December 14, 2011

Columbia Union Officers Discuss a Better Future With Liberian President

Dave Weigley (pictured second), Columbia Union Conference president, and Seth Bardu (pictured fourth), the union’s chief financial officer, just returned from Liberia where they met Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who was recently re-elected as president. Sirleaf is Africa’s first and only female president and was named as a joint winner of this year’s Nobel Peace Prize. Weigley talked with Celeste Ryan Blyden, Visitor editor and publisher, about his impressions of the visit.

Celeste Ryan Blyden: What did the president of Liberia say to you about Seventh-day Adventists?

Dave Weigley: She thanked us for our initiatives in healthcare and education. She stated how appreciative she (and Liberia) is to foreign humanitarian efforts. She said, “We as a government do not have the capability to do it all. We need your assistance.” She especially thanked us for the assistance we are giving at Cooper Adventist Hospital there in Monrovia, the capital city.
Allegheny West President Accepts New Post in Atlanta

Fredrick A. Russell, president of the Allegheny West Conference (AWC), announced yesterday that he has accepted a call to the South Atlantic Conference where he will serve as the senior pastor of the Berean church in Atlanta, Ga. He is replacing Carlton Byrd, DMin, speaker/director of Breath of Life Ministries, who accepted a call to serve as senior pastor at the Oakwood University church in Huntsville, Ala.

During his three-and-a-half-year tenure, Russell led pastors and members to focus on experiencing daily the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the power and primacy of prayer. David Weigley, Columbia Union Conference president, will be working with Robert Moore, executive secretary, to establish a date to meet with the conference’s executive committee, which will establish the time and process for electing the new AWC president. Pastor Russell will assume his new duties next month.—Story by Bryant Taylor

Waldorf Church Breaks Ground on Long-Held Dream

On Sunday, December 5, eight shovels broke ground signifying forward movement on a long-cherished dream for members of the Waldorf (Md.) church. Located at 11245 Berry Road, this church was the fastest growing congregation in all of the Chesapeake Conference for 2010.

Though this bustling, warm and diverse community continues to grow, their current sanctuary only seats 100. To accommodate all comfortably, church leaders added a second worship service. But that may not even be enough. Now they are considering adding a third worship service. The groundbreaking was the beginning of a four-phase plan to expand seating capacity.
The first phase involves building a new sanctuary, which will seat 400. They anticipate moving in by next fall. Pictured is Volodymyr Grinchenko, the church’s pastor, who is flanked by Kleyton Feitosa, Chesapeake secretary, and John Appel, Chesapeake’s Ministerial secretary.—Story by Taashi Rowe

READ MORE

Ohio Members Offer 40 Mornings of Intercessory Prayer

What happens when 170 Spanish-speaking members across the Ohio Conference commit to spending one hour with Christ first thing every morning, for 40 mornings? The experience becomes a wonderful blessing for the entire conference, says Pastor Oswaldo Magaña (pictured), the conference’s Hispanic Ministries coordinator and Ministerial secretary.

Participants in this 40 Days of Prayer underwent an eight-hour training course, then went on to daily read and meditate on Bible promises, favorite passages of Scripture, other devotional material and then pray for 10 people inside and outside of the church. Members also informed their friends that they were interceding on their behalf.

After 40 days in the program, participants came together for a special Sabbath service to which they invited those on their prayer list. “We have heard many, many wonderful experiences of the way that the Lord has been working in the lives of the people that our members have been praying for,” Magaña says.

READ MORE

La feligresía de Ohio eleva cuarenta días de oración intercesora

¿Que ocurre cuando ciento setenta feligreses hispanohablantes de toda la Asociación de Ohio se comprometen pasar la primera hora de cada mañana con Cristo durante cuarenta días? La experiencia se convierte en una bendición maravillosa para toda la Asociación, dice el Pastor Oswaldo Magaña (fotografiados), coordinador hispano y secretario ministerial de la Asociación.

Los participantes de este plan de oración de cuarenta días, recibieron preparación durante ocho horas, y
luego leyeron y meditaron diariamente en las promesas bíblicas y sus pasajes favoritos de la Escritura, y en otros materiales de meditación, y después oraron por diez personas de fuera y dentro de la iglesia. Los feligreses también les informaron a sus amistades que se intercedía por ellos.

LEA MAS

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New Jersey Conference Church Donates $1,500 to Meals on Wheels

The Robbinsville (N.J.) church has chosen the Robbinsville Township’s Meals on Wheels program as the recipient of this year’s charity offering of $1,537.14. “This donation is courtesy of the Christian Community Choir Christmas Concert held at the church Sunday, December 4.

Art Randall (pictured with his wife), pastor of the Robbinsville church, says, the township’s Meals on Wheels program helps seniors remain independent, maintain their nutritional health, serve as a referral source and allow them to better live with dignity. Meals on Wheels volunteers not only deliver vital nutrition but, more importantly provide a healthy helping of friendship and social connection.

Harrisonburg Members Host Homeless

During the week of December 5-12, more than 30 homeless men and women lined up to receive the meals that Potomac Conference’s Harrisonburg (Va.) church members prepared and served. Cherith Cox (pictured with Roger, an aid recipient), director of the Homeless Outreach ministry, plans the meals and coordinates with church members and local businesses to provide food.

“When I look at these people, I see Jesus,” Cox says as she explains her passion for this ministry, which she has led for three and a half years. “Reading Matthew 25:31-40 changed my life. I
realized that when I serve a meal, I’m feeding Jesus. When I’m washing their dirty clothes, I’m washing Jesus’ clothes. When I give them a hug, I’m hugging Jesus.”

The Harrisonburg church is one of several churches that partners with the Harrisonburg and Rockingham Thermal Shelter to provide hot meals and warm beds during the coldest months of the year.—Story by Mary Long

READ MORE

Pennsylvania Conference Church Signs Oil and Gas Lease

On behalf of the Pennsylvania Conference, Floyd Dare, Trust Services director, signed an oil and gas lease with Carrizo (Marcellus) LLC for the Tunkhannock church on their 30 acres of property. In exchange, the church received checks totaling $176,740.06.

The leases, 18 pages in length, provided $5,750 per acre to the church with 20 percent royalty on the net income from production of oil and gas. Additionally, Carrizo and its assignees are prohibited from conducting any surface operations on the church’s 30 acres during the lifetime of the lease, except for minor seismic testing; all acreage is to be permanently included in the drilling unit(s); existing water quality is to be maintained; and Carrizo is obligated to act as a prudent operator while taking into consideration the church’s property interests. Helen Clayton, who died in 1990, contributed the 30 acres ideally located on Route 6 to the Tunkhannock church.—Story by Gerald Grimaud

Adventist Hospitals Host First “Huddle Up for Prostate Health”
Shady Grove Adventist and Washington Adventist hospitals teamed up with two former Washington Redskins Pro Bowlers, Charles Mann and Dexter Manley, to offer two free prostate education and screening events for the community. The sports icons attracted crowds at both Washington, D.C., metropolitan area hospitals.

Both events included expert medical panel participants who engaged audiences and answered questions about prostate cancer risk factors, possible prevention and the range of treatments available for men diagnosed with prostate cancer. The physicians also shared vital information about screenings and overall prostate health, encouraging men 40 years and older to begin the discussion with their doctors. The hospitals also offered attendees a free prostate-specific antigen screening and photo ops and autographs with Mann and Manley. Jane Peck, Adventist HealthCare executive director of Cancer Care Services, served as the panel moderator for both events.—Story by Laura Cook

Chesapeake Conference
Member Bakes for Charity

Blogger Jackie Gonzalez-Feezer, a member of Chesapeake Conference’s Baltimore First church in Ellicott City, Md., enjoys baking. But what she enjoys more than the sweet taste of her favorite desserts is baking for a good cause and writing about it on her blog La Casa de Sweets.

Gonzalez-Feezer recently held a virtual bake sale to raise money for the victims of famine in East Africa. She offered chocolate chip, peanut butter, double chocolate and oatmeal spice cookies. “I opened up the bake sale to a few people, thinking I would sell a few dozen cookies throughout the week,” she recalls. But, “by the end of the week, I had orders for 44 dozen cookies!”

It took about 13 hours to bake 528 cookies, but Gonzalez-Feezer said, “I was so happy doing it.” She raised $400, all of which went to ADRA’s Emergency Relief Fund for East Africa.

Spotted: Shenandoah Valley
Academy Student Doing Good

Raissa Delgado, a senior at Shenandoah Valley Academy in New Market, Va., picks apples for the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank. She and other students gleaned and bagged more than 3,000 pounds of apples in an orchard near Strasburg, Va. This was part of an annual campus-wide Community Service Blitz, which including helping disabled neighbors with landscaping and painting and volunteering at the Shenandoah County Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Potomac Pastor Ministers at the Airport

Every Thursday morning, Jose A. Barrientos Jr. leaves his home shortly after 5 a.m. and drives to Washington Dulles International Airport in Chantilly, Va., to minister to his flock for several hours. Instead of church members in pews, his congregants are scurrying commuters and employees in one of the nation's largest international airports. His full-time job is the Children’s Ministries/Youth pastor at Potomac’s Community Praise Center in nearby Alexandria, but he volunteers several hours each week outside the church at Dulles.

He assists Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking passengers with practical support and sometimes prays with those who may need spiritual comfort. Barrientos is a Seventh-day Adventist minister and one of 18 assistant chaplains at the busy hub.—Story and photos by Ansel Oliver/ANN

READ MORE at Adventist News Network

2012 Visitor Calendar Chock-Full of Healthy Recipes

In two weeks a new year starts again and so do resolutions for better health. Want to enjoy your meals and be healthy?
Then pick up the 2012 issue of the *Visitor Calendar*. Each month features a vegetarian or vegan recipe that will get you off to a healthy start and keep you eating well throughout the year. Can’t wait for your calendar? **Watch** Clara Iuliano, the principal contributor of the calendar, cook yummy peanut noodles. For extra copies to share, email bweigley@columbiaunion.net or call (888) 4-VISITOR, ext. 4.

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**End Quote: Make Christmas About Christ**

“Will Christ be a significant part of my Christmas, or will He be a small ornament on the mantle of my fireplace? The wonderful thing about our Savior is that He ‘stands at the door and knocks.’ He never gives up on us. When we open the door of our lives, He comes in and sups with us. Let’s take Christ off of the mantle of our lives and let Him fully into our hearts.”—**Brian Kittleson, Spencerville Adventist Academy Principal**

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**Happy Holidays from the Visitor Staff**

We at the *Visitor* magazine are wishing you, our dear readers, a happy, blessed Christmas season. Please note that this will be the last issue of the *Visitor News Bulletin* until January 4.—**Celeste, Beth, Kelly, Sandra, Taashi, Cindy & Lisha**
Adventists in the News

Columbus African Church: Church looking for space in Northland

ACTS 9: Motorcyclists help food, clothing bank stock up

Smith Mountain Lake church: Incubator project

C.F. Richards Junior Academy wins accreditation

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 15: Dupont Park Adventist School Christmas Program will include drama, music and special presentations. This year’s musical, titled “Christmas Starr,” will be held at the Dupont Park church located at 3985 Massachusetts Avenue, S.E., in Washington, D.C., at 7 p.m. Tickets are $10 each.

December 15: G.E. Peters School’s Christmas musical production, “The Next Noel” will be held at 7 p.m. The play will take place in the Metropolitan church sanctuary, which is located at 6307 Riggs Road in Hyattsville, Md.

December 16: Frederick Adventist School invites you to their “Luke's Story” Christmas pageant at 7 p.m. at the Frederick church. Come be part of when God sent His precious Son to become a tiny baby in a stable in Bethlehem, in poverty and simplicity. For more information, email teresakelchner@comcast.net or visit www.frederickadventistschool.org.

December 16, 17: Shenandoah Valley Academy’s Annual Christmas Concert Weekend will feature the Shenandoans, handbell choir, orchestra and concert choir. The first performance will be the Christmas Candlelight Concert at New Market church on Friday, December 16, 7:30 p.m. The following evening, December 17, these same groups will perform a secular Christmas Concert at SVA’s gymnasium, 6:30 p.m. A freewill offering will be taken for the “Support the Arts” fund at SVA. All are invited to come and be blessed! For more information, visit shenandoahvalleyacademy.org.
December 17: Miracle Temple’s 17th Annual Christmas Cantata will be held during the divine worship service and will feature the sanctuary choir and symphony orchestra. For more information, visit miracletemple.net.

December 17: Capitol Hill Church Presents Handel’s Messiah during the 11 a.m. worship service at 914 Massachusetts Ave., NE, in Washington, D.C. The Capitol Hill Chorale and community, under the direction of Ramon Bryant Braxton, will present this powerful oratorio by Handel. Guest soloists include soprano Brandi Sutton; mezzo soprano Carole Dorlipo; tenor Issachah Savage; and basso Soloman Howard. Featured instrumentalists are Fred Mason, Jr. of the Immanuel Temple church in Durham, N.C., on organ; Tedde Gibson on harpsicord; and string orchestra.

December 17: Capitol Hill Church Presents their Christmas Adventist Youth Society Program, “The Boy Who Couldn't See His Many Blessings” at 4 p.m.

December 21: Join members of the Capital Hill Church for Caroling on Capitol Hill. Meet at the church at 7 p.m. Caroling books and strolling candles will be provided.

January 29: The Pennsylvania Conference Youth and Young Adult Ministries Family Ski Trip will be held at Jack Frost Big Boulder in White Haven, Pa. The price is $48 for the snow pass, lesson and rental. The lessons are for ages 8 and over. Helmet rentals are $10 additional. Tickets must be purchased by January 16, 2012. Pre-paid ticket pick-up will be at the Jack Frost Lodge, 8 a.m.-12 noon. For more information, contact the conference’s Youth Ministries Department at (607) 374-8331, ext. 212 or at pa-youth@paconference.org.

February 2: Spencerville Adventist Academy invites all eighth graders and other high school students to attend their Academy Day from 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Visiting students will get the opportunity to meet teachers and students, hear and see the school’s touring groups perform, compete for scholarships, play against basketball teams and check out the new school. To RSVP, contact Heidi Wetmore at (301) 421-9101 or hwetmore@spencerville.org.

February 17-19: The “Love for a Lifetime” Marriage Enrichment Retreat will be held at the Dunes Manor Hotel in Ocean City, Md. The registration fee of $299 per couple includes two nights at Dunes Manor Hotel, brunch, tea, dinner on Saturday and brunch on Sunday. For more information, e-mail MarriageEnrichment@comcast.net, or contact Mark and Peggy Lee at (301) 317-5428 or Jeff and Sandy Hartz at (443) 864-6328. The Triadelphia church and Maranatha Adventist Fellowship are among the churches sponsoring the retreat.
March 24-26, 2012: Pennsylvania Conference’s marriage retreat themed “Love on the Farm,” will feature Claudio and Pamela Consuegra, North American Division Family Ministries directors. It will be held at the the Best Western Premier Contral Hotel and Conference Center in Harrisburg, Pa. To register online visit, www.paconference.org, go to the Ministries page and click on Family Ministries. For more information, contact Jeanne Hartwell at jhartwell@paconference.org, or (610) 374-8331.

For more news and up-to-date information from the Columbia Union Conference, visit columbiaunion.org

Forward to a Friend or Subscribe

To share the Visitor News Bulletin with friends and church members across the Columbia Union, click the “Forward to a Friend” link below so all the photos and copy will appear correctly. Also, encourage them to sign up for the email at www.columbiaunion.org/emailnews. Thank you!

Stay Connected:

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Not spam
Forget previous vote
Dave Weigley (second from left) and Seth Bardu (fourth) meet with Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, president of Liberia.

Columbia Union Officers Discuss a Better Future With Liberian President

Interview by Celeste Ryan Blyden

Published 12/14/2011

Dave Weigley, Columbia Union Conference president, and Seth Bardu, the union’s chief financial officer, just returned from Liberia where they met Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who was recently re-elected as president. Sirleaf is Africa’s first and only female president and was named as a joint winner of this year’s Nobel Peace Prize for her efforts in stabilizing a country torn by more than a decade of civil war.

Weigley talked with Celeste Ryan Blyden, Visitor editor and publisher, about his impressions of the visit with Liberia’s 24th president.

Celeste Ryan Blyden: What did the president of Liberia say to you about Seventh-day Adventists?

Dave Weigley: She thanked us for our initiatives in healthcare and education. She stated how appreciative she (and Liberia) is to foreign humanitarian efforts. She said, “We as a government do not have the capability to do it all. We need your assistance.” She especially thanked us for the assistance we are giving at Cooper Adventist Hospital there in Monrovia, the capital city.

CRB: Why was it important to you to make that connection on behalf of the Adventist Church?

DW: We as Adventists believe we are instruments of God’s love and care. We need to be where the needs are great—well, that’s Liberia. It’s a country just emerging from years of civil war, where malaria still is a problem, where most people do not have any type of healthcare and where, because of war, education is lacking. As Adventists first of all, and as part of the Columbia Union, it is our mission to share God’s love here locally and globally. But we must remember two things: we have been blessed to be a blessing and the work of God will not be finished until it is finished everywhere.

CRB: What was your impression of your visit with Sirleaf and your trip to Liberia?
DW: Sirleaf, the president (at 73), is a grandmother figure to many in that country and with that analogy, she is leading as an ethical and moral, caring grandmother. Her initiatives are re-building the country, improving the financial situation, restoring law and order and advocating for things we believe important, such as healthcare and education. When I spoke with her, I told her we were happy to partner with her because some of her focus was ours as well.

My impression of the country is that it has some of the friendliest people you will ever meet. The church appears to be very motivated to share the gospel and actually grew in membership during the civil war, from about 3,000-4,000 members to approximately 26,000 today. I am hopeful we will be able to assist them in additional ways, such as with evangelistic meetings, pastoral and lay training and leadership development. Liberia has great potential. As a union and Seventh-day Adventist Church in general, we need to assist in filling their needs and moving God’s work forward there!
Fredrick A. Russell, president of the Allegheny West Conference (AWC), announced yesterday that he has accepted a call to the South Atlantic Conference where he will serve as the senior pastor of the Berean church in Atlanta, Ga. He is replacing Carlton Byrd, DMin, speaker/director of Breath of Life Ministries, who accepted a call to serve as senior pastor at the Oakwood University church in Huntsville, Ala.

Pastor Russell has led the Allegheny West Conference for almost three and a half years. During his tenure, the conference was led to focus pastors and members on experiencing daily the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the power and primacy of prayer. Russell, in conjunction with the leadership team, also developed a top-notch pastoral staff via recruitment and professional development, changing the way the conference office and ministry directors deliver services to the churches and refocusing on evangelism as the main priority of the conference.

Because of evangelism efforts during the past four years, some 20 new churches and worshipping groups have been planted, almost 2,000 have been baptized and nearly $800,000 has been raised for evangelism. The conference is also planning to establish at least two additional schools in 2012.

Pastor Russell believes that the AWC’s best days are ahead, and counts it an honor to have led at such a transformative season. He’s exceptionally grateful that he had the privilege of working alongside a group of outstanding pastors, an incredible executive committee and the “awesome” members of the Allegheny West Conference.

David Weigley, Columbia Union Conference president, will be working with Pastor Robert Moore, executive secretary, to establish a date to meet with the conference’s executive committee, which will establish the time and process for electing the new AWC president. Pastor Russell will assume his new duties in January 2012.
Waldorf Church Breaks Ground on Long-Held Dream

Published 12/13/2011

Last Sunday eight shovels broke ground signifying forward movement on a long-cherished dream for members of the Waldorf (Md.) church. Located at 11245 Berry Road, this church was the fastest growing congregation in all of the Chesapeake Conference for 2010. Though this bustling, warm and diverse community continues to grow, the current sanctuary only seats 100. The membership is made up of mostly young families with children, some 100 of whom belong to the church’s Pathfinder Club, Adventurers Club, Children and Youth ministries programs. To accommodate all comfortably, church leaders added a second worship service. But that may not even be enough. Now they are considering adding a third worship service. The December 4 groundbreaking was the beginning of a four-phase plan to expand seating capacity.

The first phase involves building a new sanctuary, which will seat 400. They anticipate moving in by next fall. Even then senior pastor Volodymyr Grinchenko anticipates there will still be need for at least two worship services. The next phase involves a commercial kitchen, community center and gym with space to house the homeless on cold winter nights. The third and fourth phases of the project will involve adding two wings of classrooms. The goal is to provide a Seventh-day Adventist elementary and middle school in southern Maryland—something that is now nonexistent. Grinchenko has pastored the Waldorf church since 2009 and notes that parents who live in Charles County and want their kids to attend Adventist schools often drive long distances to schools in northern or central Maryland or even to Washington, D.C. The price tag for fulfilling this dream? $4.8 million.

A young, energetic pastor from the Ukraine, Grinchenko is wholly excited about this project. “Many pastors and ministers before me contributed to this project,” he said. “There is a whole bunch of people involved now in making this dream come true.”

Grinchenko admits that this “project is quite big. It’s more than our church can afford to do, but we decided to dream big and do something only God can do.” A capital campaign is in full swing, and Grinchenko is soliciting your prayers and support. For more on the project, visit http://www.waldorfsda.org/the-building-project.
Ron Litten, the architect; Bill Murray, project manager; Roland Plater, the chairman of the building committee; Kleyton Feitosa, Chesapeake Conference executive secretary; Volodymyr Grinchenko, Waldorf church senior pastor; John Appel, Chesapeake Conference Ministerial secretary; Randy Dresser, Waldorf church head elder; and Justin Reid, Waldorf church stewardship director, ready for the groundbreaking.
Pastor Oswaldo Magaña, Ohio Conference's Hispanic Ministries coordinator and Ministerial secretary, says the 40-day prayer program prepared participants for the current 180-day prayer program.

Ohio Members Offer 40 Mornings of Intercessory Prayer
Story by Visitor Staff
Published 12/8/11

What happens when 170 Spanish-speaking members across the Ohio Conference commit to spending one hour with Christ first thing every morning, for 40 mornings? The experience becomes a wonderful blessing for the entire conference, says Pastor Oswaldo Magaña, the conference’s Hispanic Ministries coordinator and Ministerial secretary.

Participants in this 40 Days of Prayer underwent an eight-hour training course then went on to daily read and meditate on Bible promises, favorite passages of Scripture, other devotional material and then pray for 10 people inside and outside of the church. Members also informed their friends that they were interceding on their behalf.

After 40 days in the program, participants came together for a special Sabbath service to which they invited those on their prayer list. “We have heard many, many wonderful experiences of the way that the Lord has been working in the lives of the people that our members have been praying for,” Magaña says.

William Rodriguez, who pastors five churches in northern Ohio, concurs. “Besides the testimonies of the participants who share how God had blessed their lives through this program, one of the friends for whom many were praying decide to get baptized in December,” he says. “And a young couple has made the decision to get married in the spring and then get baptized.” He adds that after three members at the Lorain church completed the plan, nine members and friends decided to begin the plan also.

Participants in this program, which originated in Central America, are now continuing with the second part of the program, which involves an additional 180 days of morning prayer.

“This is just the beginning,” Magaña says. “This was to show members a new way of living in Christ. Each member learned that the first thing they should do every morning, before they begin any other activity, is to spend an hour with the Lord.”
Pastor William Rodriguez says members in all five of his churches in Northern Ohio are getting excited about prayer.
La feligresía de Ohio eleva cuarenta días de oración intercesora

Historia por el personal de Visitor Publicada el 8 de diciembre de 2011

¿Qué ocurre cuando ciento setenta feligreses hispanohablantes de toda la Asociación de Ohio se comprometen pasar la primera hora de cada mañana con Cristo durante cuarenta días? La experiencia se convierte en una bendición maravillosa para toda la Asociación, dice el Pastor Oswaldo Magaña, coordinador hispano y secretario ministerial de la Asociación.

Los participantes de este plan de oración de cuarenta días, recibieron preparación durante ocho horas, y luego leyeron y meditaron diariamente en las promesas bíblicas y sus pasajes favoritos de la Escritura, y en otros materiales de meditación, y después oraron por diez personas de fuera y dentro de la iglesia. Los feligreses también les informaron a sus amistades que se intercedía por ellos.

Después de participar en el programa durante cuarenta días, los participantes se reunieron en un servicio especial en sábado, e invitaron a los que estaban en sus listas de oración. “Hemos oído muchas y muchas experiencias maravillosas de la manera en que el Señor ha estado obrando en las vidas de las personas por quienes han orado nuestros feligreses”, dijo Magaña.

William Rodríguez, pastor de cinco iglesias en el noreste de Ohio concordó diciendo: “Además de los testimonios que los participantes compartieron cómo Dios ha bendecido sus vidas por medio de este programa, uno de los amigos por el que muchos estaban orando, decidió bautizarse en diciembre. Y una pareja joven decidió casarse en la primavera y después bautizarse”. Añadió, que después que tres miembros de la iglesia Lorain completaran el plan, nueve feligreses y amigos decidieron comenzar también el plan.

Los participantes de este programa, que se originó en Centroamérica, están ahora continuando con la segunda parte del programa, lo que envuelve ciento ochenta mañanas de oración.

“Esto es solamente el comienzo”, dijo Magaña. “Esto era para mostrarles a los miembros una nueva manera de vivir en Cristo. Cada uno aprendió que lo primero que deben hacer cada mañana antes de comenzar cualquier actividad, es pasar una hora con el Señor”.

El Pastor Oswaldo Magaña, coordinador de ministerios hispanos y secretario ministerial de la Asociación de Ohio, dice que el programa de oración de cuarenta días, es simplemente el comienzo para la feligresía hispana de la Asociación.
El Pastor William Rodríguez dice que la feligresía de sus cinco iglesias en el noreste de Ohio están entusiasmados con la oración.
Harrisonburg Members Host Homeless
Story by Mary Long
Published 12/14/2011

During the week of December 5-12, more than 30 homeless men and women lined up to receive the meals that Potomac Conference’s Harrisonburg (Va.) church members prepared and served. Cherith Cox, director of the Homeless Outreach ministry, plans the meals for both breakfast and dinner, then coordinates with church members and local businesses to provide the food necessary to feed the growing numbers in the community.

“When I look at these people, I see Jesus,” Cox says as she explains her passion for this ministry, which she has led for three and a half years. “Reading Matthew 25:31-40 changed my life. I realized that when I serve a meal, I’m feeding Jesus. When I’m washing their dirty clothes, I’m washing Jesus’ clothes. When I give them a hug, I’m hugging Jesus.”

The Harrisonburg church is one of several churches that partners with the Harrisonburg and Rockingham Thermal Shelter (HARTS), a nonprofit organization that provides hot meals and warm beds to homeless individuals during the coldest months of the year. The workers take time to eat, fellowship and pray with anyone who comes to visit the HARTS host site. Sometimes they just sit and listen or offer a hug and words of encouragement. Church members also take turns doing laundry and staying overnight at the shelter.

“They are not that different from any of us,” comments Dale Long, who pastors the Harrisonburg church. “Many of us are just one paycheck away from being in that same situation ourselves.”

Harrisonburg members will have another opportunity to minister to this special people group again in January.
A young pastor’s quick-meet ministry to airplane passengers

'They have chaplains at the airport?'; the hottest book in the chapel

6 Dec 2011, Chantilly, Virginia, United States
Ansel Oliver/ANN

About Life

Every Thursday morning, Jose A. Barrientos Jr. leaves his home shortly after 5 a.m. and drives to Washington Dulles International Airport to minister to his flock for several hours.

Instead of church members in pews, his congregants are scurrying commuters and employees in one of the nation’s largest international airports.

Barrientos is a Seventh-day Adventist minister and one of 18 assistant chaplains at the busy hub. Not only is he the youngest, he’s also the only Hispanic chaplain there, which makes him to go-to guy in offering assistance to Spanish-, Portuguese-, and Italian-speaking passengers, as well as the maintenance staff, the large majority of whom are Hispanic.

He and other chaplains offer support by roaming the terminals looking for people to assist with directions, calming down passengers at baggage claim who haven’t received their luggage, or reading faces to find those who might need solace. Barrientos also takes a turn once a month leading the Wednesday evening Protestant service held at the inter-faith chapel in the international terminal.

His full-time job is the children’s ministry youth pastor at Community Praise Center Adventist Church in nearby Alexandria, but he volunteers several hours each week outside the church at Dulles.

Denominational leaders hope that more Adventist ministers serving as community chaplains at airports is an idea that will take flight.

"We favor more pastors extending their ministries into the community," said Gary Councell, director of Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries, the denomination’s ecclesiastical endorsing agency. "We only have influence when we mingle with people and spend time with them for their interests instead of our needs."

Adventist pastors who become endorsed by ACM serve in places such as corporations, fire and police departments, sporting events and cruise lines.

At airports, many people will talk to a chaplain just to share their good mood for a few minutes, while others are desperate for spiritual support, such as a woman who was sobbing during a chapel service after discovering her significant other was unfaithful. Still, some are seeking other things.

"Need help finding your gate?" Barrientos asked a man wandering toward a dead-end corridor loaded with directions.

Barrientos is clergy, but also serves as a guide, restaurant critic, and a first-rate public relations representative. He brags up the architecture of newer terminals and boasts of upcoming renovations.

Dulles airport is currently involved in the largest public transportation construction project in the nation.

"You'll love it. When it’s done, you'll say, ‘I want to travel more,’” he tells passengers.

Opened in 1962, Dulles is 26 miles from downtown Washington, D.C. and employs almost 30,000 people. Last year it served nearly 24 million passengers, according to its website.

"It's a huge, huge place," Barrientos said one recent morning while walking through the pre-dawn chill to the terminal. "Are you ready to do a lot of walking?"

His supervisor, Ralph Benson, wears a pedometer and estimates he walks five to nine miles each day on the job. An American Baptist, he frequently sees Barrientos on the job and requests his assistance in working with Spanish-only speakers.

"He’s wonderful, everyone loves him," said Benson, who serves as director of ministry for the Metro Washington Adventist University outreach team.
Barrientos often goes out of his way to greet Hispanic employees at Dulles. Here he chats briefly with a security guard in the international terminal.

Barrientos has dark, spiky hair and wears a charcoal gray suit with a green tie. It's up to each chaplain how he or she wants to dress, he says, but he chooses formal apparel -- he needs all the cred he can get. He's 28 years old and has a cheery, young face and a slight build. Most Hispanics, he said, don't expect a minister to be young.

"But you're not old," a quizzical passenger on the underground train between terminals said to him in Spanish.

Passengers are often surprised that his job exists.

"I didn't even know airports had chaplains," said Betsy Buckner, who with her husband had flown all night after visiting friends in Argentina. They were looking for the Air France executive lounge during their five-hour stopover before a flight home to San Diego, California.

"Passengers are usually one of two extremes: people are either really, really happy or really sad," Barrientos said. Many passengers he meets are going to visit loved ones, while others have just lost loved ones.

Airport ministry is fast -- a chaplain must get to know someone quickly, and just as fast, let them go.

"It's easy for me. I like to make friends," he said after chatting up a security guard. "[My girlfriend] will tell you I talk too much."

When not talking with employees or leading passengers, Barrientos lets people know about the chapel and its services. Of the literature rack, he says the Adventist book he has to restock most often is El Camino a Cristo, the Spanish version of Steps to Christ, written by Adventist Church co-founder Ellen White. About 300 people visit the chapel every day.

The first airport chapel was established in 1951 at Boston Logan International Airport. It was a Catholic chapel named "Our Lady of the Airways." Now more than 140 airports worldwide have chapels, according to the International Association of Civil Aviation Chaplains, a non-profit organization.

Many airports began offering several denominational chapels, but the trend in recent decades is to offer one interfaith chapel, such as the one at Dulles, which offers services for Catholics, Muslims and Protestants.

Barrientos leads the 7 p.m. Christian prayer service the third Wednesday of each month.
I have always envisioned ministry outside of four walls. I would call this the church without walls. This is an amazing work he and his colleagues are doing. What is truly great is although his attire is professional his demeanor is not less than professional but he has found a way to be personable. This is always important in ministry. A way to connect with the people through everyday circumstance. The fact that he is aware, knowledgeable and comfortable in his surrounding assist him all the more in his purpose; Matt 28:16-20. I hope this idea takes off like a wildfire across the U.S. its Territories and beyond. We need a Revival and more Chaplains in our ministry to bring it through Christ Jesus.

Reshana Blackshear | December 10, 2011 3:41 AM | Reply

This is an awesome ministry! God bless and Happy Sabbath!

Jeremi London | December 10, 2011 7:13 AM | Reply

This ministry is fantastic innovation and needs much prayer. May God continue to use you and others for His glory.

Michael | December 12, 2011 4:25 AM | Reply

This is a wonderful ministry. I am sure that Pastor Barrientos will guide many people to know Jesus.

Orlean Brown Earle | December 12, 2011 4:19 PM | Reply

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Church looking for space in Northland

By Kevin Parks
ThisWeek Community Newspapers
Wednesday December 7, 2011 2:55 PM

After more than two years of sharing space with another congregation, the Rev. Kwesi Gyimah is actively seeking a building for his Columbus African Seventh-Day Adventist Church.

It must be in the Northland area and it must be much more than simply a place for worship.

Gyimah, whose church was formed in September 2009, wants to have not only a worship center but also a combination community health center and food pantry.

“Our goal is to keep our doors open seven days a week, teaching good health practice to our community, feeding the hungry and clothing the naked, mentoring young people, helping new immigrants settle in America and providing a house of prayer for all nations,” according to a letter of appeal for financial assistance from friends of the church.

“We also plan to offer marriage enrichment seminars and smoke cessation programs.

“Currently, we cannot attain any of these goals, due to lack of a facility.”

The Columbus African Seventh-Day Adventist Church has been sharing space with the Victorious Life Christian Center at 1875 Tamarack Circle N. from practically its inception. A health ministry has been one of Gyimah’s major focuses from the outset.

So why try to make a move now, especially in a troubled economy?

“It’s the change that is happening in Northland, especially with the populations of the immigrants growing,” he said recently. “What we’ve observed, what we’ve seen so much, is people falling through the cracks, especially among the immigrant population.

“What we want to do is, hey, be that bridge between the residents of Northland and the visitors who are coming in.”

Gyimah, who was born in Ghana and grew up in Nigeria, was raised in the Seventh-Day Adventist Church and his ambition from a young age was to have a health ministry. He came to the United States in 2001, initially settling in New Jersey with
his parents.

“As a small church, we have made an impact in the city of Columbus through our health ministry and other community outreach programs,” the letter of appeal said. “We intend by the grace of God to continue in His lead as the Lord blesses and directs us. We have partnered with the city of Columbus Public Health department, American Cancer Society, North Side Health Advisory Committee and YMCA, and have reached over 600 people in our community with our health message and distribution of books and tracts.”

The concept of a community health center has another partner: the Helping Hands Health and Wellness Center free clinic.

“We’re going to partner with them,” executive director Joyce Bourgault said. “It’s going to be a community center, not just a health services and health education kind of things. I can see where it’s going to be important for us to be involved with that, because there are all kinds of important things that can go on.”

“The United States has been good to us as immigrants and how we can repay that is to be good to the United States,” Gyimah said.

The proposed name for the combination worship and health center is the Global Center for Wellness and Transformation Inc.

“Anybody who passes through us will be transformed in one way or another ... just something to make your life better than it was, and at the same time, we train you to give back to your community,” Gyimah said.

Many members of the congregation, as well as the immigrant populations he hopes to reach out to through the new facility, call the Northland area home.

“Northland is the ideal place for us, Northland being one of the most diverse communities around,” Gyimah said. “Northland has been so welcoming to us as a church.”

“I just got an update from Pastor Gyimah, and they are going to receive more matching funds from his church organization to help with the purchase of a permanent facility,” North Side Health Advisory Committee co-chair Scott Dowling wrote in an email to support the proposed new facility. “Their goal now is $38,000, which seems like a lot, but is much less than the original target amount. I have been trying to help promote his cause through some other channels, but time grows short. Joyce Bourgault at Helping Hands is considering the use of the facility as well, if Pastor Gyimah’s group is successful.

“I intend to make a donation, as his group has been a huge help to all our efforts at the NSHAC and the Northland community at large,” Dowling said. “Ever since I met Kwesi Gyimah, he has quietly shared his dream of having a place where he can expand his group’s efforts to strengthen people’s bodies as well as nurture their spirit. I am very excited that he is so close to achieving this goal.”

One of the basic goals of the worship and community health center, which would also serve to provide free food to families in need, is to “build a sense of community,” according to Gyimah, in order to “help these groups live
“We want to create that sense of community so that when we see someone different from us, we celebrate that,” he added.

The effort to acquire a building has the support of the Allegheny West Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists, which is willing to loan money, but local funding is also required.

“We have set no timeline for this,” Gyimah said. “As people are moved to give, it will be welcome. I know there are people who can’t help now who can help in two years time, three years time, as things get better for them.”

More information about the project and about making online donations is available at the church’s website, www.africansda.org. Checks made out to African Adventist Church may be sent to Community Project, P.O. Box 298045, Columbus, Ohio 43229.
Motorcyclists help food, clothing bank stock up

By JULIE E. GREENE

julieg@herald-mail.com

5:19 PM EST, December 11, 2011

HAGERSTOWN

Canned food, boxes of grits, and cases of ramen noodles and dish detergent were among the many items ABATE of Maryland motorcyclists dropped off Sunday morning at a downtown Hagerstown food and clothing bank.

The motorcyclists’ group has been making the donations to ACTS 9 for the holiday season for 19 years.

This has been a busy time of year for ACTS 9, an Adventists Caring Through Sharing food and clothing bank, Executive Director Sandy Martin said.

Just as Martin has said the past two years, the food and clothing bank continues to receive fewer donations, while more families are asking for help.

Martin estimated ACTS 9 has helped about 7,000 people this year.

Some people who used to make donations are no longer able to because they’re also experiencing tough times, Martin said.

The families that seek assistance from ACTS 9 are no longer predominantly ones who were supported by blue-collar jobs, but many are families whose paychecks came from office jobs, Martin said. With some families trying to find ways to pay for fuel, it can be difficult to have money for food, she said.

ACTS 9, at 35 E. Washington St., is open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday. The food and clothing bank will be open Dec. 22 and will not reopen again until Jan. 3.

Local Adventist churches have helped keep ACTS 9’s shelves stocked, Martin said.

The Washington County chapter of ABATE on Sunday provided truckloads of clothing, food and household items.
On a Kawasaki Voyager motorcycle, Santa led a parade of motorcycles to the front of the food and clothing bank, while trucks started backing into the rear warehouse to unload donations.

ABATE raised more than $1,100 for this year’s effort, said Clarence “Tuck” Koontz Jr. with the local ABATE chapter. Koontz said that money went further because the group got a discount shopping for donations for the food and clothing bank.

In addition to holding fundraisers, the group passes around donation containers at its events and meetings, as well as at events and meetings of other groups who grant permission, said Koontz and Johnny Strouth, who co-chair ABATE’s canned food and clothing drive.

Pride Motorcycle Club helped ABATE again this year, and joining them Sunday were members of the Tri-State Riding Club.

Afterward, the motorcyclists were heading to San Mar Children’s Home to hold a Christmas party for 32 girls, Koontz said. ABATE raised more than $3,000 to buy gifts for the girls at San Mar, which offers a shelter-care program for girls in the Boonsboro area.

Raymond Sine, of Hagerstown, said ABATE started bringing donations 19 years ago to ACTS 9 after members tried taking donations to a local church, but church officials didn’t want the motorcyclists coming through the front door.

So Sine and his brother, Fritz, arranged through Martin’s father, the late Carl Shafer, to bring the donations to ACTS 9, they said.

The success of the annual campaign to help the clothing and food bank is due to everyone involved, including those who buy the food and who donate clothing, said Fritz Sine, of Chewsville.

“Just trying to make everybody’s holiday a little brighter and less stress,” Fritz Sine said. “It’s such a joy in your heart to help somebody.”

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Incubator Project

SML 7th Day Adventist Church members take on mission in Kenya

By REBECCA JACKSON, Smith Mountain Eagle

A baby boy was born much too soon in a vestpocket Kenyan clinic without electricity, his body so tiny it could be cupped in the two palms of an adult. Photos captured the baby moments after his birth, a wisp of a child swaddled in a colorful blanket, his young Masaai mother holding him, peering into his tiny face with a look of wonder.

He died less than two days later, but his death inspired one Smith Mountain Lake Church to raise money for an incubator, which could have saved the baby, church members feel. Linda and Kenneth Snedden of Franklin County, two members of Smith Mountain Lake 7th Day Adventist Church serving as part of a Share Him missions team in the east African nation, launched the Incubator Project when they returned from abroad in September after a month in Kenya.

"The little baby was not even two pounds," recalled Linda Snedden.

Electricity has since been installed in the remote clinic, which before relied solely on a solar powered generator to refrigerate medications, lights being doused promptly by 10 p.m. each night. The clinic is located an arduous 80-mile, three-hour journey down a road so pocked by deep potholes that it must be traversed in the manner of a slalom skier, rather than driven.

"The roads were unbelievable," recalled Snedden. "In addition to all the ruts, there were big rocks," certainly not the kind of thoroughfare conducive to rapid transportation.

Open sewers transsected even the larger communities the Sneddens visited, including the town of Maua and other settlements, where Kenneth Snedden preached 35 sermons in 19 days and his wife conducted church-related children's programs.

The medical facility they visited was constructed on part of a safari camp on the Masaai Mara, a vast plain teeming with wildlife much like the Serengeti in neighboring Tanzania. The camp founded by American Andrew Aho also is the site of churches and schools. An assistant to Aho, Frances Jordan, another American, runs the clinic.
"They wanted a place where Maasai women could safely deliver their babies," said Snedden.

"The camp sits on an escarpment overlooking Masaai Mara," home to a rich variety of wildlife, including lions, hippos, giraffes, a multitude of colorful bird species, and much more, added Snedden, who hails from Maryland and shares a comfortable, memorabilia-filled country home near Windy Gap with her husband of 49 years and the couple's cat. They've lived in the Lake area since 2004. They're semi-retired, with Kenneth Snedden commuting to Roanoke to work for Source 4, a printing company, and Linda Snedden employed at nearby Boone's Country Store for a couple of days a week. The Sneddens have a son, Clifford, a daughter-in-law and two grandsons, age 19 and 22, who live in Rocky Mount. "We were escorted to a tent each night," Snedden noted of the couple's second African mission, "by an armed guard who told us, 'if a lion comes, I shoot'."

To read more of this and other stories, pick up a copy of this week's Smith Mountain Eagle on newsstands or subscribe online or by calling 719-5100. A year's subscription, which is just $26 in Bedford, Franklin and Pittsylvania County, also gives you free access to the Smith Mountain Eagle's e-edition, an online version of the entire newspaper.

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STAUNTON — C.F. Richards Junior Academy has won accreditation from the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, the association's commission on elementary schools.

C.F. Richards, a Seventh-day Adventist elementary school, teaches students from preschool to eighth grade.

Its accreditation means the school meets the Middle States Association's standards for a quality school, and the move means the school will make regular reports to the group and receive regular visits from its experts to ensure that it continues to meet those standards.

"Middle States accreditation is a recognition of both prior achievements and a commitment to greater future accomplishments," said Henry G. Cram, Jr., president of the association's elementary and secondary schools commissions.

"Middle States accreditation allows for C.F. Richards Junior Academy to have a proven reason to be proud of our school," said Grant Wolters, the school's principal.

"C.F. Richards Junior Academy has worked hard to meet the expectations and standards of Middle States. We are pleased with these achievements, but we are not content. We must continue to press forward, expanding our academic resources, and preparing and training our students to reach their God-desired potential."

The Middle States Association is the second-oldest regional accreditation agency in the United States. Its accreditation makes it easier for people to evaluate students when they transfer and can help parents decide on what school is right for their children.

C.F. Richards is also accredited by the National Council for Private School Accreditation, the Virginia Council for Private Education, the Accrediting Association of Seventh-day Adventists Schools and the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists Board of Education.
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