate, was followed by special dedicatory prayers offered by Rouse and Simmons.

Jo Ellen Walton, chair of the Edson Farm Committee, flanked by Rouse and Neslund, presided at the official ribbon-cutting ceremony before inviting all present to tour the new visitor center, which was open at last!

Alice Voorheis is the editor of the "Adventist Heritage Ministry Bulletin."

Adapted from the "Adventist Heritage Ministry Bulletin, Fall Issue 2010, p. 4."
Northeastern Conference Departmental Training Convention Moves to Hartford, Connecticut

The annual Northeastern Conference Departmental Training Convention, hosted by the conference's Sabbath School department, is moving to a new location in 2011. All roads lead to the Hartford Marriott Downtown Hotel in Hartford, Connecticut, on February 20-23, 2011. Next year's theme is “Serve One Another.”

The keynote speaker for the convention is Rupert Bushner, a pastor in the Allegheny West Conference. The church clerks and treasurers will also join the group for the convention.

The registration is now a two-step process for delegates: (1) Delegates must register for the convention through the Northeastern Conference Sabbath School Department, and (2) Delegates must contact the hotel directly to make reservations for their rooms.

A brochure with information about the convention is also available on the Northeastern Conference Web site at www.northeastern.org. Contact the hotel directly to make reservations for their rooms.

All church departments are encouraged to plan to attend the convention. It will include spirit-filled devotions, inspirational music, quality departmental training, and an outstanding semi-formal award banquet scheduled for Tuesday night.

Thirty-Five Graduate from Faith and Finance Seminar at Sharon Church

The Stewardship department of the Sharon Seventh-day Adventist Church in Bronx, New York, held a graduation ceremony in August for 35 graduates of its Faith and Finance seminar series. Tracey John, treasurer, and Molvie Forskin, stewardship secretary, provided six weekly two-hour training sessions that covered the 12 lessons of the Faith and Finance curriculum developed by the North American Division Stewardship Department. The weekly attendance for the meetings averaged 40, and a total of 67 participated in the program. This included individuals who were not church members. John credits support from Courtney Goulding, the church's pastor, for making the program successful. She also expressed thanks to the Northeastern Conference Stewardship Department for providing the Faith and Finance manual to the local stewardship leaders. “We give glory to God for the great things He has done at Sharon.”

Caron Christian, a graduate of the program, says, “I found this seminar to be very timely and informative. In fact, it has added to my spiritual walk with Christ. All the money that we have, own, or receive is all His.”

The 12-lesson series includes such topics as “Major Purchases: Housing and Automobiles,” “Planning for Retirement,” “Dealing With Debt,” and more. “The Faith and Finance seminar has exposed me to biblical principles. In light of this information, I will manage according to the Word,” says Decima Jno Baptiste, another seminar participant.

After the certificates were awarded to the graduates, Goulding offered a consecration prayer.

—Adapted from First Fruits, a Northeastern Conference newsletter from the Stewardship Ministries department, vol. 3, issue 3, Fall 2010.
City Tabernacle Members are “Takin’ it 2 the Streets”

The threat of rain did not stop members of the “Takin’ it 2 the Streets” Outreach Ministries of the City Tabernacle Seventh-day Adventist Church from visiting the 150th Street block in the Harlem community where they shared Christ through tangible acts of service and provided life-changing information. A group of 23 dedicated teens, young adults, and adults went out on Sunday, September 26, to interact with the community and, in so doing, attempted to fulfill the commission outlined in Matthew 28:19 to “Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

The services provided included the distribution of free clothing and food, creating awareness and collecting signatures for the enditnow campaign (Adventists Saying No to Violence Against Women), hosting a Friends Against Lupus station, face painting for kids, and an information table that provided material about the services of the City Tabernacle church.

The “Takin’ it 2 the Streets” Outreach Ministries began in June 2009 when a group of youth decided that a vital part of their faith involved sharing the gospel. It initially began with a focus on doing prison and train ministries. After a life-changing experience at IMPACT Atlanta during the 59th General Conference Session, a new component of community service was added that follows the example of Christ by meeting the physical needs of the people first and then approaching them with the message of hope!

One of the most fulfilling parts of the experience was when a middle-aged couple stopped by the free clothing distribution table and received clothing for themselves and their family members. They inquired about receiving a meal, as well, and were escorted into the multi-purpose room where other members of the community were being served brunch. Following their brief experience, in an expression of the couple’s gratefulness, the wife repeatedly mouthed the words “Thank you.” She was so overwhelmed she couldn’t utter any words, but her smile spoke volumes.

This experience was an indication of what can be accomplished as a church when led by the Holy Spirit to serve, not being confined by the four walls and being fully connected to the community by cords of love. Imagine the possibilities!

—Rolanda Kingston, member, City Tabernacle church

Bronx Church Sponsors Senior Housing Facility

The Soundview Senior Housing, a facility sponsored by the Bronx Seventh-day Adventist Church in Bronx, New York, held its official opening on June 9. The facility, located at 669 White Plains Road in Bronx, New York, was named the “Stennett Brooks Apartments,” in honor of the late Stennett Brooks, former conference president.

The seven-floor facility houses 72 one-bedroom apartments for seniors. Present for the grand opening were J. Kendall Guy, the church’s pastor; and former pastors Calvin Harrison and Farrell Jones, who contributed greatly to the realization of the project.

Also present for the occasion were Trevor Baker, Northeastern Conference president; Oswald Euell, Northeastern Conference personal ministries director; Trevor McLean, the Soundview Senior Housing board chair; other board members; and community leaders.

—Adapted from Envision, a Northeastern Conference newsletter from the desk of the president, vol. 8, no. 2, June 2010.
**Portland Church Welcomes New Members**

August was a special month for the members of the White Memorial Seventh-day Adventist Church in Portland, Maine. Five people were baptized by Greg Carter, the church’s pastor. “It was great,” says Carter. Kirsten Kane, 15; Keira Souza, 14; and Alyssa Souza, 13; made the decision to be baptized, and they started taking baptismal classes with Bible worker Ben Schnell.

Kristen was baptized at the Portland church. Janica Peppard, a family friend and former Portland church member who moved to the Ohio Conference, returned to sing and play the piano for this memorable day. The Souza girls were baptized on August 28 at church member Nell Davies’ camp at Little Sebago Lake, Maine. Many family members and church members traveled to Windhamon that Sabbath for the baptism. It was very special for the girls because both sets of grandparents were able to be there for this extraordinary day.

Husband and wife team, Peter Provencher and Elvira Perez, who have been married a little more than a year, were also baptized in the lake at Davies’ camp on August 28. Elvira started attending church alone for a time and then brought her husband, Peter, along.

—Diane Kane, copy editor, CONNECTION, a Northern New England Conference newsletter

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**Ortel Keeps it Simple with Elementary Outdoor School Students**

My three-day experience attending the Northern New England Conference Elementary Outdoor School at Camp Lawroweld in Weld, Maine, organized by Trudy Wright, the conference’s superintendent of schools, was a most memorable occasion. With kids galore, activities plentiful, volunteering parents and teachers enthusiastically and happily working, the hours were full from sun-up to way past sundown. My responsibility was to teach and supervise an activity and have worship twice a day. What a sweet beehive in which to be a worker.

Prior to my arrival, I spoke to God at length about the messages. These are our precious kids for whom Jesus died. Our conference’s commitment to them is reflected in our financial allotment—about 35 percent of our 3.5 million dollar budget.

Our national statistics sadly reveal that most of these awesome kids will leave the church soon after academy or college. Some will return after years of much heartache and pain. With these disappointing outcomes, I pleaded with God. What can I say, and in what manner shall I present Your truth that will make a positive impact and difference in their lives now and for eternity? He came back with, Keep it simple and practical.

All surveys with Christian children and adults reveal that when a real closeness (intimacy) with God is strong, our lives are strong. If our relationship with God is weak or nonexistent, then our lives are weak.

**“If our relationship with God is weak or nonexistent, then our lives are weak.”**

I think the Holy Spirit would love to keep those words ringing in the ears and hearts of our kids. He longs for them and us to have a vibrant relationship with Him.

I would like to solicit your help. Let’s set the example for our kids. Let’s have Bible study and prayer at least twice a day to develop or solidify an intimate relationship with God.

Without Bible study and prayer at least twice a day, there would never have been a Daniel, David, or Jesus. To take it one step further—without it, there will probably be only a few of our kids in church within 10 years or in heaven eternally.

Thanks for your help in saving our kids. Let the message of Elementary Outdoor School last all year long . . . and more!

—Mike Ortel, president, Northern New England Conference
Baptism at Keene Church

Jessica Rouse and Abigail Paton were baptized at the Keene Seventh-day Adventist Church in Swanzey, New Hampshire, on Sabbath, September 4. Stan Rouse, New York Conference president, who is Jessica’s uncle, was present to perform her baptism. Ron Nickerson, the church’s pastor, baptized Abigail. Praise God that these young people made the decision for baptism.
—Greg Perry, communication correspondent, Keene church
Education Corner

Three Southern New England Conference (SNEC) schools hit record high enrollments this year. They are the Warren Adventist Elementary School in West Brookfield, Massachusetts; Rhode Island Adventist School in Lincoln, Rhode Island; and Edgewood Elementary School in Stoneham, Massachusetts.

The Warren school, which four years ago had only four potential students, opened this year with 30 students.

The newly-renamed Rhode Island Seventh-day Adventist School, in its eighth year of existence, continues to show outstanding growth with 61 students.

Edgewood Elementary School opened with 116 students, an increase of 21 students over last year.

Ten of the 16 schools saw enrollment gains over the previous year. Pre-kindergarten to eighth-grade enrollment climbed 4.9 percent, which helped offset a drop in secondary enrollment. The total SNEC school enrollment grew by one percent, maintaining and adding to last year’s record enrollment increase.

We praise God for this growth and thank all of our principals, teachers, staff, and volunteers for their ongoing commitment to spiritual nurture and academic attainment for each child.

The only true indicator of a school system’s health is its enrollment. If students cannot, or choose not to, attend our schools, it makes little difference if we offer the best curriculum, delivered by the greatest teachers, in schools administered by the most gifted administrators. Thus, every action we take and every decision we make must be focused toward the goal of increasing the number of students who attend Southern New England Conference schools.

—Gary Swinyar, superintendent of schools, Southern New England Conference

Music Ministries Retreat Encourages Music Leaders

Bright sunshine and the vivid colors of autumn greeted the participants in “Come Ye Apart,” Southern New England Conference’s first music ministries retreat, on Sabbath, October 9. A diverse group of individuals involved in music leadership joined together at Thayer Performing Arts Center on the campus of Atlantic Union College in South Lancaster, Massachusetts.

Don Pate, senior pastor of the College Church of Seventh-day Adventists in South Lancaster, Massachusetts, led out in a response-style worship service. Pate emphasized the role of the artisans who created the wilderness tabernacle and how God blessed their creative gifts as they were used for His purposes.

Throughout the day, different participants led the group in singing, sharing thoughts and experiences from their lives. From these comments grew discussions on the various aspects of music leadership. One of those who shared was Linda “Holly” Roberts, who spoke about her experience as a composer of religious songs. In the conversation that followed, it was revealed that another participant, Kirosha Huggan, has also been gifted with the same creative spirit, writing texts, and composing tunes that have blessed her friends and her church.

I spoke of the importance of seeking balance between joy and reverence, passion (emotion) and intellect, vertical (adoration of God) and horizontal (interaction with fellow worshipers), appropriateness and relevance, subjective and objective. I also shared the rich heritage of hymns and songs from the past, as well as the need to witness to the dynamic character of the church through new songs. Other topics included the mentorship of young people in the churches, the importance of understanding each congregation and the various cultural and generational backgrounds within it, and the blended approach to music in worship.

Finally, each person was asked to ponder the idea that being successful in music ministry requires much more than talent and skill. I believe the most important qualifications for music ministry are faithfulness, humility, and a willingness to serve God and your community.

The event closed with the group renewing their commitment to music ministry and also singing Johnson Oatman’s hymn, “Holy, Holy, Is What the Angels Sing.”

—Carol Swinyar, volunteer music ministries coordinator, Southern New England Conference

New friends Mona Dorsinville, Temple Salem church member, organizer Carol Swinyar, and Debra Queen, Meriden church member.

Members of the praise team from the Bethel Haitian congregation lead the group in singing songs of worship.

Alex Bezarra, College Church member, shows how an energetic and enthusiastic leader can wake up a congregation.

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Alex Bezarra, College Church member, shows how an energetic and enthusiastic leader can wake up a congregation.
The Berkshire Hills Seventh-day Adventist Church in Lanesboro, Massachusetts, held its Steps to Jesus Vacation Bible School program for approximately 30 children from July 12 to 16. They were pleased to welcome 12 children not currently attending their church.

Frank Tochterman, communication director

The New Haven Spanish Seventh-day Adventist Church in New Haven, Connecticut, held its annual children’s festival on Sunday, July 18, at Brooksvale State Park in Hamden, Connecticut. There were 22 children, 14 of whom were not members of the Adventist Church.

The children seemed to enjoy the singing, devotionals, and clown ministry by two youth, Kathrine Bonilla and Bryana Solano. There were also various activities and games, such as balloon tossing, sack racing, face painting, and obstacle courses. There was also a mini farm for the children to enjoy.

The event concluded with prayer, thanking God for a fun day. Each child received a “goodie bag” with various items, including a Scripture message on the bags. As they were leaving, some of the children asked, “When are we going to do this again?”

The sponsors of the event praise God for a wonderful turnout of visitors who were able to share in the fun.

—Marisol Galarza, church member, New Haven Spanish church

Josue Feliciano, who served as youth director for the Iowa-Missouri Conference, accepted the call to be the new Southern New England Conference youth director effective November 1. He replaces Pedro Perez, who became the youth director for the Florida Conference in July.

Feliciano and his wife, Meliza, have a 12-year-old son, Josue, Jr. They have been ministering in the Iowa-Missouri Conference for the past five years. Before that, they were in the Oklahoma Conference.

“I love to connect young people with Jesus and to share with them how to have fun and love God with all of their hearts,” says Feliciano. In addition to youth ministries, he coordinated the camp program at Camp Heritage, where kids of all ages make decisions for Jesus.

Feliciano received his bachelor’s in theology at Southwestern Adventist University in Keene, Texas. Recently, he obtained a master’s in business administration with an emphasis in leadership from Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia.

—Tamara Michalenko Terry, assistant communication director, Southern New England Conference
Rapport du secrétaire: 16,6 millions de membres aujourd’hui, mais les régions qui présentent un défi apparaissent énormes

Selon les statistiques de l’Église, environ 2,900 personnes rejoignent l’Église adventiste du septième jour quotidiennement. La dénomination compte maintenant 16,6 millions de membres adultes baptisés et un taux de croissance légèrement plus élevé que celui de l’année dernière.


Bien que la présentation récapitulât des informations des rapports des années précédentes, elle a permis d’avoir une vaste vue d’ensemble des opérations de l’Église, notamment de la mission, et constituait le premier discours de G.T. Ng en tant que secrétaire de l’Église adventiste, deuxième plus haut responsable de la dénomination. Le rapport n’est pas rendu public à cause de la sensibilité de l’œuvre dans certaines régions!

G.T. Ng, ancien secrétaire adjoint supervisant le recrutement pour les missions dans une grande partie de l’Asie, a dit que davantage de missionnaires travaillent désormais dans des institutions établies plutôt que dans l’œuvre “missionnaire de front.” En 2008, l’Église a envoyé 755 missionnaires, dont environ 56% travaillent dans des institutions. Ce chiffre était d’environ 45% il y a 10 ans, a dit G.T. Ng.

L’Église dépense 21 à 24 millions de dollars par an pour les salaires des missionnaires recrutés par l’intermédiaire de l’administration de la Conférence Générale.

“Si nous dépensons une grande partie de notre budget missionnaire pour les institutions, nous sacrifions notre besoin dans les endroits où le travail est facile” a dit G.T. Ng, faisant allusion à une région du monde allant de l'Afrique de l'Ouest à l'Asie de l'Est dans laquelle le christianisme est peu présent.

Les chiffres
Le nombre de membres de la dénomination dans de nombreuses régions du monde est élevé et en croissance, a dit Bert Haloviak, directeur du Bureau des Archives et des Statistiques.

Il y aurait 16,641,357 adventistes dans le monde, a dit B. Haloviak. Cela fait environ un adventiste sur 414 sur la planète, ce qui correspond à une amélioration de 10 membres depuis le Conseil Annuel de l’an dernier.

B. Haloviak a dit aux délégués que l'Afrique est le continent qui compte le plus de membres et que le nombre de membres en Amérique du Sud est celui qui grandit le plus vite. Sur le total de membres, l'Amérique représente 37%; l'Amérique Latine 33%; l'Asie 19%; l'Amérique du Nord 7% et l’Europe et l’Océanie 4%.

C'est également la septième année consécutive que l'Église a un gain net de plus d’un million de membres. B. Haloviak a dit que 1,062,655 personnes ont rejoint l'Église adventiste entre le 1er juillet 2009 et le 30 juin 2010.

Environ 41% de ces nouveaux membres se trouvent en Amérique du Sud et Afrique du Sud, 18% en Inter-Amérique et presque 16% en Afrique de l’Est et Afrique Centrale. Les 21% restants vivent dans d’autres régions du monde. L’Europe a compté moins de 2% de nouveaux membres.

B. Haloviak a également parlé dans le rapport de la poursuite des vérifications de membres en Amérique du Sud, tout comme il l’a aussi fait les années précéentes. Même avec les récentes mesures de vérification là-bas et en Asie du Pacifique Sud, les données révèlent que ces deux régions font partie des Divisions de la dénomination qui croissent le plus vite.

Depuis trois ans, l’Église adventiste en Amérique du Sud mène chaque année des vérifications de membres. L’année dernière, le nombre de membres a encore augmenté là-bas d’environ 218,000 personnes.

En Asie du Pacifique Sud, les taux net de croissance sont constamment restés au-dessus de 6.5%, ces trois dernières années. Cette Division connaît également 6.5%, de perte de membres sur chaque 100 gains, la seule, des 13 régions du monde que les vérificateurs des Églises commencent à considérer n'être plus un facteur influent sur l'état statistique de l'Église.

“Désormais, les vérificateurs auprès des Églises ne sont plus autant facteur d’influence sur l’état statistique de notre église” a déclaré B. Haloviak. “Heureusement, cela indique que depuis que la plupart des Divisions ont mene des vérifications auprès des membres, l'Église va assumer son taux de croissance relativement élevé.”

L’ensemble du rapport de G.T. Ng a appelé à un développement de la mission, particulièrement dans les zones les moins saturées. La mission est souvent concentrée dans les endroits où l’Église est déjà fortement représentée. G.T. Ng a parlé de “mission déséquilibrée” dans une entrevue donnée à ANN en 2009.

“Nous avons tendance à aller dans les endroits où le travail est facile” a-t-il dit. “Mais lorsque nous regardons aux pays l’interval 10/40 qui se trouvent dans l’obscurité . . . nous devons en prendre note et planifier les choses en conséquence” a-t-il dit aux délégués. Source: Adventist News Network

Asociaciones y misiones adventistas de Norteamérica pueden ser lideradas por un ministro ordenado o una ministra comisionada, votaron los miembros de la Junta Directiva de la división por amplia mayoría el pasado 7 de noviembre, durante el concilio anual del territorio.

La votación, dijeron los directivos, “reinstalará” el cambio que se hizo el año pasado a los reglamentos eclesiásticos-administrativos de la División Norteamericana, que dicen: “En la medida en que el presidente de una asociación o misión sea la cabeza del ministerio en su asociación o misión, y el principal anciano o supervisor de todas las iglesias de su territorio, el presidente de una asociación o misión debería ser un ministro ordenado, o una ministra comisionada.”

Según una declaración de la División Norteamericana (NAD), “este […] es un tema de igualdad y de oportunidad para todas las líderes que han recibido credenciales ministeriales como comisionadas.”

Al mismo tiempo, dijeron los líderes, los miembros de la junta “están solicitando a la Junta Administrativa de la Asociación General que permita una variación al modelo de constitución para adaptarse a las necesidades particulares de la División Norteamericana, al insertar en sus reglamentos, que “el presidente de una conferencia o misión debería ser un ministro ordenado, o una ministra comisionada.”

El tema de la función de las mujeres en el ministerio, que fue sacado de los temas de discusión del Congreso de la Asociación General 2010 en Atlanta, produce una diversidad de opiniones.

Daniel R. Jackson, quien dirige la iglesia en Norteamérica, dijo que se trató el tema debido a un compromiso que se había adquirido en el concilio 2009 de la NAD y, dijo, “las promesas son para cumplirlas.”

Casi todos los oradores apoyaron la medida, y la votación fue casi unánime; solo unos pocos votaron por la negativa. En 2008, la Iglesia Adventista informó que contaba con 4,197 feligreses ordenados o con licencia ministerial, y 5,224 iglesias en la División Norteamericana, que abarca a los Estados Unidos, Canadá, Bermudas y las islas de Saint Pierre er Miquel. En el mundo, la iglesia contaba en 2008 con 23,040 ministros y 65,961 congregaciones.

Source: Adventist News Network (ANN)

La reorganización de la supervisión de los programas misioneros de la Iglesia Adventista aprobada ayer busca coordinar la obra misionera mundial de la organización y utilizar de mejor manera los recursos misioneros.

Esta supervisión centralizada puede ayudar a racionalizar el proceso de contratación y envío de misioneros, dando especial prioridad a las grandes ciudades y a la “Ventana 10/40.”

Según los directivos, las áreas centralizadas abarcan: el procesamiento del personal misionero, las estrategias y financiamiento misioneros, y la comunicación misionera. La formación de esta nueva junta fue aprobada el 12 de octubre por la Junta Directiva de la iglesia mundial.

La reestructuración propuesta no elimina la Misión Adventista, que actualmente supervisa a los pioneros de Misión Global y a los centros de estudio. En su lugar, esta secretaría ahora depende de la Secretaría de la iglesia mundial. La Misión Adventista se encargará básicamente de coordinar las necesidades de promoción, recolección de fondos y comunicación, afirma la propuesta de los directivos.

Esta medida formaliza la elección de Gary Krause como secretario asociado, que seguirá siendo director de la Secretaría de Misión Adventista desde la Secretaría.

La Junta de la Misión busca crear mayor conciencia de la planificación misionera, no “quitar poder a las diversas entidades que actualmente supervisan los programas misioneros,” dijeron los directivos.

Ted N. C. Wilson, presidente de la Iglesia Adventista mundial, quien presidirá la Junta de la Misión, dijo que la reestructuración marca “un renacimiento en la misión de la iglesia” y que recordará a los líderes y a los miembros de iglesia cuál es la principal prioridad de la iglesia: esparcir el evangelio.

Algunos de los objetivos de la Junta Misionera son:

- Incrementar el número de misioneros que buscan establecer la iglesia en zonas del mundo aún no alcanzadas
- Acortar de manera significativa los procesos de traslado de misioneros
- Coordinar la promoción de la misión y evaluar el conocimiento que tienen los feligreses del programa misionero de la iglesia
- Coordinar las comunicaciones y los esfuerzos para la recolección de fondos para evitar la competencia y mejorar la efectividad de estos procesos

Se espera que la Junta de la Misión se reúna tres veces al año.

Source: Adventist News Network (ANN)
Implications:

1. The church affirms the biblical view of sexuality as a wholesome attribute of human nature created by God to be enjoyed and used responsibly in marriage as part of Christian discipleship.

2. The church is committed to sharing a biblical view of human sexuality in an intentional and culturally sensitive manner. Emphasis is placed on appreciating and understanding the human body and its functions, upholding sexual chastity outside and fidelity within marital relationships, and developing skills for decision-making and communication about sexual behavior. The church is committed to conveying the truth that the misuse of one’s own sexuality and the abuse of power in relationships are contrary to God’s ideal.

3. The church calls people to dedicate themselves before God to sexual abstinence outside the marriage covenant and sexual faithfulness to one’s spouse. Apart from the wholesome expression of sexual intimacy in marriage, abstinence is the only safe and moral path for the Christian. In any other context, sexual activity is both harmful and immoral. This high standard represents God’s intention for the use of His gift, and believers are called upon to uphold this ideal, regardless of the prevailing standards in the culture around them.

4. The church recognizes the sinfulness of humanity. Human beings make mistakes, use poor judgment, and may deliberately choose to engage in sexual practices that are contrary to God’s ideal. Others may not know where to turn for help to live sexually pure lives. Nothing, however, can spare such individuals from the consequences of departing from the divine plan. Emotional and spiritual wounds left by sexual activity that violates God’s plan inevitably leave scars. But the church extends Christ’s ministry of mercy and grace by offering God’s forgiveness, healing, and restorative power. It must seek to provide the personal, spiritual, and emotional support that will enable the wounded to lay hold of the gospel’s resources. The church must also help persons and families identify and access the full network of professional resources available.

5. The church recognizes as morally acceptable the use of contraceptive measures, including condoms, by married couples who seek to control conception. Condoms in particular may be indicated in some marital circumstances—for example, when one partner has been exposed to or has contracted a sexually transmitted disease, thus putting the spouse at high risk for infection.

On the other hand, the premarital or extramarital use of condoms—either in an attempt to lower the risk of unwanted pregnancy or to prevent the transmission of a sexually transmitted disease raises moral concerns. These concerns must be considered in the context of the divine plan for human sexuality, the relationship between God’s creative intent and His regard for human frailty, the process of spiritual growth and moral development within individuals, and the nature of the church’s mission.

Though condoms have proved to be somewhat effective in preventing pregnancy and the spread of disease, this does not make sex outside of marriage morally acceptable. Neither does this fact prevent the emotional damage that results from such behavior. The church’s appeal to youth and adults alike, believers and nonbelievers, is to live lives worthy of the grace extended to us in Christ, drawing as fully as possible upon divine and human resources to live according to God’s ideal for sexuality.

6. The church acknowledges that in cases where a married person may be at risk for transmitting or contracting a sexually transmitted disease such as Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) from his or her marriage partner, the use of a condom is not only morally acceptable but also strongly recommended if the husband and wife decide to continue having sexual intercourse. Users of condoms must be alerted to the importance of using them properly and to the limits of their effectiveness in preventing the transmission of HIV infection.

Appeal:

We are facing a crisis that threatens the lives and well-being of many people, including church members. Both youth and adults are in peril. The church must develop, without delay, a comprehensive strategy of education and prevention. The resources of health, social services, educational, ministerial, and other professionals, both within and without the church, must be mobilized. This crisis demands priority attention—using every legitimate resource and method at the church’s disposal to target the home, school, church, and community. The destiny of an entire generation of human beings is at stake, and we are in a race against time.
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OBITUARIES


COLE, Zepaniah E.—109; b. Mar. 3, 1901, in Jamaica, West Indies; d. Aug. 24, 2010, in Springfield, Mass. He was a member of the Shiloh Springfield Seventh-day Adventist Church in Springfield, Mass. He served the church as elder, lay preacher, evangelist, colporteur, Sabbath School teacher, guidance counselor, and lecturer throughout Jamaica and the United States. He assisted in the building of churches and schools and won many souls to Christ. He was predeceased by one daughter, Lydia; three brothers, and two sisters. He is survived by nine children, Eudellee (Winston) Powell; Elisha (Alover); Hyman (Ouida); Roy (Joanne); Vincent; Dave (Nella); Lilly; Esther and Mary; 40 grandchildren; 55 great-grandchildren, and 24 great great-grandchildren, nephews, and nieces.

LANGLEY, Lunette Blanche (Smith)—95; b. Jun. 7, 1915, in St. Catherine’s, Jamaica, W.I.; d. Jul. 8, 2010, in Atlanta, Ga. She held offices in such departments as Sabbath School, MV (AYS), Lay Activities (Personal Ministries), Dorcas (Community Services), and more. She is survived by three children, Winston Langley (Winston Powell); Elisha (Alover); Hyman (Ouida). Roy (Joanne); Vincent; Dave (Nella); Lilly; Esther and Mary; 40 grandchildren; 55 great-grandchildren, and 24 great great-grandchildren, nephews, and nieces.

MYERS, Margaret I.—88; b. Feb. 12, 1922, in North Pembroke, N.H.; d. Sept. 25, 2010, in Concord, N.H. She was a member of the Concord Seventh-day Adventist Church in Concord, N.H., for more than 64 years. She was the Pathfinder leader for 20 years. She served in several other positions including Missionary Volunteer leader and treasurer. She was predeceased in October 1992 by Clifton E. Myers, her husband of 46 years. She is survived by her son Larry E. Myers of North Pembroke, N.H.

ODELL, Gertrude (Mueller)—103; b. Nov. 10, 1906, in Brooklyn, N.Y.; d. Sept. 13, 2010, in Greenville, Tenn. She was an R.N. and worked as a nurse in Boston and in Greenfield, Tenn. She traveled extensively throughout Africa doing Christian missions and continued her humanitarian work as a volunteer at the Boston Van Ministry. She put her nursing skills to use for 10 years bringing free health education to the public in Boston at Government Center and in Cambridge, Mass. On her 90th birthday, she received a citation for distinguished public service from the governor of Massachusetts and a letter of commendation from the president of the United States. She was predeceased by her husband, Richard, in 1986, and her oldest son Richard, Jr., who died in a car accident at the age of 19. She is survived by her daughter, Julie Middleton; son, Dr. Michael Odell, daughter-in-law, Jeanne Nicora Odell, three granddaughters, Debra Coston, Wendy Odell Magus, and Melanie Sahly; and four great-grandchildren, Chelsea and Christina Coston, and Cameron and Lauren Sahly.
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Wishing our readers a happy, healthy, and prosperous season!

—Atlantic Union Gleaner Staff

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