

THE ATLANTIC UNION

DECEMBER 2011

GLEANER



Undivided Attention

Prioritizing and Focusing on the Things That Really Matter

Quoi de Neuf?

Adventist Education

Youth Connections

¿Qué Está Pasando?

inside **DECEMBER** 2011

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The author of this month's cover story reminds us of our need to prioritize and focus on the things that really matter in life. Our regular features include, Adventist Education and Youth Connections. The cover photo is an image from iStockphoto.

MISSION STATEMENT

To faithfully chronicle the work and progress of the church in the Atlantic Union territory and inform, instruct, and inspire our church members.

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February 2012	December 9
March 2012	January 13
April 2012	February 10

The GLEANER deadline schedule is available online at www.atlantic-union.org/gleaner4.html.

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In the Midst **of Change**

I was sitting at my desk on the afternoon of August 23 when my chair began to shake in such a way that I wondered who had entered the room without my knowledge and was shaking my chair. I turned to see, but no one was there. Then I noticed that the computer monitor was shaking, and the water in the bottle on my desk was moving back and forth like waves in the ocean. It was an earthquake. Not just a slight tremor, but a noticeable quake. I have experienced tremors in New England in past years, but not one as noticeable as this.

Two other recent weather-related events of note are the June 1 tornado, which spawned six other tornadoes that impacted the Connecticut River Valley in Massachusetts and parts of southern Maine. Three lives were lost, many were injured, and many others were left homeless. Hurricane Irene, a large and powerful Atlantic hurricane, caused extensive flooding and wind damage along its path through the Caribbean, the United States East Coast, and as far north as Atlantic Canada. When the hurricane passed through New England on August 28, no one could have predicted the damage it would cause, particularly in the state of Vermont.

The economic crisis continues to plague the nation and the world. It is a daily roller coaster ride. One day the economy is up, the next day it's down. Homes above water, homes under water. Homes in foreclosure. People out of work. There seems to be no end in sight.

On the morning of August 4, as I arrived in the office, I received a phone call saying that my mom was rushed to the hospital. Within hours of that call a chain of events occurred, including updates, more phone calls, prayers, and the doctor's assessment that she had 24 hours to live. About 18 hours after the first call, in the early hours

of the morning on August 5, she was gone. My 91-year-old mother closed her eyes in sleep for the last time on this earth.

Whether it happens slowly or quickly, we are living in the midst of change. And whether we like it or not, change is coming. Some change will have a positive impact on us, some change will not. What matters is how we decide to react to change.

With all that is happening around us in nature, with the economy, and to our physical systems, I am more sure now than ever before that I don't want to "store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal." I prefer to store treasures in heaven, "where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal." Where my treasure is, there the desires of my heart are. (Matthew 6:19-21, NLT)

Adventist Christians are supposed to be people of hope, even in the midst of change. We are privileged to have a window of opportunity and are commissioned to share that hope with others. Now is the best time to step out of our comfort zone, rise above our difficulties, and share the greatest gift with someone—Jesus Christ, the One who never changes.

So, be bold and share Jesus' promise in John 14:1-3 with those around you who may be discouraged: "Let not your heart be troubled. . . . I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."

Stay tuned. The only thing that does not change is change itself. ☺

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



*Whether we like
it or not, change
is coming. . . .*

*What matters is
how we decide to
react to change.*





Undivided Attention

iStockphoto

Prioritizing and Focusing on the Things That Really Matter

*I've discovered
that information
and knowledge
without focus
leads to
ignorance and
insanity.*

When was the last time you gave anything your undivided attention? Today that's a pretty tall order with smartphones, nagging e-mails, work, family issues, and more. Giving anyone or anything your undivided attention means that something important may get neglected. Then what?

I'm finding that multi-tasking works fine for some things, but not everything. When I'm handling my online banking, I better be careful. When I'm talking with someone, I need to give them my undivided attention. If I don't, then I'm essentially telling them that our conversation, and possibly friendship, is of little importance.

If God is who I say He is, then He deserves my undivided attention. This means turning off the iPhone during my daily devotions and resisting the temptation to see what my Facebook friends are up to during the sermon time in church. Of course I can use technology as a means to connect with God (i.e. my Kindle e-reader Bible, or my iPhone devotional apps). But if I'm not careful, hundreds of distractions lie just a few finger taps away. Giving God my undivided attention means designating times when I solely focus on listening to Him speak. It means allowing His words to slowly seep into my consciousness so that my heart is transformed and renewed.

Yes, I have a lot of things to juggle, and twenty-first century living is a lot more complicated than my grandparents could ever have imagined. But if I let it, the Information Age will completely consume me. And I've discovered that information and knowledge without focus leads to ignorance and insanity. So, I'm on a quest to prioritize and focus on what really matters. Care to join me? ☺



Rich DuBose, director of Church Support Services for the Pacific Union Conference, is a writer and Christian resource provider. Answers © 2011 AnswersForMe.org. Reprinted with permission.





By Trudy Wright

An Occult Invasion

When God created planet earth, Satan was confined to one tree in the garden. Today, because sin entered the world, his presence is more prevalent and invasive than ever before, as manifested in the universality of the occult. It takes the vigilance of leadership in the home, school, and even the church to expose and exclude Satan. And yes, there are even protestant denominations and schools of theology that have involvement with the occult. They call it “reimagining scripture.” In the United States some of these religions include Wicca, Neo-paganism, Satanism, and Occultism.

In the Northern New England Conference we have a media policy to support our teachers in upholding our beliefs in God and to expose the truth about Satan. The North American Division provides a curriculum that teaches truth. Exclusion of the occult is one of the many reasons we sacrifice to establish and maintain Seventh-day Adventist Christian education.

The occult is woven through the media today in books, magazines, movies, television, the Internet, video games, and more. It is subtle, as Satan has always been, and often begins under the guise of fantasy and romance. It traps and leads

youth deeper into darkness, violence, and evil. In my study about the Harry Potter series alone, I listed almost 30 different types of the occult, including witchery, wizardry, ancient runic alphabet, necromancy, astrology, gods and goddesses, vampires, alchemists, spells, sorcery, and more. Many of the main characters and places were named after famous ancient occultists.

The occult is defined as matters involving the influence of supernatural or supernormal powers; and sta-

“In the last days of earth’s history spiritualism will counterfeit the power of God.”

tistics show that it sometimes leads to violence and criminal behavior. Occult behavior includes listening to music that has death or suicide in its lyrics, possession of such paraphernalia as skulls, black candles, satanic bibles, Ouija boards, tarot cards, and satanic symbols, and an obsession with wearing black clothing. The occult has become a multi-million dollar business. Immediately after new occult books and films are released, the occult business booms and occult activity increases.

The world is becoming desensitized to the occult. In the last days of earth’s history, spiritualism will counterfeit the power of God (2 Thessalonians 2:9-17). We know that any involvement with the occult is detestable to God. How many times did King Saul visit the witch? Only once, and his story tells the results.

There are many scriptures about the occult in the Bible. One such Scripture is Deuteronomy 18:10-12: “There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter of familiar spirits, or a wizard or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord.”

Even though there is an occult invasion, God is our leader. Be careful whom you follow and where you lead! Lead your family into truth. Choose a Seventh-day Adventist school to help you lead your children into truth. Fight the invasion. ①



Trudy Wright is the Northern New England Conference superintendent of schools.

Christmas, a Season of Opportunities

How did December 25 become a Christian celebration? The most respected of several theories states that December 25 was the birthday of the invincible sun, the day when pagans honored the sun god, Mithras. History relates that from mid-December till early January, non-Christians in Rome held festivities, which included drunkenness and other corrupted practices. During the fourth century, Christians in Rome decided to directly challenge the pagan god and the practices associated with his birthday. They proclaimed the same day as the day of Jesus' birthday, stating that Jesus is the true Sun of Justice that brings light to a dark world. As the pagans got drunk, the Christians, who were in the minority, observed the day with reverence.

The pagan celebrations were introduced in the United States as the European immigrants began to settle here. The Puritans did not celebrate it, but others did, by hunting, dancing, and getting drunk. Violence was recorded in some of the early Christmas celebrations in the United States. The first Police Corps of New York City was organized after a violent Christmas riot. As these things happened, some people worked hard to make Christmas a family-oriented season, with beautiful activities. They accomplished some of their objectives, but through the years Christmas has become, for many, a consumers' festival, a time for holiday specials. It is also significant that more than 80 percent of the public in this country believe that Christmas has spiritual relevance and they see this season as a time for reflection.

Regardless of what we think or do, Christmas is here to stay. It will happen whether we like it or not. So what can we do? Following are a few options:

- Party, get drunk, and be violent like the pagans did.
- Ignore Christmas, since we know it is not really Jesus' birthday anyway, and criticize those who celebrate it.

- Enjoy the season and use it to make others aware of Jesus in our neighborhood, workplace, church, and community.

I like what Ellen G. White had to say in *THE ADVENTIST HOME*, p. 478: "As the twenty-fifth of December is observed to commemorate the birth of Christ, as the children have been instructed by precept and example that this was indeed a day of gladness and rejoicing, you will find it a difficult matter to pass over this period without giving it some attention. It can be made to serve a very good purpose."

In our home, we see Christmas as a season of opportunities to serve a good purpose, a time of enjoyment and happiness,

a time to celebrate the fact that Jesus was born, a time to point others to Him, not only through words, but with acts of kindness and love. We enjoy sitting by the fireplace to talk and reenact the nativity story. Our kids know that Christmas is not only about

receiving gifts and blessings, but primarily about giving love, peace, and salvation to others, just as Jesus did and continues to do during and since His first Advent.

We remember that Immanuel means "God with us." (Matthew 1:23, NIV). My knowledge of history will not keep me from remembering that God is with us, that Jesus was born to make my life and yours better, and to give us salvation and hope. I will use this season, as well as other seasons, to share Him, always keeping in mind that during this time of the year, more than 80 percent of Americans are willing to think and reflect on their spiritual lives. Christmas is a season of opportunities in the home, the church, and the community. 🙏

My knowledge of history will not keep me from remembering that Jesus was born to make my life and yours better, and to give us salvation and hope.



José Cortés is the director for the Youth Ministries, Pathfinder, and Adventurer departments in the Atlantic Union.

Connect with him on Facebook and Twitter at: <https://www.facebook.com/PastorJoseCortesJr>, <https://www.facebook.com/JoseCortesJr>, and <https://twitter.com/JoseCortesJr>.



Operation Five Loaves and Two Fish Feeds More than 200 Families

Operation Five Loaves and Two Fish, a church's action of love initiated by the Hamilton church to feed needy families in the community, was hailed a success by church members, but more importantly, by those who were the recipients of a food hamper. The church was able to touch the lives of more than 200 families in less than one hour.

Hamilton church's goal to reflect Christ's love and meet the needs of the community is in direct response to what they see as their mission. They have

of the community. A group of about 50 volunteers joined with members of the church to put together the hampers, separating them into categories, such as those for seniors and vegetarians. Working together, they were able to prepare and organize hampers in about four hours.

Tributes of gratitude have been pouring in as members of the community express their appreciation. One grateful mother, recently laid off, said, "I just did not know what to do. My cabinets were bare." Another said, "I had nowhere to turn. I just want



James Landy, Operation Five Loaves and Two Fish program coordinator, and Kenneth Manders, Hamilton church pastor, partnered with community agencies to help provide food for struggling families.



Church members and volunteers from the community prepared food hampers that served more than 200 families in the community.



Jeffrey Brown, Bermuda Conference president, front left, with the volunteers who helped prepare the food hampers for distribution.

"Hamilton church's goal to reflect Christ's love and meet the needs of the community is in direct response to what they see as their mission."

been feeding needy individuals twice weekly on a regular basis. But as more and more people are losing their jobs and struggling to meet their obligations, the number of people using the service has increased. So the church wanted to help in a more tangible way and members began donating food and other items in preparation for their scheduled event. Contact was made with several major businesses, including the Market Place, Arnolds, Lindos, Butterfield and Vallis, Bermuda General Agency, and still others who donated food items.

James Landy, program coordinator, spoke to the press regarding this project to provide 100 to 150 hampers of food to financially challenged members

to say 'thank you,' 'thank you,' 'thank you.'

The blessings were not just felt by those who received, but by those who gave. One church member said, "We are so excited and blessed to know that we have met the needs of our community." Kenneth Manders, the church's pastor, said he was happy to partner with the community agencies to provide food for struggling families. "The church where worship is a joy had joy overflowing when they were able to help the community," Manders said.

On that day the Hamilton church distributed more than \$15,000 worth of food to more than 200 families in Bermuda who were in need.

—Sheila Holder, communication director, Bermuda Conference

Tell Us What's Happening in Your Church . . .

We are looking for news and other inspiring stories from your church to share with our readers. E-mail your stories with the photos attached as separate files to the Bermuda Conference communication director. Be sure and include a caption with each photo and the name of the photographer.

For information on what types of stories to submit, visit: www.atlantic-union.org/gleaner.html and click on "Guidelines for Submitting Articles."

We would love to hear from you!



Sheila Holder
Communication Director
Bermuda Conference
E-mail: sholder@bermudaconference.bm



The Latest on Atlantic Union College

Background

Shortly after AUC was informed in 2010 by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) that its accreditation would be discontinued as of July 31, 2011 for financial reasons, AUC officials began to explore the possibility of joining with another Seventh-day Adventist sister institution to form a branch campus on its location in South Lancaster, Massachusetts.

Formal talks commenced with Washington Adventist University (WAU) in Takoma Park, Maryland, in light of the two institutions already having had an articulation agreement for the teach-out of AUC students after July 2011. While both constituencies of AUC and WAU approved the concept, an operating agreement was never reached. On October 5, 2011, AUC's board of trustees voted to suspend any further negotiations with WAU.

The following is an update of developments by the AUC board and college officials since the October 5 decision:

- AUC retained the Boston law firm of Rubin and Rudman, LLC, to provide legal counsel to assist AUC in matters relating to AUC's standing with



the state of Massachusetts and to examine the provisions of corporate law related to the AUC Charter issued in 1883.

- AUC officials met with the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education (Massachusetts DHE) on October 13 to explore the process for continuing its degree-granting authority originally granted by state legislation back in 1883.
- In the October 13 meeting, the Massachusetts DHE informed AUC that it will entertain an application from AUC for the reestablishing of degree-granting authority, upon securing the necessary approvals by DHE and others.
- It was agreed that AUC must complete the application submission by January 1, 2012.
- Also, in the October 13 meeting, AUC informed the Massachusetts DHE that, given the fact that a WAU branch campus at AUC was no longer in the equation, AUC intends to apply for accreditation from a different accrediting body.
- Massachusetts DHE officials have confirmed that the national accreditor AUC is applying to is a legitimate alternative to NEASC accreditation, and the U.S. Department of Education lists this accrediting association as one that will qualify AUC to offer its students

federal student aid (Title IV) funding.

- On October 25, the AUC board voted to secure the services of Gina Spivey Brown, Ph.D., a Maryland educator, as administrative consultant, to give leadership to the preparation of the DHE application documents, as well as the application for accreditation of selected degree programs (to be announced later).

Campus Status

Since the July 31 interim cessation of AUC's educational operation, a small staff has been retained (mostly plant maintenance and records personnel) while the college awaits the next steps in the application processes. Also, it is anticipated that a constituency meeting of the college will be called in the near future to help determine the direction, scope, and financial support by the Atlantic Union Conference and its six local conferences. For ongoing updates, kindly refer to AUC's Web site (www.auc.edu).

—Donald G. King, president of the Atlantic Union Conference and chairman of the Atlantic Union College, Inc., Board of Trustees

Atlantic Union College Among Award Winners at SAC Awards Banquet

Atlantic Union College (AUC) was among the winners of several prestigious awards presented at the Society of Adventist Communicators (SAC) Convention Awards Banquet honoring individuals for their work.

Nearly 200 Adventist communication professionals and interested students attended this year's convention, on October 20-22 in Lombard, Illinois. Guest speakers included David Neff, CHRISTIANITY TODAY editor-in-chief, John

Bradshaw, *It Is Written* speaker/director, and Don Livesay, Lake Union Conference president.

Kimberly Maran, SAC president, says, "With 35 categories, this is our first foray into the expansion of the awards, and the pre-

sentation of them." In the Corporate Communication: Constituency Report (Print) category, AUC won "Best in Class" for the 2011 Atlantic Union College Constituency Report. Individuals recognized were Cindy Kurtzhals, AUC public



relations and publications director; Winona Wendth, cover photo; Lois King, assistant vice president for marketing, and Melahn Cable, contract layout/graphic designer.

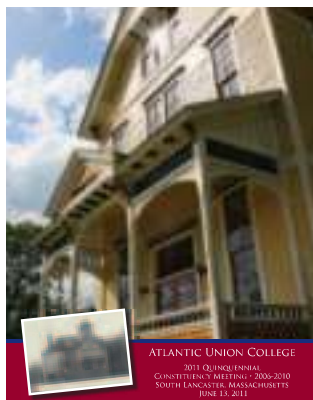
In the Marketing/Public Relations: Media Pitching Campaign category, AUC won “Best in Class” for the pitch for the article “Women Refs Blaze a Trail” that appeared in the WORCESTER TELEGRAM AND GAZETTE. Individuals recognized were Cindy Kurtzhals, AUC public relations and publications director; Coach Sandy Smith, recreation director; and Karen Nugent, reporter for the WORCESTER TELEGRAM AND GAZETTE.

In the Corporate Communication: Newsletter (Print) category, AUC received “Honorable Mention” for the AUC TODAY newsletter. Individuals recognized were Cindy

Kurtzhals, AUC public relations and publications director; Bordes Henry-Saturné, vice president for enrollment; and Melahn Cable, contract layout/graphic designer. To view a list of the 2011 winners, visit www.adventistcommunicator.org.

Pat Humphrey, SAC vice president for recruitment, says, “SAC is comprised of a variety of committed Adventists who have a passion to share the message of the Adventist Church through their unique areas of media ministry—whether through the printed page, photography, television, radio, the Internet, social media, music, art, or a host of other creative outlets.

“It’s about connecting with other communication professionals and growing from one another’s knowledge, expertise, and passion for ministry. It’s about networking and making new friends—people who



At the SAC Awards Banquet, AUC won “Best in Class” for the 2011 Atlantic Union College Constituency Report, top left; “Honorable Mention” for the AUC TODAY newsletter, top right; and “Best in Class” for the pitch for the article “Women Refs Blaze a Trail” that appeared in the WORCESTER TELEGRAM AND GAZETTE, right.

will become a source of spiritual and professional support for years to come.”

The next SAC convention is in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on October 18-20, 2012, and is open to all communication professionals.

—Ednor A. P. Davison,
GLEANER editor



Remembering . . . Philip S. Follett

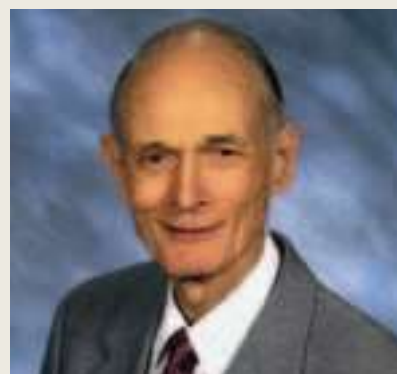
Philip S. Follett, 79, a former president of the Atlantic Union Conference, died in his hometown of Collegedale, Tennessee, on October 7. He served as a pastor and administrator in the Seventh-day Adventist Church for 58 years and was most recently a member of the Collegedale Church.

Born on March 15, 1932, in Kansas City, Missouri, Follett earned his undergraduate degree from La Sierra University, his master’s degree from Andrews University, and was awarded an honorary doctorate from Atlantic Union College. He entered the pastoral ministry in 1953 and served as a pastor and conference secretary in Southern California from 1953

to 1967. He also served as president of the Ohio, Chesapeake, and Northern California conferences before he was elected as president of the Atlantic Union Conference in 1986 where he served until 1992. He went on to serve as a vice president of the world church from 1992 until his retirement in 2000.

After his retirement, he continued his ministry as president of LifeTalk Radio until 2008, and served part-time in various capacities until August 2011.

Follett’s wife, Bernardine DeFehr Follett, preceded him in death in 1985. He is survived by his daughter, Lorraine (Scott) Ball of Ooltewah, Tennessee; son, David Follett of Fitchburg, Massachusetts;



Philip S. Follett

two grandchildren, Jonathan and Jessica Ball; a sister, Barbara Connel of Palm Desert, California; nieces Kathy Lance and Elaine Hamilton; and extended family Calvin and Kristine Follett and their children Nathan and Jannah.



Hannah Walwyn: Living a Life Committed to Excellence

Hannah Walwyn, an eighth-grader at the Bronx-Manhattan Seventh-day Adventist School and a member of the Shalom church, captured the Principal's Scholar Award—the school's top academic honor—at the end of the 2010-2011 school year and moved one step closer to fulfilling her dream of becoming a justice of the United States Supreme Court. She accomplished this by achieving As in all five core subject areas.

Throughout middle school, Walwyn lacked the confidence to shine in the classroom; she was withdrawn and shy. Her mother, Glenda Walwyn, even contemplated having her repeat the sixth grade. But with prayer, determination, and the support of her mother and mentor, Pearl Brown, Walwyn made significant strides in improving her academic and civic performance in the seventh grade. Her report on Michelle Obama, the wife of the first elected African-American president, highlighted



Hannah Walwyn, was awarded the Principal's Scholar award at the end of the 2010-2011 school year.

the prominent place that women of color have come to occupy in society, a place she would like to occupy one day as a Supreme Court justice. On another occasion, she captured the attention of the class when she shared about the

physical restoration and spiritual redemption of her father, which culminated with his baptism.

As confidence in her leadership and scholastic ability increased, Walwyn became involved in activities outside of the classroom. She enlisted in the school's Bible class, attending all the classes and completing all assignments on time. As a member of her church's Pathfinder club, she committed and was able to expertly recite the six memory texts of the Explorer AY/Pathfinder class. And on Thirteenth Sabbaths at church, Walwyn is the only young person who is able to recite all 13 memory texts. Walwyn hopes to use her passion for memorization in her pursuit of law and becoming a justice of the Supreme Court.

Guided by the promises of Scripture, specifically Philippians 4:13, faith in God, and the support of caring adults, Walwyn believes that any young person can overcome adversity to succeed in their endeavors.

—Chris Jones, member, Flatbush church

Ask Dr. Smith Column Draws Record Numbers

Alanzo Smith, Greater New York Conference (GNYC) family counselor and licensed marriage, family, and mental health therapist, responds to pressing concerns that impact the lives of Adventists and others from all walks of life in his online column, Ask Dr. Smith. More than 12,000 people have access to such questions as “Should I continue to pay tithe when my husband isn't working and things are tough at home?,” “Do you think it right to have oral sex?,” and “What should I do if I am falling in love with a man when I am a man, too?”

The ministry started when Smith was serving

as family ministries director for the conference. He began saving questions and later used 19 of them in one of his books, *WHY GOOD RELATIONSHIPS TURN BAD*. Realizing that he could give the answers and take questions from a wider audience, his Ask Dr. Smith column was launched on the conference's Web site: www.gnyc.org.

Since then, the radar of the column keeps expanding, as he visits churches and encounters young people who tell him that his answers are very helpful to them. Parents from different ethnic backgrounds would tell him that when

they have issues with their children, they send them online to the Ask Dr. Smith column. “It's a readership of thousands and it's hard to answer a question that everyone will agree with. Some people will always hold to their opinion,” says Smith. However, his answers to questions are usually biblically based, doctrinally sound, clinically sensitive, and free!

“If someone wants to ask a question about aborting their baby and what's the church's position on abortion, they don't have to reveal their faces,” Smith says. This points out the direct link between ano-



Devin Rodriguez

Alanzo Smith, Greater New York Conference family counselor and licensed marriage, family, and mental health therapist, answers questions online in his Ask Dr. Smith column.

nymity and success, but also highlights a more underlying issue in the Adventist Church of the relationship between personal values and

religious values. It underscores that the processes of growth in groups shouldn't be underestimated.

Smith says his column became popular in a short time "because most people prefer to ask questions by

phone and e-mail, rather than go in for a face-to-face appointment. On some occasions people respond with disagreements to my answers and I would post their disagreements and my rebuttal online. This profes-

sion is an awesome responsibility and I do it while staying committed to the values of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and, at the same time, helping families."

You can ask Smith about anything that relates to

family issues online by visiting www.gnyc.org and click on Ask Dr. Smith in the bottom left corner.

—Chelston Lee, Communication Advisory committee member, Greater New York Conference

Soundview Spanish Church Equips Its Members for Service

After months of work, the Soundview Spanish church in Bronx, New York, showcased the first fruits of its missionary endeavors on August 6 with the graduation of 87 students from the Bible class, and 14 baptisms from the work of 15 small

share the good news of our Lord and Savior with those thirsting for it.

The missionary endeavors began as a result of meetings called the Missionary Bonfire that are held every Sabbath afternoon at the church. The

open discussions. Topics discussed include how to go door to door sharing the everlasting gospel, how to reach out to people using good tactics, and how to give an effective Bible study. The missionary project that is ongoing

at the church was conceived in the Missionary Bonfire meetings, with the vision of establishing a new church in the area of Yankee Stadium.

Under the leadership,

has been equipped to work in the field. "The secret to getting such results is to start from within the church," says Martinez. "For this reason, fasting,

"The most important thing is to be committed to Christ."

prayer, and weeks of revival are essential to prepare the church as a whole, and each laborer individually."

"Organization is another important and necessary factor in all things that take place. Without organization there is no success," Martinez says. "The best way to organize the church and execute a plan of work is through small groups, as Jesus did. However, this is all done in vain if Jesus Christ is not the center of it all. The most important thing is to be committed to Christ."

These successes are not as a result of the simple efforts of men, but the mighty power and love of God breaking barriers in the hearts of many.

—Keila Pinales, communication director, Soundview Spanish church



Abel Rosario, the church's pastor, leads the congregation in its missionary endeavors to share the good news of Jesus' return.

group ministries. This is only the beginning of the great things God wants to do through His people at the Soundview Spanish church.

The church is blessed with a missionary spirit that has reached even the youngest. The desire is to

purpose of these meetings is to enable each member to be an efficient and productive laborer for the Lord through seminars and

vision, and perseverance of Abel Rosario, the church's pastor, and Onis Martinez and the Personal Ministries department, each member



The Soundview Spanish church held a graduation ceremony for the students who completed the Bible class.



USA, Committed to Making Sure No Youth is Left Out

Union Springs Academy in Union Springs, New York, has recently established an advancement and development department. Their mission is to ensure that no youth is denied an Adventist education because of finances. Headed by Larry Hayes and assisted by Mark Cady and Andrea

the necessity of this critical tool in preparing students to face life's challenges through a personal relationship with Jesus.

The committee members commit to praying for academy staff and students and to recruiting other members who share the same passion and are willing to dem-



The Union Springs Academy Advancement and Development Department will try to ensure that no student is denied an Adventist education because of finances.

The funds . . . will go directly into students' accounts to ensure they are able to attend or remain at the school.

Tagalog, they are working to establish a Committee of 100, which is a group of at least 100 members who are passionate about Christian education and understand

onstrate this commitment through monthly donations of at least \$100. These funds will not be a budget filler or take care of physical plant needs but rather, will

go directly into students' accounts to ensure that they are able to attend or remain at the school.

The need is great because of the difficult economic times as well as a large number of resettled refugee youth

who would otherwise be in public schools. More information about Union Springs' Committee of 100 can be found at www.committee100usadevelopment.org.

—Kim Kaiser, communication director, New York Conference

Parkview Students Empowered as Servant Leaders

Things happen when a school systematically works to empower its students for servant leadership. As a result, students at Parkview Junior Academy in Syracuse, New

York, are going to the principal and asking if they can make presentations to the school board about things that matter to them. Students are taking more responsibility for them-

selves and for their peers. They are also involved in meeting the needs of others outside of their school.

The school's mission statement is "Empowering students to think deeply, serve humbly, and trust God wholeheartedly." Students at Parkview have been empowered for servant leadership, in part, through the creation of seven leadership teams of mixed-age students. The teams take care of needs, such as communicating to the church what is happening in the school, leading the school in community building activities to ensure that every student has a sense of belonging, working to make sure that Satan

is unwelcome in the school through prayer and school-wide spiritual events, planning outreach activities, and maintaining and beautifying the physical plant.

On October 19, a group of students, organized by seventh-grader Eden Strachan, visited a nursing home after school. Strachan was motivated to visit the nursing home after she experienced a renewed relationship with Jesus. Now she is encouraging her peers to reach out and learn the joy of service, as well. What a delight to see the training coming from within the ranks of the youth themselves!

—Kim Kaiser, principal, Parkview Junior Academy



On the back row are Jordan Tamaleaa and Debbie Sydow, president of Onondaga Community College, who was at the nursing home celebrating 50 years of partnership between the nursing home and the college. On the middle row are Tha Blay Paw, Eden Strachan, Maombi Ndeze, Jalen Tamaleaa, Annelise Burghardt, Say Wah Paw, and Eh Dar. On the front row are Elisha Strachan, Jeanine Barakamfitye, and Pam Arquitte.

Pathfinders Take Time to Recharge, Learn, and Network

About 22 Pathfinders met at Camp Cherokee in Saranac Lake, New York, for the annual Pathfinder Leadership weekend. The September 9-11 training event was coordinated by Dan Whitlow, New York Conference Youth Ministries director, and George Silver, New York Conference Pathfinder director. It was a time for Pathfinders to recharge, learn, and network.

For the past 30 years or so, youth leaders have gathered at Camp Cherokee each year for the Pathfinder Leadership weekend. It gives local Pathfinder leaders and some teenagers a chance to learn the latest updates and swap ideas that work in clubs. Some club leaders even plan future joint outings.

José Cortés, Atlantic Union Conference Youth Ministries director, was the featured speaker for the weekend. His wife, Joanne, and sons, José III and Joel, joined him. Cortés' message for worship included asking almost all of the young people to share their vision. He shared that where there is no vision, people perish and where there is a vision, the devil will create obstacles. "However, God is bigger than any obstacles the devil can create," Cortés said. "All young people need to have Christ-centered vision."

Mia Gayle, a Buffalo Pathfinder, said she attended the event because she wanted to "learn to be a leader in the Pathfinder community." Rilla Garlock, another Pathfinder said, "I like all the people, the wor-



Pathfinders met at Camp Cherokee in Saranac Lake, New York, for the annual Pathfinder Leadership weekend.

ships, and the boat ride." Activities available during free time on Sabbath included canoeing, kayaking, taking a motor boat ride, relaxing near the water, or going for a hike. Dick Bradt, Pathfinder area coordinator for Rochester, says, "I get the reward of helping potential leaders and I get the satisfaction of knowing that they are working with young people." He has attended and presented workshops for many years.

Participants had the choice of learning about Pathfinder basics, doing class work to become Master Guides, or work toward the Pathfinder Leadership Award. The weekend is set up so that a person can complete the Master Guide class work over a two-year cycle. The Pathfinders expressed appreciation for the enthusiasm and the love of young people displayed by the presenters.

—Howard Krug, Pathfinder leader, Bay Knoll church

Bath Women's Ministries Small but Active

The Seventh-day Adventist company in Bath, New York, has a small congregation that meets in the community room of an assisted living facility. Though they are few in number, the women's ministries group is making itself well known in the Bath area. This group is doing its best to aid the women of their town in as many ways as possible. They regularly collect and donate furniture, clothing, food, and personal

Though they are few in number, the women's ministries group is making itself well known in the Bath area.

hygiene items to the women's shelters that assist battered women who are attempting to start new lives. As part of the baby bottle project, baby bottles are filled with change and dollar bills that are donated to the crisis pregnancy center. A baby shower was held for a young mother who had no supplies for her new arrival.

The latest project undertaken by this community-minded group involves filling backpacks with items of comfort for children who have been removed from their neglectful or abusive homes by the Department of Social Services. Items in the backpacks include hand-made quilts, toys, books, and personal items.

Though these women are few in number, they are making the love of Christ felt in the Southern Tier.

—Wendy-Lynn Dunn, member/pastor's wife, Bath church



Rochester Area Churches Get Up, Get Out, and Move

About 145 members from Rochester area churches descended on the grounds of the Mendon Ponds Park in Rochester, New York, on Sunday, September 25, to get moving and show their commitment to living healthy, productive, and active lives. People from zero to 80 joined in the festivities and walked the 5k course.

Rochester area churches involved.

With help from James Bowman, co-chair of the CHIP Program, and Christopher McDonald, Adventist Youth director, the team posted flyers, visited sister churches, and distributed pins to members, encouraging them to “get up, get out, and move!”

Their efforts paid off when members from the Jefferson Avenue, Breath

phers, concession pit stops, and then a welcome reception at the finish line, complete with water and healthy snacks.

Local media outlet YNN news printed a cover story with James Bowman and shared the activity with the Rochester viewing area, featuring the Jefferson Avenue church and its efforts to spread information about



Young people from the Rochester area churches participated in the Let's Move Day activities.



The spirit of community, family, and fellowship filled the air as members of all ages walked, ran, or strolled on the trail.

First Lady, Michelle Obama, started the Let's Move initiative in 2010 in Washington, D.C. Since then, many organizations have caught the wave and jump-started their own plans and programs to aid in fighting obesity.

When the North American Division announced September 25 as Let's Move Day, members of the Jefferson Avenue church jumped in. Kim McDonald and Shackarah Vera, avid walkers and runners, began planning to get the

of Life, Genesee Park Boulevard, Antioch, Rochester First Hispanic, Haitian, and Bayknoll churches arrived donned in their white, green, and blue Let's Move T-shirts, shorts, sweats, and sneakers, ready to move.

The spirit of community, family, fellowship, and good health filled the air as members walked, ran, and strolled on the trail. Every person completed the walk/run and was met throughout the course by photogra-

health and the gospel message.

Let's Move is a national initiative aimed at bringing heightened awareness and action to the fight of obesity in children and adults. The message ties into the Seventh-day Adventist Church's health message and it was a natural fit for the church to adopt and bring Let's Move Day to the Rochester community.

—Angela Tucker, communication director, Jefferson Avenue church

“Takin’ It 2 the Streets” Hosts Block Party

The “Takin’ It 2 the Streets” Outreach Ministries at City Tabernacle church held its first SUMMERFEST, a block party for the Harlem community on 150th Street between Amsterdam and Broadway. The August 6 event was sponsored by *Faith for Today*, the Northeastern Conference Medical Missionary Team, Starbucks, and generous donations from the mem-

bers of the City Tabernacle church. Friends of the community and church members were invited to the outdoor concert and to participate in several medical and community service activities.

Performers for the event included B. Cain and Rock, the Heritage church youth choir, the Bronx-Manhattan Drum Corps, Hadassah Bellot, the Adventurers Living Flames Club, Greater

Calling, City Tabernacle Youth Praise Team, Silent Testimonies, Edison Alvarez, and the City Tabernacle Adult Choir.

A highlight of the program included a time for church members and friends from the community to participate in an intercessory prayer. Balloons filled with prayer requests were tossed in the air for about 10 seconds and each person retrieved

one of the balloons. Then, in the middle of the street, hundreds of people stopped to pray with one another.

Services offered to community residents included the distribution of food, clothing, and toys, and an arts and crafts area for the children. Captain Ruel R. Stephenson and Officer Ana Almonte, from the 30th Police Precinct, were on hand for the event. They were responsible for grant-

ing the street permit to hold the block party.

Rain began to fall during the event, making it necessary to move the activities indoors. Some residents stayed, attended the concert, and took advantage of the other services offered. At the end of the program, Uba Ogbuehi, elder, reminded the group that their mission was to reach people outside of the four walls of the church. The message served to empower the members and community residents to reach out to those they

encounter on a daily basis. At the end of the event, they formed a circle and Linda Marrow prayed a prayer of consecration. Throughout the evening, while everyone helped to clean up, members and guests shared testimonies about God's goodness and their excitement about sharing the good news.

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come"—Matthew 24:14. This is both our great commission and



City Tabernacle church members and residents of the community stopped to pray for one another during a block party hosted by the church.

our main purpose as disciples of Christ. Now the question is, what are you waiting for?

—Rolanda Kingston, member, City Tabernacle church

Mary Cameron Receives Outstanding Advocate for Children and Youth Award

Mary Cameron, director/founder of Uniondale Early Childhood Center and a dedicated member of the Westbury church, was one of 25 individuals to receive the first-ever Outstanding Advocate for Children and Youth Award.

Cameron, a professional, with years of experience as a child care executive, is known and respected as an accomplished motivational leader, educator, mentor, mother, and wife. A woman of sound intellect, generous spirit, and wide exposure, Cameron's credentials include a Bachelor of Science and an associate degree in early childhood education, a master's degree in business administration, and an honorary doctorate in philosophy. She also has extensive experience as a communication leader. She served for five years at East New York church, eight years at Ebenezer church, and 15 years at Bethany church. On three occasions, Cameron was awarded the Excellence in Communication Award from the Northeastern Conference, the Positive Image Communication Award, and the Northeastern Conference Layperson



Mary Cameron, Outstanding Advocate for Children and Youth Award recipient, second from right, with, from left, Samuel Livingstone, Oswald Euell, and Jackie Livingstone.

Counselors Volunteer Appreciation Award. In 2005, Cameron was appointed to the Northeastern Conference Academy Board of Education.

The inaugural Outstanding Advocate for Children and Youth Awards reception took place on September 13 in Uniondale, New York. Present at the ceremony were Oswald Euell, Northeastern

Conference personal ministries director; and Samuel and Jackie Livingstone, from the newly-organized New Jerusalem church in Hempstead, New York. The Northeastern Conference Communication Department congratulates Mary Cameron on this outstanding achievement.

—Stephen L. Williams, Sr., communication director, Northeastern Conference



Prayer Meeting “Vermont Style”

The Barre church in Barre, Vermont, is trying to utilize technology to widen its influence and participation in prayer meeting.

In the rural state of Vermont most people live anywhere from a half hour to an hour from the church. With the rising cost of gas and the time restraints of making it home and back to prayer meeting, many are finding it difficult to attend.

As the church prayed about the dilemma and looked at other models, the Lord revealed to them the idea of using a teleconference line so people can call in to prayer meeting. The conference line is free; the only cost incurred is the long distance phone call for the church and for the church member. Yet, when looking at the cost of gas, it is still more affordable to call in.

The church now has Internet access for those

who have a computer and Internet connection. About two days prior to prayer meeting the study outline is e-mailed along with the teleconference instructions. This process acts as a reminder and gives members some written material to follow.

Prayer meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. and the fellowship continues until 7:00 p.m. From 7:00 p.m. the group sings and prays, and then at 7:30 p.m. the group spends about a half hour or so studying the Bible. Currently they are studying the book of Revelation verse by verse.

Each week the numbers fluctuate and, on average, 12-22 people attend prayer meeting and anywhere from two to six people are on the teleconference line. This system is not perfect, but it is a way to get people involved.

At the Randolph church, prayer meeting/Bible study



At this prayer meeting 18 attended and five more were on the conference line.

are conducted a little differently. Each Monday evening the location of prayer meeting is rotated and held at the home of any member who is willing to allow their house to be used. This has some interesting advantages:

- The members of the church get to visit each other's homes.
- The hosting family is guaranteed a visit by me, even if no one else shows up.
- This allows the members to minister as a body of believers and bring

prayer meeting to members who are shut-ins and can't get out.

To ensure that people are aware of where prayer meeting is being held each week, the dates of the meetings are listed in the bulletin for a month at a time.

There are challenges and opportunities with the way prayer meeting is conducted. Now you know how prayer meeting is done “Vermont style.”

—Brian Bilbrey, pastor, Vermont District

NNEC Disciples Kids, Parents, and Mentors

Lynn Ortel, Northern New England Conference (NNEC) communication director, interviews Susan Schnell, the NNEC Kids in Discipleship coordinator. Schnell is passionate about teaching children how to have a wonderful and real relationship with Jesus.

L.Ortel: *What is Kids in Discipleship?*

S.Schnell: Kids in Discipleship (K.I.D.) is a ministry inspired by Don McClafferty, founder/director of K.I.D., that equips congregations, parents, and mentors to implement the model of discipleship described in Deuteronomy 6:4-7. Through this intentional discipleship

focus, parents, mentors, and children grow in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and with each other. Families are then empowered to use their gifts in worship, ministry, and mission.

L.Ortel: *Why disciple children?*

S.Schnell: Don McClafferty says, “Current research shows that there is a clear window of time in which to secure our children’s hearts to Jesus. According to the Barna Group, people are most open to accepting Jesus between the ages of 5 and 13. After that time it becomes more difficult to make this life-changing decision. The Barna Group provides research, resources,

and training to facilitate transformation in organizations, communities, and individuals.”

L.Ortel: *How does one disciple children?*

S.Schnell: FOOTPRINTS FOR KIDS is a 24-lesson intergenerational Bible study course, where parents and mentors work alongside their children and participate in a highly interactive small group. FOOTPRINTS FOR KIDS lessons assist adults as they mentor their children in three areas:

- Build Your Relationship with Jesus
 - Know the Truth of Jesus
 - Share Jesus with Others
- Each lesson also includes a take-home resource that

reinforces the points of the Bible study.

L.Ortel: *How are parents/mentors equipped to disciple their own children?*

S.Schnell: Before participating in FOOTPRINTS FOR KIDS, parents and mentors go through FOOTPRINTS FOR PARENTS AND MENTORS, a set of 12 small group Bible studies drawn from the lives of Bible characters, that equip adults to become the primary spiritual nurturer of their own children. Parents and mentors learn to grow in their personal relationship with Jesus Christ and learn how to be intentional as they disciple their children.

Oakfield Church Holds Cooking Classes at Hospital

About 15 people from the community and 15 members of the Oakfield church in Oakfield, Maine, attended three weekly cooking classes at the Houlton Regional Hospital in Houlton, Maine. Peggy Engrof, the church's personal ministries leader, assisted by Paul and Louren Wainwright, presented health messages and cooked dishes for the participants.

There is a story behind how those classes became a reality. Engrof says, "One day, while having my devotion, it dawned on me that I do nothing for my neighbor. Oh sure, I teach Sabbath School and volunteer at our local schools, but only if my children are involved. I love my family, but [did I] love my neighbor? I didn't think so. So, I asked God to help me find something to do

that would be of no benefit to me, but that would be a blessing to someone else.

"About this time a new couple started attending our church—Wendy and Roger Belanger. Wendy was interested in reaching out to the community with cooking classes. Under her tutelage I learned how to conduct the classes. The Belangers have since moved, but I am so happy to serve my community conducting these classes. I hope that Jesus' love for others will be seen in me, and people will want to attend the Oakfield church. The goal for these classes is to love the participants so much that they will hunger to learn more about God's love for them.

"The classes are free and are advertised in the local newspaper and on the radio. Flyers are posted on local



The Oakfield church members held three weekly cooking classes at the Houlton Regional Hospital in Houlton, Maine. About 15 members attended from the community and 15 members from the church.

bulletin boards. The whole church helps out by giving money to provide door prizes. They arrive early to help set up and to be there as welcoming and friendly people when the community arrives. The church also helps with the clean up. Before each class begins, the workers stop and pray for those who will attend and they dedicate themselves again to God.

"At the class in the Houlton Regional Hospital 30-35, people attended, half coming from the community.

"When we have an evangelistic series, I pray that many hearts will be touched and some of these people will want to give their hearts and lives to Jesus."

—Information supplied by Jim Hogan, communication correspondent, and Peggy Engrof, personal ministries leader, Oakfield church

Northern New England Conference
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SNEC Elects New Superintendent and Associate

The Southern New England Conference (SNEC) has elected Pat Giese as the new superintendent of schools. She succeeds Gary Swinyar, superintendent for the past seven years, who accepted a call to the Gulf States Conference in Montgomery, Alabama.

Giese and her husband, Ken, moved to the Southern New England Conference three years ago when she was invited to serve as associate superintendent. Her prior experience includes serving as an elementary school teacher/principal in Ohio and Pennsylvania, as well as on various committees for the conference and union in that region. Since coming to Southern New England, Giese's frequent visits to



Pat Giese, superintendent of schools

schools, with teachers, and on school boards have prepared her to meet the challenges of the SNEC Education department. She holds a master's degree from Andrews University and has done postgraduate study at the University of Toledo.

From Giese's perspective, reflecting Jesus through



Ian Bothwell, associate superintendent of schools

excellence in education is an evangelistic tool that reaps great results, as well as elevates the high calling of young people. Therefore, one of her primary goals is to keep Adventist education in the forefront of the SNEC membership.

Assisting Giese is Ian Bothwell, who will serve as associate superinten-

dent of schools. Bothwell comes to this position with a strong background in education, having taught on the elementary, secondary, and collegiate levels. For the past 13 years, she served as a professor in the Atlantic Union College Education and Psychology Department.

Bothwell received her doctoral degree in Language and Literacy Acquisition from the University of California, Berkeley. She has been a guest lecturer in Uganda, East Africa, Thailand, and Russia. Bothwell says that she and her husband, Roger, have enjoyed many wonderful adventure-filled years together.

—Frank Tochterman, communication director, Southern New England Conference

WW II Veterans Participate in GBA's Graduation Ceremony

Willie Shellman, who serves as president of the New England Chapter of Tuskegee Airmen, Inc., and is also employed as the executive director of the YMCA Achievers Programs at the YMCA of Greater Boston, was the keynote speaker at Greater Boston Academy's 67th graduation ceremony, held at Stoneham Memorial church on June 5. The next day, June 6, marked the 67th anniversary of D-Day.

Shellman's talk was titled "Paint Your Wings," based on the fact that Tuskegee Airmen painted the wings and the tails of their aircraft a specific color (often red) to be distinguished from enemy planes. He urged the graduating class to "paint [their] wings with character, determination, good citizenship, self-discipline, and higher education."

He was accompanied by Harvey F. Sanford and William Vickers, fellow members of the Tuskegee

Airmen New England Chapter and World War II veterans.

The graduates met and spoke with the veterans before the commencement ceremony. Several members of the Class of 2011 reflected upon their time with the veterans: "It was an honor to have World War II veterans, who bravely 'painted their wings' no matter what they went through, at our graduation," said Carlos Rodriguez.

"Their message was inspirational. I appreciated the metaphor ["Paint Your Wings"], and I thank them for their service to our country," Kayla Panameño said.

"I learned many things from the Tuskegee Airmen that were never discussed in textbooks," Stephanie Nwaoha said.



Five of the eight 2011 GBA graduates are, from left, Stephane Pierre, Stephanie Nwaoha, Sharla Mercado, Kyungje Sung, and Kayla Panameño. Seated are, from left, Tuskegee Airmen Veteran Harvey F. Sanford, History/English teacher Astrid E. Wendth, and Tuskegee Airmen Veteran William Vickers.

The 2011 graduates are Gianelie Bustillo, Jonathan Gilbert, Sharla Mercado, Stephanie Nwaoha, Kayla Panameño, Stephane Pierre, Carlos Rodriguez, and Kyungje Sun.

—Lisa Wheeler, '85, director of advancement, Greater Boston Academy.

Quoi de Neuf?

Dans la Fédération de L'Union Atlantique

Noël, une Saison d'Opportunités

Comment 25 décembre a-t-elle devenu une fête chrétienne? Une des théories les plus respectées déclare que 25 décembre a été l'anniversaire du soleil invincible, le jour où les païens honorent le dieu du soleil, Mitras. L'histoire raconte que depuis la mi-décembre jusqu'au début de janvier, les non-chrétiens de Rome organisaient des festivités qui comprenaient l'ivrognerie et autres pratiques corrompues. Pendant le quatrième siècle, les chrétiens de Rome ont décidé de contester directement le dieu païen et les pratiques associées à son anniversaire. Ils ont proclamé le même jour comme jour d'anniversaire de Jésus, affirmant que Jésus est le vrai Soleil de Justice qui apporte la lumière dans un monde ténébreux. Comme les païens ivres, les chrétiens, qui étaient en minorité, ont observé le jour avec révérence.

Les célébrations païennes ont été introduites aux États-Unis au moment où les immigrants européens ont commencé à s'installer ici. Les puritains ne les ont pas commémorées, mais d'autres, par la chasse, la danse, et l'ivrognerie. La violence a été enregistrée dans certaines des premières célébrations de Noël aux États-Unis. Le premier corps de police de New York a été organisé après une violence émeute de Noël. En raison de ces incidents, certaines personnes ont travaillé dur pour faire de Noël une saison axée sur la famille, accompagnée de belles activités. Ils ont accompli certains de leurs objectifs, mais à travers les années la Noël est devenue, pour beaucoup, un festival des consommateurs, un temps pour les promotions de vacances. Il est également significatif que plus de 80 pour cent de la population dans ce pays croient que Noël est la pertinence spirituelle et ils voient cette saison comme un temps de réflexion.

Indépendamment de ce que nous pensons ou faisons, Noël est là pour

rester. Il arrivera, qu'on le veuille ou non. Alors, que pouvons-nous faire? Voici quelques options:

- Fêter, se saouler, et être violents comme faisaient les païens.
- Ignorer la Noël, puisque nous savons qu'elle n'est pas vraiment l'anniversaire de Jésus, de toute façon, et critiquer ceux qui la célèbrent.
- Profiter de la saison et l'utiliser pour rendre les autres conscients de Jésus dans notre voisinage, travail, église, et communauté.

J'aime ce qu' Ellen White avait à dire dans le FOYER CHRÉTIEN, p. 478: "Tandis que le vingt-cinq décembre est observé pour commémorer la naissance du Christ, comme les enfants ont été instruits par le précepte et l'exemple que ce fut un jour de joie et de réjouissance, il vous sera une question difficile à passer cette période sans lui donner une certaine attention. Il peut être fait pour servir une bonne cause."

Dans notre maison, nous voyons de Noël une saison d'opportunités de servir une bonne cause, un moment de plaisir et de bonheur, un temps pour

célébrer le fait que Jésus est né, un temps d'attirer d'autres à Lui, non seulement à travers les mots, mais avec des actes de bonté et d'amour. Nous trouvons beaucoup de plaisir à nous asseoir près de la cheminée pour parler et rejouer l'histoire de la Nativité. Nos enfants savent que Noël n'est pas seulement une époque pour recevoir des cadeaux et des bénédictions, mais surtout pour partager l'amour, la paix et le salut aux autres, tout comme Jésus a fait et continue de faire pendant et depuis son premier avènement.

On se souvient qu'Emmanuel signifie "Dieu avec nous." (Matthieu 1:23). Ma connaissance de l'histoire ne m'empêchera pas de me rappeler que Dieu est avec nous, que Jésus était né pour améliorer ma vie et la vôtre, et pour nous donner le salut et l'espoir. Je vais utiliser cette saison, ainsi que les autres saisons, pour Le partager, en gardant toujours à l'esprit que pendant cette période de l'année, plus de 80 pour cent des Américains sont prêts à penser et à réfléchir sur leur vie spirituelle. Noël est une saison d'opportunités à la maison, l'église et la communauté.

José Cortés est le directeur pour les ministères de la Jeunesse, Eclaireurs, et Aventurier à l'Union Atlantique.

English translation on page 18 of this issue.

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¿Qué Está Pasando?

En la Unión del Atlántico

Navidad, una Época de Oportunidades

■ Cómo fue que el 25 de diciembre llegó a ser una celebración cristiana? La teoría más respetada indica que el 25 de diciembre es el cumpleaños del invencible sol, el día que los paganos adoraban al dios sol, Mitras. La historia relata que desde mediados de diciembre hasta el principio de enero, los no cristianos en Roma llevaban a cabo festividades, las cuales incluían borracheras y otras prácticas corruptas. Durante el cuarto siglo, los cristianos en Roma decidieron desafiar directamente al dios pagano y las practicas asociadas con su cumpleaños. Ellos proclamaron el mismo día como el día del cumpleaños de Jesús, diciendo que Jesús es el verdadero sol de justicia que trae luz a un mundo en tinieblas. Mientras los paganos se embriagaban, los cristianos, que eran la minoría, observaban este día con reverencia.

Las celebraciones paganas fueron introducidas en los Estados Unidos cuando los inmigrantes europeos comenzaron a poblar esta región. Los puritanos no celebraban la navidad, pero otros sí, lo hacían cazando, bailando y emborrachándose. Actos de violencia fueron registrados en algunas de las primeras celebraciones de navidad en los Estados Unidos. Los primeros cuerpos de policías de la ciudad de Nueva York fueron organizados luego de un motín violento un día de navidad. Mientras estas cosas sucedían, algunas personas trabajaban arduamente para hacer de la navidad una ocasión orientada hacia las familias, con hermosas actividades. Ellos lograron alcanzar algunos de sus objetivos, pero a través del tiempo la navidad se ha convertido, para muchos en un festival comercial, un tiempo para especiales de compras. Es significativo que más del 80 por ciento de las personas en este país cree que la navidad tiene una relevancia espiritual y ven esta época

como un tiempo de reflexión

A pesar de lo que pensemos o hagamos, la navidad está aquí para quedarse. Seguirá celebrándose, lo queramos o no. Entonces, ¿que podemos hacer? A continuación hay algunas opciones:

- Haz una celebración, embriágate y se violento como los paganos hicieron.
- Ignora la navidad, ahora que sabemos que no es realmente el cumpleaños de Jesús, entonces critica a aquellos que lo celebran.
- Disfruta de la época y úsala para traer conciencia a otros acerca de Jesús en tu vecindad, trabajo, iglesia y comunidad.

Me gusta lo que Elena G. de White dijo en el HOGAR CRISTIANO, pg. 478 (en inglés): "Mientras el 25 de diciembre es observado para conmemorar el nacimiento de Cristo, mientras los niños han sido instruidos por precepto y ejemplo que este es un día de alegría y regocijo, encontrarás que es muy difícil pasar por alto esta época sin prestarle alguna atención. Puede ser usada para un buen propósito".

En nuestro hogar, vemos la navidad como una época de oportunidades

para servir a un buen propósito, un tiempo de placer y alegría, un tiempo para celebrar el hecho de que Jesús haya nacido, un tiempo para señalar a otros hacia El, no solo con palabras, pero con actos de bondad y amor. Nos encanta sentarnos cerca de la chimenea para hablar y repasar la historia de la natividad. Nuestros hijos saben que la navidad no es solo acerca de recibir regalos y bendiciones, pero primordialmente de dar amor, paz y salvación a otros, como lo hizo Jesús y lo sigue haciendo desde su primer advenimiento.

Recordamos que Emmanuel significa "Dios con nosotros" (Mateo 1:23). Mi conocimiento de la historia no me alejará de recordar que Dios está con nosotros, que Jesús nació para hacer mi vida y la tuya mejor, y para darnos la esperanza y salvación. Yo voy a usar esta época, al igual que otras, para compartir a Cristo, siempre recordando que durante esta época más del 80 por ciento de los americanos están dispuestos a pensar y reflexionar en sus vidas espirituales. La navidad es una época de oportunidades en el hogar, la iglesia y la comunidad.

José Cortés es el director de los departamentos de Jóvenes, Conquistadores y Aventureros en la Unión del Atlántico.

English translation available on page 18 of this issue

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Sunset Table

January 2012	6	13	20	27
Bangor, ME	4:09	4:18	4:27	4:37
Portland, ME	4:20	4:28	4:36	4:46
Boston, MA	4:27	4:35	4:43	4:52
South Lancaster, MA	4:29	4:37	4:45	4:54
Pittsfield, MA	4:36	4:43	4:52	5:01
Hartford, CT	4:35	4:43	4:51	5:00
New York, NY	4:44	4:51	4:59	5:08
Albany, NY	4:35	4:43	4:52	5:00
Utica, NY	4:41	4:49	4:58	5:07
Syracuse, NY	4:45	4:53	5:02	5:11
Rochester, NY	4:51	4:59	5:07	5:16
Buffalo, NY	4:57	5:04	5:13	5:22
Hamilton, Bda	5:28	5:34	5:40	5:47

OBITUARIES

BOYCE, David C.—74; b. Nov. 5, 1936, in Barbados, West Indies; d. Oct. 7, 2011, in Middletown, N.Y. He was a member of the Middletown church in Middletown, N.Y. He was a former member of the Ephesus and Spanish Washington churches in New York

where he served as a deacon. He was predeceased by his wife, Lydia Boyce. He is survived by a daughter, Sandra Figueroa; a son, Rafael Nieves; and a grandson, Andrew Figueroa.

DELEVANTE, Dorriel A. (Waugh)—68; b. Sept. 20, 1942, in Jamaica, West Indies; d. Sept. 7, 2011, in Hyde Park, Mass. She was a member of

the Hyde Park church in Hyde Park, Mass. She is survived by four daughters, Paulette Johnson of Hyde Park, Mass.; Claudette (Lindel) Ivy-Brown of Roslindale, Mass.; Joy (Jim) Hansbury of Milton, Mass.; Ava (LeRoy) Atkinson of Roslindale, Mass.; two sons, Ian (Carole) Delevante of Warwick, R.I.; Leroy (Janice) Delevante of Brockton, Mass.; 12 grandchildren; one great-grandchild.

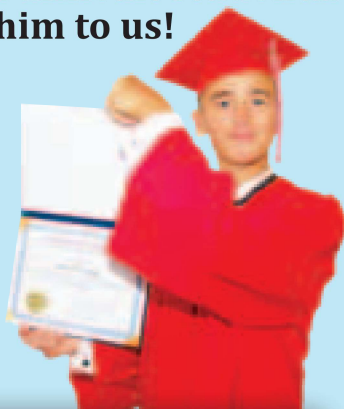
MILLS, Elizabeth L. (Penn)—98; b. Jun. 17, 1913, in Mt. Vernon, Ohio; d. Oct. 1, 2011, in Sulfur, Okla. She is the wife of the late Merle Mills who served for 14 years as president of the Southern New England Conference. She is a graduate of Columbia Union College (now Washington Adventist University). She and her husband served 14 years as missionaries in Africa. She was preceded in death by her son Merlin Mills; grandson, David Castro, and two sisters, Florence Coyle and Francis Trefz. She is survived by her son, Dr. Myron (Lorinda) Mills of Sulfur, Okla.; a daughter,

Margene Castro of Pawtucket, R.I.; seven grandchildren, Randy, Derek and Mike Castro and Peter, Mikey, Michelle and Matthew Mills.

PRICE, Lillian I. (Risch)—80; b. Jun. 29, 1931, in Chicago, Ill.; d. Oct. 11, 2011, in South Lancaster, Mass. She was a member of the College Church in South Lancaster, Mass. She served in the Women's Ministries department and was a member of the Adventist Nurses Association. She is a graduate of Atlantic Union College. She is survived by George Price, her husband of 60 years; a son, Douglas Price of Clinton, Mass.; five daughters, Patricia Lambert of Madison Wis.; Lynette Veo (Jack) of Hudson, Mass., Brenda Wagner (Rick) of Sterling, Mass., Debbie Price of Westminster, Mass., Cheryl Price-Bartlett (Bill) of Lancaster, Mass.; Robin Bechhofer of Madison, Wis.; a brother, Albert Risch of Madison, N.H.; a sister, Heidi Kwort of Australia; 17 grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

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