Members Debate, Pray About Upcoming Constituency Meeting

People from all across the Columbia Union Conference, outside the union and even from around the world are talking about and praying for the special constituency meeting slated for Sunday. At this meeting, delegates will consider a request from the union executive committee to approve ministerial ordination without regard to gender.

After the July issue of the Visitor magazine reached members with the cover story “Weighing the Issues: Why We’re Advocating for Women’s Ordination,” there have been a flood of comments on the union’s website, on Facebook and even via telephone. So far there are 161 comments on the union’s website and comments have poured in from as far away as South Africa, France and India. Pastor Daniel KalapalaIa, who labeled himself as “a friend and well wisher from Vijayawada, India” wrote: “Trust the Spirit of God will prevail and guide the church in the right direction.”

Here in the Columbia Union, discussion has been plentiful and passionate in some conferences and decidedly less so in others. Click here for snapshots of what is happening in each conference around the union.—Story by Taashi Rowe

Columbia Union Leaders Call for Day of Prayer

On Sunday, July 29, the Columbia Union Conference will convene a special constituency meeting to
consider a request from the union executive committee to approve ministerial ordination without regard to gender.

In anticipation of that meeting, union president Dave Weigley asks church members unionwide to set aside Sabbath, July 28, as a day of prayer.

“Since our announcement about the session, many people have been talking and praying about it, emailing me, commenting on our website and calling our office,” Weigley says. “The officers and I have been praying throughout this process, and before we convene this special meeting, we want to solicit the prayers of our unionwide family. Please pray with us for God's Spirit to guide, His will to prevail and that we, as His people, will heed His voice.”

**Click here to read this statement in Spanish or here to read it in French.**

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**Líderes de la Unión de Columbia convocan un día de oración**

El domingo 29 de julio, la Unión de Columbia se reunirá en una sesión especial de congreso para considerar el pedido de su junta ejecutiva de aprobar la ordenación ministerial sin distinción de género.

En anticipación a la convocatoria, el presidente de la unión, Pastor Dave Weigley, solicita a toda la feligresía de la unión a dedicar el sábado 28 de julio como un día de oración.

“Desde nuestro anuncio de la sesión, mucha gente ha estado hablando, orando, enviando correos electrónicos, comentando en nuestro sitio de la internet y llamando a nuestra oficina,” declara el pastor Weigley. “Los administradores hemos estado orando durante todo este proceso, y antes de esta reunión especial queremos solicitar las oraciones de toda la familia de nuestra unión. Por favor ora con nosotros por la dirección del Espíritu de Dios, que su voluntad prevalezca, y que nosotros como su pueblo escuchemos su voz.”

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**How to Get Session Results**

The Columbia Union Conference Special Constituency Meeting July 29 is only open to registered delegates, but Columbia Union leaders are considering streaming presentations from the meeting. During the meeting, *Visitor* staff will share updates via Facebook and Twitter. Following the meeting, we will release a statement and full report via email, website and in the August *Visitor*.

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Email News – Sign up at [www.columbiaunion.org/emailnews](http://www.columbiaunion.org/emailnews)
Potomac Invites Professor to Present Research on Ordination

Potomac Conference leaders have invited Darius Jankiewicz, PhD, a professor of New Testament History at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University (Mich.), to present his research on the history of ordination, ecclesiastical authority and the fundamentalist influence upon Adventism.

“Dr. Jankiewicz’s research provides a fresh, historical window through which we can observe ordination,” says Bill Miller, conference president. “I believe the past is foundational to all future decisions. If new information is available about our history, then we all owe it to ourselves to avail ourselves of that information. Our invitation to Dr. Jankiewicz is simply that—to help get his information out to all our people in the Columbia Union and beyond.”

Jankiewicz will present at 3:30 p.m., July 28, at the Sligo church, which is located at 7700 Carroll Avenue in Takoma Park, Md. All are welcome to attend. The event will also be streamed live on both the Potomac Conference website and the Sligo church website.—Story by Tiffany Doss

Ebenezer Member, First Black Marine, Receives Medal of Honor

Until 1942 the United States Marine Corps refused to recruit people of color. Franklin D. Roosevelt’s creation of the Fair Employment Practices Commission in 1941 forced the Corps to begin recruiting black Marines. The Marines’ first black recruits received basic training at the segregated Montford Point Base adjacent to Camp Lejeune (N.C.), and would continue to do so until 1949. More than 20,000 blacks trained in segregated facilities and became the first blacks to serve in the United States Marine Corps.

Last month at the Marine Barracks in Washington, D.C., Philip Herout, 85, a member of Allegheny East Conference’s Ebenezer church in Philadelphia, was
among 400 men who received Congressional Medals of Honor for their service to the United States with the Montford Point Marines.

“I never would have imagined this,” Herout said his voice trembling with emotion. “I always remember what my mom told me, ‘One of these days, it would be so nice if you can smell your roses.’ The sweetest rose I ever got was when they gave me that Congressional Medal of Honor.”

Spring Valley Academy Selects Interim Principal

When Vern Biloff decided to retire in June 2010, as vice president of education for the Central California Conference, little did he know that the Lord had a plan for his continued service in Seventh-day Adventist education. He has agreed to serve as interim principal at Spring Valley Academy (SVA) in Centerville, Ohio, for the 2012-13 school year.

Biloff dedicated more than 42 years to Adventist education and was one of five union educators to receive the distinguished Lifetime Service Award from the Pacific Union Conference. Biloff is optimistic and shares, “Our children’s future will be secure if they are encouraged to ask questions and, in turn, receive thoughtful, ethical and Christ-centered answers from their pastors and teachers.” He joins the SVA staff in August.—Story by Vicki Swetnam

WAU’s English Chair Gets Summer Seminar Award

Susan Comilang, chair of Washington Adventist University’s (WAU) Department of English and Modern Languages, is the recipient of a National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) summer seminar award for college and university teachers. The NEH is an independent federal agency created in 1965. It is one of the largest funders of humanities programs in the United States. The seminar, part of the NEH’s division of education programs, is open to 16 participants to explore “Tudor Books and Readers, 1485-1603” in Antwerp, Belgium; London; and Oxford, England.

“The experience has been really wonderful so far,” says Comilang fresh off a trip examining books at Corpus Christi College and Magdalene College in England. “It is my plan to use the research I am able to do as a
Comilang (pictured left with a student), whose doctoral work is on the early modern period, has chaired the Department of English and Modern Languages since 2004.—Story by Grace Virtue

Highland View Graduates Speak for Commencement

“I realize that most schools believe their senior class is special and unique, and that might be true; however, I can tell you that Highland View Academy’s Class of 2012 truly is an exceptional group,” says Chaplain Brett Hadley.

Earlier this year, the seniors discovered that the keynote speaker for their Commencement, who they had scheduled three years in advance, needed to cancel. This left the class officers in a bit of a quandary, but one of the sponsors reminded the students of their motto “Leave a Trace,” and suggested their entire class speak for graduation.

On Commencement morning, 35 seniors took turns approaching the microphone, and for 30 seconds each, shared what made their time at Highland View Academy special. They also offered words of wisdom to the underclassmen.

The 2012 senior class’ greatest accomplishment did not happen by individual students but by the entire class working together to fulfill their motto.—Story by Renee Williams

AHS-2 Researchers Share Study Results, Health Tips at Camp Meetings

This summer Adventist Health Study-2 (AHS-2) researchers visited several camp meetings around the Columbia Union Conference. Many of the 96,000 study members of AHS-2 are church members in the Columbia Union.

“Despite the fairly tight schedule, all of the
presentations were warmly received,” said Terry Butler, DrPH, one of AHS senior researchers assigned to do the presentations at the Ohio and Potomac conference camp meetings.

Titled *Are Adventists Living Longer and Healthier? Latest Findings from the Adventist Health Studies*, his presentation underlined the preliminary findings from AHS-2 and its sub-study, the Adventist Religion and Health Study. “We now know that vegetarian Adventists have lower mortality rates, and lower rates of certain cancers compared to non-vegetarian study members,” said Butler, an epidemiologist and pastor who met several study members while at camp meeting. Pictured is Butler, flanked by two AHS-2 participants at the Ohio Conference Camp Meeting.

To learn more about the Adventist Health Study-2 and its findings, visit [adventisthealthstudy.org](http://adventisthealthstudy.org).—*Story by Barry Manembu*

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**Newark English’s Little Lights Adventurers Shine**

The 24 members of the Little Lights Adventurer Club at New Jersey Conference’s Newark English church have been very busy serving the Lord and having fun. Their director, Carol James, says the Little Lights is the number-two Adventurer club in the conference. This year they visited with their senior pastor, Andre Ascalon (pictured); cheered up residents of a nursing home; volunteered at a soup kitchen; made thank-you cards for their local firemen and policemen, and joined 1,000 other Adventurers from around the conference for Family Time Out.

“This is a club where the children and their parents learn about Jesus,” says James, who has worked with Adventurers since the 1980s. “The most important thing we do in this ministry is show the kids that the most fun they can have is not watching TV, it’s learning about God through nature, helping people around them and growing in Christ.”—*Story by Taashi Rowe*

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**UPCOMING EVENTS**

*Click here for a complete listing* of upcoming events around the Columbia Union Conference.
MARYLAND
July 28-August 4: The Metropolitan church is hosting “AirBorn,” an evangelistic series focused on the grand occasion of Christ’s second coming. Pastor Carlton P. Byrd, DMin, speaker and director of Breath of Life television ministries, will present the series, which starts each night at 7 p.m. It ends Saturday, August 4, with the divine service at 11 a.m. There is no meeting on Thursday, August 2.

On Sunday evening, July 29, Grammy-award winning gospel sensation Marvin Sapp will be the special musical guest. Admission is free, but you must reserve a seat in advance! Send an email to airborn@metrosda.org to ensure you get a seat! There will be a Vacation Bible School during the series. The church is located at 6307 Riggs Road in Hyattsville, Md. For more information, visit metrosda.org.

July 29-August 5: Need to reconnect with God? Want your kids to grow spiritually? Join Wheaton church members at their Mega Week celebration. A revival service and Vacation Bible School will be held Sunday thru Friday, 6:30-8:30 p.m. On Saturday there will be adult and children’s church and gospel music on the lawn 6-9 p.m. On Sunday there will be a Fun Day from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The church is located at 3132 Bel Pre Road in Silver Spring, Md. For more information, visit wheatonsda.org or email wheatonsda@hotmail.com.

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.

July 28-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 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.

WASHINGTON D.C.
July 28: Capitol Hill Church Day of Community Service. Instead of regular worship service, the congregation will disperse across the Washington, D.C.-area in various community projects. The service opportunities are broad and include: a morning run with homeless in transition support groups; delivering groceries to seniors; tending to the trees and plantings along the Anacostia River; cleaning and organizing a
children’s playroom; delivering meals to persons living with life-threatening illnesses; sorting donated clothing for a thrift store; and writing cards and letters to military personnel. The day will also include an onsite health fair and neighborhood prayer walk. For more information, visit chcsda.org.

**VIRGINIA**

**July 29: Movimiento Joven Adventista,** Potomac Conference’s Hispanic Youth Ministries, will be hosting a youth Olympics. Each church is invited to participate in playing soccer, basketball, volleyball, swimming, running and chess. The event will be held at the Shenandoah Valley Academy, which is located at 234 W. Lee Highway in New Market, Va. There is a $10 entrance fee. Register at movimientoja.com.

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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Story by Taashi Rowe
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Here in the Columbia Union, discussion has been plentiful and passionate in some conferences and decidedly less so in others. Below are snapshots of what is happening around the union:

During the divine service at Chesapeake Conference’s New Hope church in Fulton, Md., pastors presented information to congregants, distributed copies of the July Visitor, included articles on the subject in two of their bulletins and placed a statement and additional resources on their website. At another, more traditional church nearby, one of the Sabbath School classes dispensed with the lesson and discussed the July Visitor at great length.

Potomac Conference’s leaders have posted some information and resources on their website. They also invited a professor from Andrews University (Mich.) to share information about the role of women in ministry at Sligo church in Takoma Park, Md., this Sabbath, starting at 3:30 p.m. Sligo church also held a special prayer meeting on Tuesday where “the emphasis was not that the matter would be voted but that God’s will would be done. We also took time to pray for unity,” said Don McFarlane, the church’s administrative pastor. Several speakers, including Josephine Benton, Sligo’s first woman pastor, shared their experiences. Throughout the evening, attendees also prayed for women in pastoral ministry and in leadership at all levels of the church.

In the New Jersey Conference, James Greene, executive secretary, with the full support of his fellow officers, wrote a letter, to General Conference leaders in response to their appeal for unity. In the letter, Greene writes: “If Martin Luther and the other reformers had heeded the advice and counsel of the church leaders, during the time of the reformation, to cherish church unity over what the Bible teaches, there would not be a Seventh-day Adventist Church today. It was because of these reformers, willingness to place Scripture above church policy and practice that the great protestant reformation took place.”

On Monday the Mountain View Conference Executive Committee resolved: “Following the scriptural mandate of the priesthood of all believers, and as directed by its constitution and bylaws, intentionally chooses to continue its long-held commitment of supporting, encouraging, empowering, and celebrating the involvement of all members, regardless of gender, in church ministry. However, we will do so only in harmony with the Seventh-day Adventist World Church, as expressed by actions taken during the General Conference in business session.”

Pennsylvania Conference leaders not only placed resources on their website that shared both sides of the issue, but they also made room at three of their town hall meetings, which were intended to prepare for their upcoming constituency session, to discuss at length this special Columbia Union constituency session. During one particular meeting, the discussion, slated for only one hour, went on for three hours. Ray Hartwell, conference president, has also blogged about the topic.

The topic of women in ministry also came up at a recent Allegheny East Conference (AEC) town hall meeting. In addition to that discussion, attendees also prayed that the union delegates would heed the Holy Spirit’s moving. At AEC’s Metropolitan church in Hyattsville, Md., pastors Brenda
Billingy and Marquis Johns visited each Sabbath School class and distributed copies of the July Visitor. They also said a special prayer for the session and are planning another prayer at tonight’s prayer meeting.

Ohio Conference leaders held a special town hall meeting with delegates and outlined the history of women in ministry, gave information from both sides of the argument and encouraged delegates to read more on the subject. The conference’s Mount Vernon Hill church in Mount Vernon also included an article supporting the ordination of women in their newsletter.

And in the Allegheny West Conference, President William T. Cox Sr., simply said, “The officers and members of the Allegheny West Conference are in prayer as we consider the vote for ordination of women. Our prayer is that God’s will will be done and His name will get all of the praise.”

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23 de Julio del 2012

Líderes de la Unión de Columbia convocan un día de oración

El domingo 29 de julio, la Unión de Columbia se reunirá en una sesión especial de congreso para considerar el pedido de su junta ejecutiva de aprobar la ordenación ministerial sin distinción de género.

En anticipación a la convocatoria, el presidente de la unión, Pastor Dave Weigley, solicita a toda la feligresía de la unión a dedicar el sábado 28 de julio como un día de oración.

“Desde nuestro anuncio de la sesión, mucha gente ha estado hablando, orando, enviando correos electrónicos, comentando en nuestro sitio de la internet y llamando a nuestra oficina,” declara el pastor Weigley. “Los administradores hemos estado orando durante todo este proceso, y antes de esta reunión especial queremos solicitar las oraciones de toda la familia de nuestra unión. Por favor ora con nosotros por la dirección del Espíritu de Dios, que su voluntad prevalezca, y que nosotros como su pueblo escuchemos su voz.”

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Contact:
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La Unión de Columbia, en el internet. Desde nuestra sede en Columbia, Md., trabajamos para avanzar y ejecutar la misión de la Iglesia Adventista del Séptimo Día en el centro de los Estados Unidos--preparar a un pueblo para el pronto regreso de Cristo.

En esta página compartimos historias emocionantes de cómo Dios está obrando en las iglesias hispano hablantes. ¡Necesitamos su ayuda en mantener actualizada esta página! Le invitamos a enviarnos sus historias y noticias en inglés y español a Visitor@columbiaunion.net.

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Les Leaders de la Columbia Union Conférence lancent un appel à la prière

La Columbia Union Conférence convoque ce dimanche 29 juillet une circonscription spéciale en vue de considérer une requête des membres du comité exécutif d’approuver l’ordination au ministère sans égard au sexe.

Dans l’attente de cette réunion, le président de l’Union, Dave Wigley, requiert des membres d’Eglise peuplant le territoire de l’Union de consacrer le Sabbat, 28 juillet à la prière.

« Depuis notre annonce de la réunion spéciale, de nombreuses personnes se sont mises à parler et prier à ce sujet, certains m’ont envoyé des emails, d’autres ont posté des commentaires sur notre site web et d’autres nous ont même contacté au bureau » déclare le président de l’Union, Dave Wigley. « Les officiers et moi n’avons pas cessé de prier tout le long de ce processus, et avant de convoquer cette réunion spéciale, nous voulons solliciter la prière de tous les membres de notre Union. Je vous demande donc de prier pour nous afin que nous soyons guidés par le Saint Esprit, que Sa volonté soit faite et que Son peuple se soumette à Ses directives ».

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AHS-2 Researchers Share Study Results, Health Tips at Camp Meetings

Story by Barry Manembu
Published 7/25/2012

is summer
Adventist Health Study-2 (AHS-2) researchers visited several camp meetings around the Columbia Union Conference. Many of 96,000 study members of AHS-2 are church members in the Columbia Union.

Last July the National Institutes of Health awarded AHS-2 $5.5 million to continue the study for another five years and these camp meeting visits were all about sharing the latest results with study participants while giving a personal face to the research.

"Despite the fairly tight schedule, all of the presentations were warmly received," said Terry Butler, DrPH, one of AHS senior researchers assigned to do the presentations at the Ohio Conference Camp Meeting. "Several people, who wanted for more information, even followed me to the foyer to ask questions afterwards."

Titled "Are Adventists Living Longer and Healthier? Latest Findings from the Adventist Health Studies," his presentation underlined the preliminary findings from AHS-2 and its sub-study, the Adventist Religion and Health Study. "We now know that vegetarian Adventists have lower mortality rates, and lower rates of certain cancers compared to non-vegetarian study members," said Butler, an epidemiologist and pastor who met several study members while at camp meeting.

Another senior co-investigator, Patti Herring, PhD, accompanied by her research assistants Donna Richards and Nicceta Davis, shared study results at the Allegheny East Conference Camp Meeting. She, too, received positive responses from the attendees. Her presentation began with a video clip of news coverage of the AHS-2, followed by a quick summary on the health outcomes of study participants in this particular conference. This include the percentage of those who reported having high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and type 2 diabetes, patterns of meat eating or vegetarians, and levels of physical activity. She shared a few health tips for managing high blood pressure, managing diabetes, lowering cholesterol, preventing health disease and lowering their risks of various cancers.

"We looked at meat eating patterns in Black study members and found that vegans had the best health outcomes. They reported less high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and type 2 diabetes, patterns of meat eating or vegetarians, and levels of physical activity. She shared a few health tips for managing high blood pressure, managing diabetes, lowering cholesterol, preventing health disease and lowering their risks of various cancers.

"Blacks have the worst health conditions compared to other ethnic groups in America, but this is our time to tell the world that Black Adventists have better health outcomes," said Herring,
challenging the audiences.

To learn more about the Adventist Health Study-2 and its findings, visit adventisthealthstudy.org.

Kermit Netteburg, pastor of the Beltsville (Md.) church, greets Terry Butler, DrPH, at the Potomac Conference Camp Meeting.

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