Potomac Member, Businessman, Avid Supporter of Adventist Education Dies

Following complications with pneumonia, Stewart Bainum, founder of Choice Hotels International, the second-largest hotel chain in the world, died yesterday at 94. But, Bainum wasn't known only for his business acumen. This member of Potomac Conference’s Sligo church in Takoma Park, Md., was also known for founding and operating the Commonweal Foundation through which his family
donated millions of dollars every year to support educational programs and projects.

In a November 2011 Visitor article titled “Giving Back,” Bainum shared, “We believe that each individual has value and potential and deserves a quality learning environment. Our goal is to provide them with that.”

Upon hearing about his death, Hamlet Canosa, EdD, director of Columbia Union’s Office of Education, said, “[We] mourn the loss of a true friend, generous benefactor and model Christian servant. Mr. Bainum’s tireless efforts to ‘make a real difference’ … will continue to be deeply appreciated by all who were directly or indirectly touched by his kindness and support.” A funeral service will be held 11 a.m. Monday, February 17 at Sligo church.—Story by Visitor Staff

Columbia Union Pathfinders Rise to Active Lifestyle Challenge

The North American Division’s Health Ministries Department recently recognized three Columbia Union Pathfinder clubs for engaging in healthier living. As participants in the division’s 2013 InStep for Life contest, they each won $1,000, which will go toward their trip to this year’s Forever Faithful International Camporee. The Atholton Faithblazers Pathfinder Club (pictured) from Chesapeake Conference’s Atholton church in Columbia, Md., logged 8,950 miles of activity while the Bulldogs Pathfinder Club from Allegheny West Conference’s Greater New Hope Community church in Canton, Ohio, claimed 5,096 miles. Potomac’s Patterson Avenue church in Richmond, Va., also received $1,000 for having some 26 percent of their members participate.

With obesity on the rise among young Americans, Katia Reinert, PhD, who directs the division’s Health Ministries department, thought it was important to involve some of the youngest members in the annual competition.

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Frederick Church Men’s Ministry Event Draws 100 -Plus

More than 100 men, including 25 who were not Seventh-day Adventists, attended the “Are You Man Enough?” event at Chesapeake Conference’s Frederick (Md.) church, February 7-9.

“It was a great event. A good time meeting others who are focused on being a better man for their family, church and community,” said William Ivany, an attendee from Martinsburg, W.Va., on the event Facebook page.

The event drew participants from Maryland, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, California, Florida and Montana. Frederick member Sean Loomis and retired Navy SEAL Eric Davis planned physical activities that required the men to work with strangers of different ages, physical strength levels and communication styles to improve their communication and leadership skills.

Christian counselor Ken Williams and Frederick youth pastor Mark Sigue also provided practical training on how to become better leaders.—Story by V. Michelle Bernard

READ MORE

Allegheny East Members Presents “Blacks in Wax” Experience
In celebration of African-American History Month, the Adventist Youth Society at the Capitol Hill church in Washington, D.C., presented their fifth annual “Our History, Our Words, Our Music” event. The program, which took place last Sabbath, featured the Allegheny East church’s take on the popular Blacks in Wax Museum, and special guest, LeRoy A. “Boots” Battle, Sr., who was an original Tuskegee airman.—Story by Michelle Riley Jones; Photos by Norman Mitchell

Highland Adventist Students Dig Deep, Produce High Yields—Even in Winter

High school students at the Highland Adventist School (HAS) in Elkins, W.Va., have started a business. Most days after school, in the school’s driveway, they are sell vegetables they have cultivated.

The project, which is being managed by the school’s entrepreneurship class, started after the school installed a 32’ x 20’ high tunnel near the school. After hours of hard work in preparing the ground for planting and research to determine what plant species would be best for winter growing in the high tunnel, the students planted kale, spinach, hardy lettuce, swiss chard and a few other experimental plants.

“The students are really enjoying this project and learning a lot about small business management,” states Cheryl Jacko, principal and entrepreneurship teacher. Pictured are Hannah Spitalsky and Lena Giltner mixing topsoil and composted manure for planting beds.

READ MORE

York Students Have Fun Recycling Tons
Last year for the first time, students at the York Adventist Christian School in York, Pa., participated in the Keep America Beautiful Recycle Bowl. Students at 1,500 schools nationwide were challenged to collect one ton of paper, plastic, glass and aluminum recyclables in just one month. While York students had ranked high in previous competitions, their teachers say this was a "crazy, almost unbelievable goal."

The first week of collections started sporadically, but by the second week, the students caught the vision and were unstoppable! In fact, the students became so excited that every morning they would wait in line at the front door to have their recycling items weighed and added to the ever-growing recycling pile. After all of the bags, bottles and boxes were tabulated, the students had collected more than 16 tons of recycling! They came in first in their division, and collected $1,000 in prize money.—Story by Jennifer A. McCary

Potomac President Joins Shady Grove’s Board
The Shady Grove Adventist Hospital in Gaithersburg, Md., recently appointed William “Bill” K. Miller, president of the Potomac Conference, to its governing board for an initial three-year term. "We are pleased to welcome Bill Miller to our board," says John Sackett, the hospital’s president. "With substantial experience in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, I am confident that he will help us continue to carry out our mission as we provide high-quality care for our growing population."

Miller comes to the board with more than 30 years of experience in the Adventist Church. He was elected president of the Potomac Conference in August 2006 and is currently pursuing a Doctorate of Ministry in Leadership.

"I am honored to join the board at Shady Grove Adventist Hospital and am looking forward to helping the organization as it cares for the physical, mental and spiritual needs of our community," says Miller.—Story by Susan Griffiths

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**BMA Students Need Your Prayers!**

There are 156 students at Blue Mountain Academy (BMA) in Hamburg, Pa. So far, 26 of those young people have a person committed to praying for them. The school is seeking individuals to pray for the other 130 kids. Candidates should be interested in encouraging their students and sharing God’s love.

Previous Blue Mountain Academy Prayer Patch Partners have encouraged students, revealed God, and made a lasting impression on young people by simply praying regularly, sending a note or card often, and sending a care package occasionally. “God has often timed those notes and packages to arrive just at that moment when a student needed a reminder that someone cared,” shared Tammy Horst, communication director for the Pennsylvania Conference. To learn more, email Horst at horst@paconference.org.

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**Work-Life Balance in Europe Could Backfire**
Against Religious Minorities, Experts Say

An alliance promoting work-life balance and social cohesion in Europe reiterated its call for work-free Sundays at a conference in Brussels, Belgium, last month. The European Sunday Alliance, a coalition of national Sunday alliances, trade unions, civil society organizations and faith communities established in 2011, is gaining some traction in the European Parliament but continues to trouble religious liberty advocates.

At the Second Conference on Work-Free Sundays and Decent Work, the alliance launched a pledge targeting current and future members of the European Parliament, asking lawmakers to promote legislation that “respects” Sunday as a “day of rest” and guarantees fair work hours.

Religious minorities in Europe—among them Muslims, Jews and Seventh-day Adventists—worry the proposal could infringe on free expression of religious beliefs, despite its seemingly well-intentioned goals.—Story by Adventist News Network

READ MORE ON ANN'S WEBSITE

What can we Learn From Europe’s Religious Wars?

In a recent Talking About Freedom podcast, Walter Carson, host and Columbia Union general counsel, talks with David Trim, PhD (pictured), General Conference archivist, about his research on the European religious wars.

Click here to listen to this episode.

UPCOMING EVENTS
MARYLAND

February 1-22: Each Sabbath in February Miracle Temple in Baltimore will share a sermon series on “Breaking the Chains of Slavery.” This Sabbath the sermon will be titled “Contented Slaves: The Slavery Mindset,” February 15; the title will be “Who’s Your Massa” with speaker Ronnie Vanderhorst and on February 22 the title will be “The Underground Railroad.” The church is located at 100 South Rock Glen Road in Baltimore. For more information, visit miracletemple.net.

February 15: Chesapeake Adventist Single Adult Ministries is planning a Valentine's Day potluck and party at 6:30 p.m. at the Chesapeake Conference office, 6600 Martin Road, Columbia, Md. Bring food to share. For more information, contact Fred Thomas by email at fthomas1950@yahoo.com, or by phone at (410) 992-9731.

February 15: The Middletown Valley Church invites you to our special visitors’ day. The theme for the day is “Wholly Loved” with a focus on the relationship among the Trinity and their relationship with us. A fellowship meal will follow the worship service. There will also be a free Southern gospel concert with a local quartet, The Heavners, at 6 p.m. The church is located at 1811 Arnold Road in Jefferson, Md.

February 16: If you've been thinking about losing weight, the South Carroll church is sponsoring a program based on the Full Plate Diet. To learn more, plan to attend a free informational session Sunday, 4-5:30 p.m. at 2020 West Liberty Road in Taylorsville, Md. (for GPS use Westminster). For more information or to RSVP, call Better Living for South Carroll at (410) 861-0460 or email betterliving4sc@gmail.com.

February 22: The Miracle Temple’s Women’s Ministries team is hosting “MT Boutique,” for those interested in getting gently-used yet fashionable shoes, handbags, coats, dresses etc. The boutique takes place in the fellowship hall and goes from 6-9 p.m. The church is located at 100 S. Rock Glen Road in Baltimore.

February 23: The Metropolitan church are offering free tax preparation services at their facility in Hyattsville, Md., from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Those who are unemployed, are 65 and older, have a family income of less than $75,000 per year or an individual income of less than $50,000 per year are eligible to receive assistant. Click here to register.

NEW JERSEY

February 16: The Wayne church is hosting a blood drive from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The church is located at 218 Ratzer Road in Wayne, N.J.

March 1: The Waldwick school is hosting its annual international festival at 7 p.m. This event is always a fun celebration of all the cultures represented in the school and local churches. The school is located at 70 Wycoff Avenue.

OHIO

February 22-23: The Southeast church in Cleveland is hosting a
special Black History Month celebration themed “Embracing the Past, Building the Future.” The weekend will feature music, poetry, dramatic presentations and a Sabbath potluck. The speakers will be Nevilon Meadows and Southeast’s own Pastor Jerome Hurst. For more information, visit se7day.org.

WEST VIRGINIA

February 18: The Berkeley Springs Seventh-day church will hold its monthly Supper Club on Tuesday at 6 p.m., featuring vegan and vegetarian Italian foods. Following the meal, which is free to community visitors and members, Al Montanero of the Martinsburg church will give a presentation on the benefits of juicing fruits and vegetables. The church is located at 3606 Valley Drive in Berkeley Springs, W.Va. For more information, contact Lisa Shingleton, Health Ministries director, in the evenings at (304) 258-2739.

TENNESSEE

February 4-March 7: Submissions for the 2014 SONscreen Film Festival, which will take place on the campus of Southern Adventist University in Tennessee will be accepted starting February 4. The regular submission deadline is March 1 and the late fee deadline is March 7. Click here to register your SONscreen 2014 entry.

OHIO

February 21-23: During the GODEncounters weekend in Oregonia, Sam Leonor, chaplain at La Sierra University in California, will speak. Attendees will focus on prayer, music, fellowship and small group discussions. Click here to get more details and check out pictures!
Bainum, Businessman and Avid Supporter of Adventist Education Dies

February 12, 2014 · by Taashi Rowe · in Education, Potomac Conference

Story by Nadia McGill/Visitor Staff

Stewart Bainum, founder of Choice Hotels International, the second-largest hotel chain in the world, died today at 94 following complications with pneumonia. But Bainum wasn’t known only for his business acumen. A member of Potomac Conference’s Sligo church in Takoma Park, Md., Bainum was also known for his commitment to Seventh-day Adventist education.

“Today, the Columbia Union Office of Education mourns the loss of a true friend, generous benefactor and model Christian servant,” said Hamlet Canosa, EdD, the union’s vice president for education. “Mr. Bainum’s tireless efforts to ‘make a real difference’ in the academic pursuits of the young will be heralded for years to come and will continue to be deeply appreciated by all who were directly or indirectly touched by his kindness and support.”

For more than 40 years, the Bainum family has operated the Commonweal Foundation and donating millions of dollars every year to support programs and projects that help disadvantaged youth across the country succeed academically.

“One of our core beliefs at Commonweal Foundation is that, if you want to go far, you have to have an education. We believe that each individual has value and potential and deserves a quality learning environment. Our goal is to provide them with that.” Bainum shared in a 2011 Visitor article titled “Giving Back.” Portions of that article is below:

A Pocket Full of Dreams

Bainum was forced to drop out as a student at Mount Vernon Academy (MVA) in Mount Vernon, Ohio, in the 1930s because he could not pay his tuition. With no real prospects and only $3 in his pocket, he hitchhiked to Washington, D.C., looking for work. Once there, he got a job as a plumber’s assistant, making 30 cents an hour.

After a year and a half in the city, he managed to save enough money to return and finish his studies at MVA. He continued his education at what is now Washington Adventist University (WAU) in Takoma Park, Md., ultimately settling in the capital area.

Due to self-discipline, perseverance, strong work ethic, vision and business acumen, Stewart grew more and more successful. He developed several businesses, including a plumbing and mechanical contracting company, and got into the apartment and office development industry. In 1951 he founded the Realty Investment Company, Inc.

After building his first motel in 1957, Bainum joined an association of independent hotel owners that he would eventually be asked to run. That association became Choice Hotels International, which is now the second largest hotel franchise company in the world. He is also the founder of ManorCare, which in 1998 became part of HCR ManorCare, the nation’s top nursing home corporation.

Turning Dreams Into Reality

Despite his achievements, Bainum never forgot his humble beginnings. In 1968 he created the College Fund, as it was originally named, as
a means to give back to his community. He provided financially needy students with loans to help them pay for their college education.

However, since then, he has grown the organization’s mission and objectives, changing not only its name in 1985 to the Commonweal Foundation, but also shifting its focus to support disadvantaged youth currently enrolled in secondary education.

The catalyst for this change came in 1988 when Commonweal was a key supporter of the “I Have a Dream” Program. Stewart agreed to pay the college tuition of 67 seventh-graders at Kramer Junior High School in southeast Washington, D.C., if they finished high school. The results were spectacular! Nearly 75 percent of the 67 “Dreamers,” as they were called, graduated high school, compared to only 27 percent of their peers. In addition, of the 10 that Stewart sent to his alma mater, Mount Vernon Academy, nine graduated.

From this experience, he developed Commonweal’s Pathways to Success Program (PSP), through which he continues to provide low-income middle and high school students with scholarships to attend private, faith-based boarding and day schools selected by Commonweal.

“Both of my parents grew up in poverty,” explains Barbara, Bainum’s daughter and his successor at Commonweal, and also a Sligo church member. “Having the opportunity to go to boarding school, they really felt that it changed their lives … this had an immense impact on how the focus of the foundation has evolved.”

Helping Schools Help Students

Through Commonweal, the Bainums also provide schools with the resources they need to help students reach their potential, in the form of grants and multi-year service contracts. Some of this assistance has gone to meet school needs, including staffing shortfalls, staff training and development, and facility renovation.

Since Commonweal’s inception, the Bainum family has given thousands of scholarships to needy students, and they partner with, on average, approximately 39 schools each year, more than half of which are Seventh-day Adventist.

In addition to the PSP, Commonweal’s other programs help supplement and improve students’ chances of academic success. Through the Learning Support Program and Partners in Learning Program, students between kindergarten and 12th grade can get free tutoring to help improve their literacy rates and math skills.

Through the Grants Program, Commonweal staff manages the financial assistance they provide their partners. One such grant allows them to target community-based organizations focused on youth development; another empowers staff at PSP partner schools to get the training and technical assistance they need to increase student achievement.

The Commonweal Foundation continues to grow, and the family behind it remains dedicated to helping its students and partners succeed. As a matter of fact, says Barbara, the growth and development of their students and partnering organizations is essential to the foundation’s success. “As we move forward, our intent will be to be much more involved with our schools,” she explains. “I am gratified to lead the Commonweal Foundation, knowing that the work that we do embodies what my father wants to give back to his church and community.”

Portions of this article were reprinted from “Giving Back,” a November 2011 Visitor magazine article. Click here to read the article in its original format.
Columbia Union Churches Win Activity Awards

columbiaunionvisitor.com/columbia-union-churches-win-activity-awards/

February 12, 2014 · by Taashi Rowe · in Allegheny East Conference, Chesapeake Conference, Entities, Health & Lifestyle, More, Potomac Conference

Story by Visitor Staff

The North American Division’s (NAD) 2013 InStep for Life Awards recently confirmed what many around the Columbia Union already knew—we love being active and healthy! Several Columbia Union members recently received awards in Orlando, Fla. The 2013 awards recognized Seventh-day Adventist unions, conferences, churches, schools and Pathfinder clubs for engaging their communities in healthier living year round and during their Let’s Move! Day in September.

The awards recognized the Columbia Union over all, the Allegheny East and Potomac conferences, and Sharon Temple Junior Academy in Wilmington, Del., for scoring top miles. Allegheny East’s Pine Forge Academy church in Pine Forge, Pa., accumulated the most miles of any NAD church.

With obesity on the rise among young Americans, Katia Reinert, PhD, thought it was important to involve some of the youngest members. “We had a Pathfinder’s challenge this year, and gave $1,000 to the top 10 clubs with miles and participation rates for this year’s international camporee,” she shared. “We worked with the Youth Ministries Department because we wanted to engage more youth and kids.”

The result was that two Columbia Union clubs won $1,000 toward this year’s Forever Faithful International Camporee in Wisconsin for accruing top mileage. Atholton Faithblazers Pathfinder Club from Chesapeake Conference’s Atholton church in Columbia, Md., had 8,950 miles of activity while the Bulldogs Pathfinder Club from Allegheny West Conference’s Greater New Hope Community church in Canton, Ohio, had 5,096 miles of activity. Potomac’s Patterson Avenue church in Richmond, Va., also received $1,000 for having some 26 percent of their members participate. Reinert is planning a three-day InStep for Life challenge at this summer’s camporee.
February 12, 2014 · by Michelle Bernard · in Chesapeake Conference

More than 100 men, including 25 who were not Seventh-day Adventists, attended “Are You Man Enough?” at Chesapeake Conference’s Frederick (Md.) church February 7-9.

“It was a great event. A good time meeting others who are focused on being a better man for their family, church and community,” said William Ivany, an attendee from Martinsburg, W.Va., on the event Facebook page.

The event drew participants from Maryland, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, California, Florida and Montana.

Frederick member Sean Loomis and retired Navy SEAL Eric Davis planned physical activities that required the men to work with strangers of different ages, physical strength levels and communication styles to improve their communication and leadership skills.

Christian counselor Ken Williams and Frederick youth pastor Mark Sigue also provided practical training on how to become better leaders.

“If we are told, we forget. If we write it down, we lose it and don’t read it. But if we do it and fail followed by immediate correction, the success rates increases dramatically,” said Davis.

“That is what guys want. Men want an adventure! We gave them that experience,” said Loomis.

Loomis said they’re already planning another event for the fall. For more information on upcoming events, visit manenoughevents.com.

Read more articles on men-focused ministries around the Columbia Union:

- 100-Plus Workshop Attendees Learn the Importance of Being “Real Men”
- Columbia Union Men Strengthen Faith at Annual Retreat
Highland Adventist Students Dig Deep, Produce High Yields —Even in Winter

February 11, 2014 · by Taashi Rowe · in Education , Mountain View Conference

Story by Highland Adventist School Staff

High school students at the Highland Adventist School (HAS) in Elkins, W.Va., have started a business. Most days after school, in the school’s driveway, they sell vegetables they have cultivated.

The project, which is being managed by the school’s entrepreneurship class, started after the school installed a 32’ x 20’ high greenhouse near the school. After hours of hard work in preparing the ground for planting and research to determine what plant species would be best for winter growing in the high tunnel, the students planted kale, spinach, hardy lettuce, swiss chard and a few other experimental plants.

Carol Carter, PhD, associate professor and chair of the Davis and Elkins College Department of Business and Entrepreneurship, and Harry Henderson, associate professor in the same department, provided expert business advice as the project was in the planning phase. Carter also supplied the school with an entrepreneurship curriculum she co-authored.

The students also enjoyed a visit from Mike Kwasniewski, owner of the Charm Farm in Beverly, W.Va. Kowasneiwski talked to the students about the basics of starting and running a small business followed by a visit to the greenhouse where he made some management and growing suggestions. As the greenhouse crops have begun to grow, the students hand pick, package and price the produce before selling. The students report that they have no trouble selling their winter vegetable.

“The students are really enjoying this project and learning a lot about small business management,” states Cheryl Jacko, principal and entrepreneurship teacher. “We are very appreciative to the Tucker Community Foundation and our matching donors, Dr. Carter, Mr. Henderson and all the others who have contributed to this project. Besides learning small business skills, a goal of this project is to help our students discover ways they can develop business opportunities right here in our area. We want to see our graduates stay here to build our local community while supporting themselves through private enterprise or learn how to become a self-supporting missionary. They are also learning a lot about sustainable, local agriculture, which we promote. It is a win-win opportunity for our students.”
Hannah Spitalsky and Lena Gilmer make soil for planting beds from top soil and composted manure.
In Europe, Adventists call on Sunday Alliance not to discriminate

An alliance promoting work-life balance in Europe is lobbying members of the European Parliament to endorse work-free Sundays in the continent. Above, a committee room of the European Union in Brussels, Belgium. [photo: Wikimedia Commons]

Goal of promoting work-life balance could backfire against religious minorities, experts say

February 11, 2014 | Silver Spring, Maryland, United States | ANN staff

An alliance promoting work-life balance and social cohesion in Europe reiterated its call for work-free Sundays at a conference in Brussels, Belgium last month.

The European Sunday Alliance, a coalition of national Sunday alliances, trade unions, civil society organizations and faith communities established in 2011, is gaining some traction in the European Parliament but continues to trouble religious liberty advocates.

At the Second Conference on Work-Free Sundays and Decent Work, the alliance launched a pledge targeting current and future members of the European Parliament, asking lawmakers to promote legislation that “respects” Sunday as a “day of rest” and guarantees fair work hours.

“A work-free Sunday and decent working hours are of paramount importance for citizens and workers throughout Europe,” a document distributed by the alliance said, adding that extending the workweek to “late evenings, nights, bank holidays and Sundays” is jeopardizing the health, safety, family and private lives of employees.

The alliance also argues that a longer workweek with fewer holidays isn’t the answer to Europe’s entrenched financial woes—instead it favors job creation and competitiveness.

“Competitiveness needs innovation, innovation needs creativity and creativity needs recreation,” the document states.

Economic arguments aside, religious minorities in Europe—among them Muslims, Jews and Seventh-day Adventists—worry the proposal could infringe on free expression of religious beliefs, despite its seemingly well-intentioned goals of reducing stress and overwork.

“Millions of European citizens belonging to religious minorities could be affected by [the] EU Sunday Law aspirations,” said Liviu Olteanu, director of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty for the Adventist Church’s Inter-European Division (EUD).

In a January 21 news release, the EUD endorsed the position of Hannu Takkula, a Finnish member of the European Parliament who has spoken out against work-free Sundays.

“Legislation must never discriminate on religious grounds. A law setting up Sunday as the universal work-free day would do just that,” Takkula said in a recent news release.

“Freedom of religion and belief is a core European value. … The European Union must guarantee everyone equal rights and freedoms to celebrate the rest day of their convictions,” he added.

John Graz, director of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty for the Adventist world church, said he was pleased that Takkula and other Parliament members are taking a clear stand against work-free Sundays.

“We encourage all lawmakers in Europe to protect the rights of all people of faith, including those who do not observe Sunday as a day of rest,” Graz said.
Adventists in Europe have questioned the effects of work-free Sundays since the European Sunday Alliance was established.

In 2011, Raafat Kamal, Public Affairs and Religious Liberty director for the Adventist Church in Northern Europe, said Adventists “support the notion that people need a day of rest to achieve a work-life balance,” but “at the same time, we want to be sure that those who don’t observe Sunday as a designated religious day of rest will be respected.”

Now, Olteanu is directly calling on members of the European Parliament “not to interfere in matters relating to religious liberty and freedom of conscience, proposing or accepting laws that affect the religious liberty of religious minorities.”

Olteanu encouraged Adventist Church members in Europe to pray for the situation and contact their respective Members of Parliament or MEP candidate to lobby for their religious liberties.

“We should commit ourselves with wisdom, balance and [a] positive attitude to be ambassadors of liberty, hope and peace, loving others but looking always to promote and defend religious liberty for all people,” Olteanu said.