July 11, 2012

Visitor Publishes Special Issue on Ordination

This month the Columbia Union Conference published a special issue of the Visitor magazine themed “Weighing the Issues: Why We’re Advocating for Women’s Ordination.” According to Visitor editor and publisher Celeste Ryan Blyden, the objective with this special issue is threefold:

1. To help members know why the union’s leadership is advocating for women’s ordination,
2. To educate readers on the history surrounding women’s involvement as ministers and our church’s actions around this issue to date, and
3. To answer the most common questions received in response to the union’s announcement last month that a special constituency session is planned for July 29 to seek approval to ordain proven ministers without regard to gender.

To facilitate the wider conversation, the union communication staff also set up special Web pages in English, Spanish and French so interested members can review the special issue, access additional
Members Weigh in on Ordination Discussion

People across the Columbia Union are talking about the special July Visitor on ordination and the union’s announcement that it will hold a special constituency session July 29. “The July issue of the Visitor reminds me of the best days of [Seventh-day] Adventist communication. It deals with an issue that many a church member is talking about and wondering what actually is at play, but doing [so] in the spirit of openness,” wrote Potomac Conference member Rajmund Dabrowski on the union’s website.

Comments are coming via email, Facebook and the union’s website where, to date, more than 75 have been posted on a comments page designed to facilitate a wider conversation on the matter.

Overall, nearly 1,500 new visitors logged onto the union’s website during the last 10 days, most to read the articles related to this subject. To join the conversation, visit www.columbiaunion.org/2012specialconstituency.—Story by Celeste Ryan Blyden

READ MORE

Former WGTS Radio Host Dies at 83

Long time radio host Gerry Fuller, DDS, died Sunday, July 1, at the age of 83. A member of Potomac Conference’s Sligo church in Takoma Park, Md., he was best known as host of the Saturday morning broadcast, Breakaway, at Washington Adventist University’s WGTS 91.9 FM radio station in Takoma Park, Md. For 45 years people tuned in to the station to listen to Fuller’s familiar voice and hear fascinating interviews with well-known guests such as Ben Carson, Charles Stanley, Philip Yancey and many other public figures.

A licensed dentist, Fuller retired from WGTS in the fall of 2011, just before his 82nd birthday. Following his retirement, the Gerry Fuller Mission Outreach Fund was established to mentor Christian radio stations throughout the world and teach them how to better spread the Word of
Fuller’s wife, Joy, his three children, Gerri Ann, Jon and Jay, as well as his two grandchildren survive him. The radio station will air a special tribute to Dr. Fuller on WGTS at 9 a.m., Saturday, July 14, and Sligo church will host a memorial service at 4 p.m.—Story by Barby Kulakov

READ MORE
Conference-Level Women’s Ministries

**Potomac Conference** leaders announced plans to relaunch a conference-level Women’s Ministries department during two camp meeting prayer breakfasts with almost 200 women in attendance.

The vision is to encourage and train women to be involved with community entities like abuse and domestic violence shelters, aiding unemployed women, teenaged mothers and young girls. “We want this to be an opportunity for women to mentor within their community,” said Cress. “Everything we do ought to involve the public. I don’t want to see us plan events just for entertainment within our Adventist groups. I want to see us inviting others and fellowshipping.”

Cress (pictured right with Carla Baker, North American Division Women’s Ministries director), is planning a 2013 women’s convention to prepare for the North American Division’s convention in 2014.— *Story by Tiffany Doss*

**READ MORE on Potomac Conference’s website**

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**First Hispanic Church of Columbus Celebrates New Building**

Under the title “Buildings do not Last, Builders Do,” Raj Atikken, president of the **Ohio Conference**, spoke at the inaugural service for the First Hispanic church of Columbus in their new building. Doug Falle, conference secretary/treasurer, and Oswaldo Magaña, conference Clergy Care/Leadership Development director, led the inauguration service. The church’s pioneers (pictured), which included Felix Kelmes, Carmen Santos, Daniel Mason and Pastor Orlando Newball, also attended.

Church members spent the weekend reminiscing about their humble origins in August 1994. Roberto Rivera, the church’s current pastor, reminded members through an Ellen White quote, “We have nothing to fear from the future, unless we forget how the Lord has led us, and what we have learned in our past history” (*Life Sketches*, p. 216).
Pine Forge Graduates 40

Pine Forge Academy’s “Inimitable Class of 2012” recently walked across the stage in the Luther Palmer Pavilion in Pine Forge, Pa., for the last time as academy students. All 40 graduates have received at least one letter of acceptance to college while 76 percent graduated with honors and more than $1 million in scholarships.

The traditions of the academy’s graduation exercises are like no other. During the Commencement service, the honor guards salute each student, faculty and staff member, platform guests, and a returning member of the Class of 1962, with equal parts precision and pomp. The Commencement speaker, David Ralph, gave the students free “legal advice” as they begin their lives as adults. He said, “Choose your battles well and fight the good fight of faith!”—Story by Norman Niles

New Video Features Russian Bible Translation Project

Twenty years ago, Russian native Mikhail Petrovich Kulakov Sr. had a dream. He wanted to translate the full Bible into modern Russian because the current translation is over 100 years old. Before his death in 2010, he completed the Pentateuch, Psalms and the New Testament. Now his son, Mikhail Kulakov Jr., a professor at Washington Adventist University (WAU) in Takoma Park, Md., is working with a team of scholars to complete the translation by 2015. But already it’s garnering acclaim as early readers react. “They’re saying, ‘Now I can understand the Word of God,’” reports Guillermo Biaggi, president of the Euro-Asia Division, which is shepherding the project through the Russia-based Bible Translation Institute. The Columbia Union Conference and its Washington Adventist University (WAU) are also supporting the project.

Union communication director Celeste Ryan Blyden recently traveled to Russia to attend a board meeting of the Bible Translation Institute, learn more about the project and report on it. Click here to watch the video.
**UPCOMING EVENTS**

*Click here for a complete listing of upcoming events around the Columbia Union Conference.*

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**DELAWARE**

**July 14-August 8:** New Beginnings evangelism training seminars will take place all over the Columbia Union Conference. This DVD has brought hundreds of thousands of individuals to the Lord over the past decade. Each person who attends the training will receive a free copy of the DVD, if he or she promises to use it within the next 12 months. The DVD contains 25 evangelistic presentations, each with its own outline guide, and it's very easy to use! The trainings will be held: July 14 at the Dover First church in Delaware, July 28 at the Cherry Hill church in New Jersey, August 11 at the Laurelwood church in New Jersey and September 8 at the White Marsh church in Maryland. For more information, email cuasi@columbiaunion.net.

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**MARYLAND**

**July 13-15:** The Middletown Valley church invites you to attend their Revival and Renewal Weekend with speaker Ron Halvorsen. An evangelist and prayer revivalist, he will speak for a “Prayer Warrior Seminar,” which consists of three lectures: July 13 at 7 p.m. and July 14 at 11 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. The church is located at 1811 Arnold Road in Jefferson, Md. To register, call (240) 415-8268 or email mvsdaevents@gmail.com.

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**OHIO**

**July 14-15:** What kind of impact does your church have in the local community? The Ohio Conference’s Adventist Community Services Symposium will provide leadership training to share new approaches to impacting your community. The training will be held at the Worthington church at 385 East Dublin-Granville Road (State Route 161) in Worthington. The classes will be Sabbath, July 14 from 10 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and Sunday, July 15, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. To reserve seats or ask questions, leave a message for Monte Sahlin, the event coordinator, at (800) 272-4664 or email him at montessahlin@gmail.com.

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**NEW JERSEY**

**July 25-29:** The Allegheny East and New Jersey conferences will be sponsoring the Alliance of Prison Ministry Organizations and Affiliates (APMOA) 22nd annual convention in East Rutherford, N.J. Themed “Compassion in Action: Building Bridges of Hope,” there will more than 25 Prison Ministries and community services workshops. Speakers will include C.D. Brooks, former speaker/director for the Breath of Life broadcast; José H. Cortés, New Jersey Conference president; J. Alfred Johnson II, director of Adult Ministries for the North American Division; and Charles Cheatham, Allegheny East Conference president. For more information or to register, click here or call (201) 896-0500.
PENNSYLVANIA
July 13-15: Allegheny East Conference’s Spanish Council of Churches will host a Pathfinder Camporee themed “Only Be Strong and Very Courageous.” It will be held in Pine Forge, Pa. For more information, contact your Pathfinder leader.

WASHINGTON, D.C.
June 28 – August 2: Responding to Climate Change in Our Congregations is a summer class that Interfaith Power & Light is offering to all. People of any faith tradition who are part of a local congregation are warmly welcome to participate and learn what is happening to our world due to climate change. The class will cover both the scientific basics and the moral implications. The class takes place Thursdays, 7-8:30 p.m. at the Servant Leadership School, The Festival Center in Adams Morgan, at 1640 Columbia Road NW, in Washington, D.C. Click here to register.

Having trouble viewing this email? Click here to read it online. For more news and up-to-date information from the Columbia Union Conference, visit columbiaunion.org

Forward to a Friend, Subscribe or Send Us Stories

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.

To send us a news story, email us at visitor@columbiaunion.net. The deadline for all submissions is 10 a.m. each Tuesday.

Stay Connected:

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Visitor News Bulletin is an electronic newsletter published by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Columbia Union Conference. You are free to reprint any portion of the bulletin, however, please identify Visitor News Bulletin as the source.
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To facilitate the wider conversation, the communication staff also set up special web pages in English, Spanish and French so interested members can review the special issue, access additional resources, link to related documents and share comments.

Members Weigh in on Ordination Discussion

People across the Columbia Union are talking about this special issue as well as the union’s announcement that it will hold a special constituency session July 29. "The July issue of the Visitor reminds me of the best days of [Seventh-day] Adventist communication. It deals with an issue that many a church member is talking about and wondering what actually is at play, but doing [so] in the spirit of openness," wrote Potomac Conference member Rajmund Dabrowski on the union’s website. It also caught the attention of Tara VinCross, Pennsylvania Conference pastor, who emailed: “When I got [it] in the mail yesterday, I read every article!”

Comments are coming via email, Facebook and on the union’s website where, to date, more than 75 have been posted on a comments page designed to facilitate a wider conversation on the matter, including this one from Joann: “I never for one moment believed that there was any leader in this church that would stand up for righteousness/justice though the heavens may fall. And here they are before my very eyes—my own union leaders. It brings tears to my eyes each time I think about it.”

On Facebook the number of people talking about the Visitor rose by 140 percent and the total reach increased by 182 percent. Not everyone was sharing positive feedback. “When I read the announcement of the special constituency in the CU Visitor I was stunned, and felt somewhat ashamed, that my union would take upon themselves the authority to decide on an issue that clearly is not in the best interest of church unity,” wrote Vince. He and several others shared suggestions and counsel.

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Fuller was born in Minnesota to two Seventh-day Adventist church schoolteachers. His parents moved to California soon after his birth where Fuller lived for most of his young life. He graduated from Pacific Union College (Calif.) with a degree in speech and then spent several years as a television announcer in Northern California. After moving to the Washington, D.C.-area, he received his degree in dentistry from Howard University. Fuller worked as a licensed dentist for many years and served as president of the WGTS radio station board.

Fuller retired from WGTS in fall 2011, just before his 82nd birthday. Following his retirement, the Gerry Fuller Mission Outreach Fund was established to mentor Christian radio stations throughout the world and teach them how to better spread the Word of God.

Despite being regarded as a powerful figure, Fuller was also considered a friend. At Fuller’s 2011 retirement celebration, John Konrad, current general manager of WGTS shared his close relationship with the longtime legend saying, “Gerry has been a constant source of support and inspiration to me since I started working at WGTS in high school. And even then though Gerry has been my boss for years, he's been more like a brother to me.”

Fuller’s wife, Joy, his three children, Gerri Ann, Jon and Jay, as well as his two grandchildren survive him. The radio station will air a special tribute to Dr. Fuller on WGTS 91.9 at 9 a.m. Saturday, July 14, and Sligo church will host a memorial service at 4 p.m.

Correction: This article was updated on July 11 to reflect the correct schools Dr. Fuller graduated from as well as the date of WGTS' tribute to him.

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Join in the discussion:

There are no comments.

Anonymous

Name:

Email:
Attendees to Miracle Temple’s recent prayer summit witnessed many miracles.

Allegheny East 24-Hour Prayer Line Provides Comfort

Story by Samantha Blake Published 7/11/2012

“Does anyone on the line have something on their heart they’d like to pray for?” asks a prayer facilitator for a 24-hour prayer line.

“My mother just passed away this morning,” a caller responds. “I want to ask God to be with me.”

As prayer is requested, so it is received. On the telephone, prayer facilitators, who volunteer to be on the 24-hour prayer line, provide a listening ear for callers who desire prayer or who want to voice their testimonies of praise. Facilitators also share Bible texts to provide encouragement and inspiration for those in need of God’s word.

The prayer line is a community of callers, and it is run like a prayer group. Callers can stay on the line with unspoken requests as they listen in to those who make their requests heard, or they can unmute their line by dialing *62 and voice what God has placed on their hearts.

In a two-week period, the prayer line receives phone calls from more than 5,000 people worldwide, with calls coming in from Jamaica, Africa and Australia.

Eight churches within the Allegheny East Conference operate the prayer line. These churches include the Miracle Temple in Baltimore, Md.; Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.; Emmanuel in St. Leonard, Md.; Breath of Life in Fort Washington, Md.; Mitchellville in Largo, Md.; Fourth Street Friendship in Washington, D.C.; First church in Washington, D.C.; and Pisgah in Bryans Road, Md. Each church hosts the prayer line for 40 days, and during those 40 days, prayer facilitators are asked to fast, not only from foods, but from things that can distract the heart, such as watching television and reading certain books.

Each hour at the prayer line is devoted to a focus, such as family, children and youth, unity and fellowship, salvation, health and healing, power to rebuke the devil, bondage and addiction, marriage, finance and ministry for the incarcerated.

The idea for the prayer line began when founder Dexter Ravenell, Miracle Temple’s prayer minister, recognized the need for more prayer in church. Ravenell attended a prayer meeting at Brooklyn Tabernacle (N.Y.), where more than 4,000 people were present for prayer meeting every Tuesday night. Impressed by the power of the Lord, Ravenell shares, “I was just so awestruck by the very presence of God that I [thought] ‘I’d like the church that I belong to, to have prayer be a priority.’”

After experiencing the Brooklyn Tabernacle prayer meetings, Ravenell returned to the D.C.-Baltimore area with a passion for prayer. Ultimately, the 24-Hour prayer line was birthed at Miracle Temple. And, with the help of prayer coordinator Saundra Austin, who is a member of the Capitol Hill church, the prayer line has blossomed, and churches outside of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination have gotten involved.

The churches have even presented prayer opportunities outside of the line, including a prayer cruise and most recently, a prayer summit at Miracle Temple. Ravenell shares that the church was able to witness firsthand the power of prayer. “Things that we were praying for, just broke out,” he says. During the summit more than 50 people were healed. Those who went up to the altar with a walker and cane, returned back to their seats without their aids. Ravenell also shares that a boy who was registered at a school for the blind, got his sight back on the day of the summit.

Since 2011 the prayer line has remained a full-time commitment. Austin says, “God answers
Dexter Ravenell, Miracle Temple’s prayer minister, founded the prayer line along with Saundra Austin, prayer minister for the Capitol Hill church.

Sharon Pruitt became a member of the Fourth Street Friendship church after joining the 24-hour prayer line.

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Join in the discussion:

There are no comments.

Anonymous

Name: 
Email: 
The Potomac Conference announced its plan to re-launch women’s ministries at conference level during two Camp Meeting prayer breakfasts with almost 200 women in attendance.

“This ministry has the goal of empowering the women of Potomac to be disciples of Jesus,” said Sharon Cress, pastoral ministries associate for discipleship. “And to nurture within our congregations and communities by sharing the message of Good News.”

The vision is to encourage and train women to be involved with community entities like abuse and domestic violence shelters, aiding unemployed women, high school mothers and young girls. “We want this to be an opportunity for women to mentor within their community,” said Cress. “Everything we do ought to involve the public. I don’t want to see us plan events just for entertainment within our Adventist groups, but I want to see us inviting others and fellowshipping.”

Special guest, Carla Baker, Women’s Ministries coordinator for the North American Division, spoke at the re-launching event and shared resources and opportunities for involvement across the nation.

Cress, who was the associate ministerial secretary for the General Conference for 18 years and director of shepherdess international, is planning a 2013 women’s convention to prepare for the NAD’s convention in 2014. Almost every attendee signed up to receive a women’s newsletter sent out by the NAD and to receive notifications for training events Potomac will be planning before the end of this year.

“We’d like to give a special thanks to President Bill Miller and John Cress, director of pastoral ministries, for...”
their vision of empowering women to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ," said Cress. "We’d also like to thank Nancy Melashanko, associate superintendent for education, and Jenny Spangenberg with all their help in planning and implementing this event and we’d like to salute the women ministries groups that have already been effectively ministering their communities.”