

THE ATLANTIC UNION

DECEMBER 2016

GLEANER



A NEW DAY DAWNS in Boston

- ❖ Building a Bridge for Freedom and Religious Liberty
- ❖ Atlantic Union Academy Students Assist Louisiana Flood Victims
- ❖ Journey to Forgiveness

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“Revelation Today: A New Day is Dawning” was the theme of a three-week Bible series hosted in the city of Boston as part of the Compassion Boston initiative.

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20 Journey to Forgiveness

Throughout my ministry, I have seen many youth, young adults, and adults struggling with many battles in their lives. One of the most difficult battles is to be unforgiving.

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Cover: The image of the Boston skyline at sunrise used in the cover design is from [iStock.com/roman_slavik](https://www.iStock.com/roman_slavik).

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Stay Focused on the Mission

In just a few weeks 2016 will be history. It will be a year to remember for many people because of a number of reasons. However, it is important to remember that with each new moment, each new day, and each new year comes the unknown with its challenges, opportunities, joys, sorrows, and a host of other things.

At the Atlantic Union Conference's 30th quinquennial session, under the theme "Faithful to the End," held in June at Machlan Auditorium on the campus of Atlantic Union College, delegates voted a complete change in the administrative leadership team, along with some directors' positions. These changes also impacted several of the conferences, as well (See the August GLEANER).

The Seventh-day Adventist Church, at its annual council meeting, voted a "Unity in Mission: Procedures in Church Reconciliation" document that outlines "steps of reconciliation with entities that appear to have overlooked or ignored the biblical principles as expressed in the Fundamental Beliefs, voted actions, or working policies of the Church." The North American Division, at its year-end meeting, voted to authorize its executive committee to appoint a subcommittee to "craft a thoughtful path forward" in response to this document.

The 2016 U.S. election campaign cycle seemed as if it would never come to an end. It was unlike any other that I (and many others) have seen in a lifetime. Now that it's all over, fear, frustration, anger, and other emotions are impacting many people. As I watched the events unfold, it left me wondering, *What now?*

In the quietness of the early morning hours as I connected with my Friend before I began my day, He reminded me, "Give your entire attention to what God is doing right now, and don't get worked up about what may or may not happen tomorrow. God will help you deal with whatever hard things come up when the time comes"—Matthew 6:34, MSG.

It may cause us concern sometimes when we witness change occurring in

the world and in our church, but this should motivate us to pray more and to stay focused on our mission of being God's ambassadors. Regardless of what happens on this earth, Jesus will return in His time to take His children home. His coming may be delayed, but it is sure to be fulfilled.

As we move forward into 2017, I invite you to join me in prayer for the leaders of the church at all levels. Let us pray that Jesus, our Captain, will steer the ship in the direction it needs to go, and that we will not be distracted by anything that will potentially prevent us from advancing God's work.

Let us pray for the United States and nations around the world as we look for divine intervention as God prepares planet earth for His triumphal return.

Let us be about our Father's business, and, as individual members of the Adventist Church, help to meet the needs of those around us who not only need to hear the gospel, but need to be fed, clothed, and cared for. I am praying that we will truly be His representatives here on earth and that we will stay focused on the mission.

We must remember that God will help chart our course through the unknown challenges ahead and He has given us the assurance: "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. 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"—John 14:1-3, NKJV.

Stay focused on the mission; don't get distracted. Reach out, especially during this holiday season, and touch someone's life. Share God's love with them and the wonderful news of Christ's soon return.

Ednor A.P. Davison is the communication director for the Atlantic Union Conference and editor for the Atlantic Union GLEANER.



"We must remember that God will help chart our course through the unknown challenges ahead."



A New Day **DAWNS** in Boston

By Olivia Ruiz-Knott

“We all know some things that are incontrovertibly true,” said John Bradshaw, *It Is Written* speaker/director, in an evening presentation at the Boston Temple, “Like, ‘Getting a parking ticket in Boston is easy.’”

On the morning of October 29, some 3,000 Adventists (and very-soon-to-be Adventists) throughout the greater Boston area and beyond tried to avoid this incontrovertible truth by car-pooling, taking the T, catching a bus, walking, or carefully studying parking

maps—all to get to the Reggie Lewis Track and Athletic Center, the venue rented for the final day of what some have identified as the largest evangelistic event in Boston in more than 50 years.

“Revelation Today: A New Day is Dawning” was the title and theme of a



John Stapleton/It Is Written

John Bradshaw, *It Is Written* speaker/director, speaks to an audience of about 3,000 on the final weekend of the *Revelation Today* series in Boston.



three-week Bible series hosted in the city of Boston by *It Is Written* (IIW), in partnership with the Northeastern Conference (NEC), the Southern New England Conference (SNEC), and the Atlantic Union Conference as part of the Compassion Boston initiative. The series ran from Friday, October 7 to Saturday, October 29, in more than 50 local host locations throughout the city, with all attendees joining together for the final weekend.

And at that final weekend, 50 people gave their lives to Christ in baptism, according to the office of John Amoah, SNEC ministerial and evangelism director. There was one additional profession of faith, and other participating churches reported that during the earlier weeks of the series, another 28 were baptized, for a current total of 79 new Seventh-day Adventist believers.

Tom Murray, who works for SNEC—one of the two conferences in which Boston is located—served as (among several other responsibilities) the project manager for Compassion Boston. From Murray's perspective, the planning for the *Revelation Today* series began as early as 2010 when he heard about the General Conference's "Mission to the Cities" initiative.

He went back to the local conference with a dream to reach Boston, and reached out to IIW about doing evangelism in the city. It took five years, but in 2015, IIW officially partnered with Compassion Boston to work toward these meetings. "In spite of many who consider Boston to be an 'evangelist's graveyard,' " said Murray, "IIW leadership responded enthusiastically, creatively, and energetically with us to plan a Spirit-inspired series that fit the unique challenges and opportunities of the Boston area."

One such "fit" was the theme chosen for the series: "A New Day is



John Stapleton/It Is Written

Pastors from churches in the Boston area participating in the *Revelation Today* evangelistic series, baptize candidates during the afternoon service on the final weekend of the series.

Dawning." This affected the tone of the presentations and all visual communication, such as graphics, handbills, posters, and other advertising. Rather than focusing on beasts, doom, and gloom, "What we wanted to do in Boston was share a message that gave confidence and assurance," said Yves Monnier, IIW director of evangelism.

All this planning resulted in a multi-church project that involved 55 Seventh-day Adventist churches (with the support of more than 40 pastors) across two conferences: 19 churches from the Northeastern Conference and 36 churches from the Southern New England Conference. These churches boasted a diversity of languages: 15 English-speaking, seven French, three Portuguese, and 25 Spanish, as well as Korean, Mandarin, and Twi-speaking congregations. During the three-week series, most churches began by having a local speaker present the first week of meetings, then switched to watching a livestream of Bradshaw for the remaining two weeks, until all the churches came together at the Reggie Lewis Center for the final weekend.

Twenty-four of the 25 Spanish-language churches joined together in one location for Impacto Boston, a

week of live presentations with Elias Sarmiento, pastor of the Greater New York Conference Yonkers District. Besides these 55, 26 more churches just tuned into the live-streamed presentations, bringing the total number of involved churches to 74.

In preparation for the series, IIW mailed out 390,159 flyers, provided 48,090 handbills, 19,995 door hangers, and 1,290 posters that were distributed locally by church members. Social media advertising reached over 18,900 link clicks, with most of those clicks coming from men between the ages of 25 and 34 (women of the same age were just 2 percent behind), according to IIW representative Keith LaRoy.

But that wasn't the only preparation. In the months leading up to this series, IIW and Compassion Boston hired six full-time Bible workers to begin studying the Bible with anyone in the Boston area who was interested. IIW sent out mailers offering free Bible study lessons to several Boston neighborhoods and—while expecting no more than two per thousand to be returned—received back as many as eight per thousand in some areas.

By the time the meetings started, the Bible worker team had 95 friends in sit-



down, in-home studies; and 165 friends receiving drop-off studies every week, according to Jack Phillips, IIW's Bible work program director for Compassion Boston. More than 50 of those friends attended seminars around the city, and five of those who were in sit-down Bible studies chose to get baptized. Several others are continuing studies in preparation for baptism. Speaking post-series, "This is not the time to sit back, but to participate and retain those newly added to the church," said Karen Matambo, a Compassion Boston Bible worker. "We're looking for church

not an end in itself, but part of a great, continuing work God is doing in the Boston area."

"The *Revelation Today* series was a vital component of our decision to more intentionally reach out to the greater Boston area," said Murray. "As part of the Compassion Boston program, our people have set out to care like Jesus cares and love like Jesus loves. This involves community engagement, meeting felt needs, and sharing the liberating gospel. . . . We are looking forward to the next major Compassion Boston initiative: Your

New England and Northeastern conferences working together to build up God's kingdom in the city of Boston," said Daniel Honoré, Northeastern Conference president. "It is my prayer . . . that we, as Seventh-day Adventists, working in unity, will exemplify the love and compassion of Jesus Christ as we lead more souls to Him. We don't see this as the end. We see it as the beginning of something great for years to come."

Perhaps the theme chosen for this evangelistic series was more apt than intended. A new day is dawning in Boston: not only in the lives of the 79-plus new believers who now have assurance and hope for the future; not only in the sense that we understand the world to be on the brink of a "great, gettin' up morning" (as Bradshaw likes to say); but it seems that a new day has dawned in the Boston area churches.

Monnier commented, "When an evangelistic series is completed, the first question people will ask is, 'How many baptisms did you have?' It's a good question, but there's a better question: 'How has the evangelistic series transformed the churches involved?' Well, from everything I've observed and heard, IIW's participation in Boston has had a profound, positive impact on the churches. There's a belief that evangelism can work, even in Boston. There's a desire to build on the momentum and reach more people for Jesus. IIW's role in Boston may have ended, but the work is far from done. It's good to see that churches are more than ever energized to do something great." ①



Olivia Ruiz-Knott is the communication manager for Compassion Boston.



John Stapleton/IIW is Written

Members and friends from area churches attend services at the Reggie Lewis Track and Athletic Center in Boston on the final weekend of the *Revelation Today* series.

members in the Boston area to continue studying with those who are not yet ready to be baptized and disciple them. This is crucial, as many of the Bible workers may be leaving soon."

Now that the *Revelation Today* meetings are over, church leaders are taking a moment to look back—and to look forward.

"*Revelation Today* Boston was truly blessed by God," said Bradshaw. "We saw what happens when God's people come together, reach out to their communities, and share Jesus with people who have become their friends. . . . I'm excited to see that this project was

Best Pathway to Health in the fall of 2017."

"The *Revelation Today* series provided opportunity for individuals, as well as churches, to see the Spirit of the Lord moving and working in the lives of many wonderful people who attended the meetings," said Amoah. "Not only did it provide opportunity for many to come to the knowledge of and into a loving relationship with the Lord, it was also a revival for the members of the churches that participated in the series."

"What a delight it was to see our members, from both the Southern

NETS Students Help a Family in Need

Recently, Courtnie Shields had an experience that most Bible workers don't usually have. Though it might have seemed out of the ordinary, God saw fit, that for His glory, it was necessary.

Shields is a student in the NETS Evangelism Center (NETS) program at Atlantic Union College (AUC). Reaching out to others and sharing the good news of God's love has always been a passion for her. She joined NETS to become more effective in sharing this truth. A month into the program, Shields and the other students had already begun giving Bible studies to a number of individuals in Lowell, Massachusetts. Shields and her Bible study partner, Rumbidzai Gutu, had been conducting Bible studies with several individuals when suddenly, one day, they declined. This was a shock to both Shields and Gutu. They contemplated about God's purposes for having them out there. It was on this day that God introduced Shields and Gutu to one of their, now, most cherished and faithful Bible study families.

Shields and Gutu were on their way to another street to begin searching for more Bible study contacts, when on a porch at a cross street, they noticed a young girl looking at them. Shortly after, the young girl's mother came out and began talking to the girl. Shields felt God impressing her to ask this woman if she would desire Bible studies. Without introduction, Shields asked the woman, "Ma'am would you like to have Bible studies?" Intrigued by the request, she said yes.

Soon after, the Compassion Boston evangelistic series with John Bradshaw, speaker/director of *It is Written*, began and Shields and Gutu invited the woman and her family to attend. The woman, named Ms. Karen, her mother, and her youngest daughter went to several of the meetings. However, two weeks into the series, the family stopped attending.

While dropping off the Bible study contacts,

proper precautions were taken to protect the girl and prayer began. Soon after, another NETS team member was called, Jericho Bautista. Eventually, two more members arrived.

They prayed for Ms. Karen's daughter. After about four minutes her seizures stopped, but she had a fever of 103 degrees. At Atlantic Union College's NETS program, Shields and her friends learned about



Courtnie Shields is a student enrolled in the NETS Evangelism Center four-month program at Atlantic Union College.



Classes for students attending the NETS Evangelism Center program are held in the Miles building on the campus of Atlantic Union College.

who attended the meeting that night, Shields felt an impression to pass by Ms. Karen's house. Shields was impressed not to go alone and went back to the church to pick up her Bible study partner. At the church, she was informed that Ms. Karen had called asking for prayer and for Shields and Gutu's presence. Shields arrived at Ms. Karen's house shortly after, with her fiancé, and Gutu. Once inside, they noticed that Ms. Karen's oldest child was having seizures and her body was shaking violently. At this point, the

medical missionary work. They were blessed that in the NETS program they learned massage therapy and hydrotherapy. They used cold compresses and wrapped her in blankets to help bring down the fever. They repeated this process three times, while praying and singing hymns to her. Ms. Karen's daughter was encouraged. She started praising God on the spot and testifying, "I know God loves me. I know he sent you guys here."

Shields praised God for the opportunity to help Ms.

Karen's family and for bringing her to AUC. She's thankful for being a part of the NETS program and learning the right tools to help bring more people to the kingdom.

Courtnie Shields will finish her NETS training at Atlantic Union College in December 2016. She is planning her future in ministry, as well as a wedding with her future husband.

—Emmanuel Ortiz, communication manager, and Johnathan Dixon, Student Association president, Atlantic Union College



Atlantic Union Academy Students Assist Louisiana Flood Victims

Thirty-eight students from four academies in the Atlantic Union Conference—Greater New York, Northeastern, South Brooklyn, and Union Springs—plus chaperones, participated in disaster relief efforts in southern Louisiana October 22-28. They went to offer their assistance in the wake of historic flooding of more than five feet that took place in previously unflooded areas in August 2016. This natural disaster is the largest in the U.S. since Superstorm Sandy.

The volunteers worked in conjunction with the administrators and Adventist Community Services (ACS) coordinators for the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference. This trip was jointly sponsored by the Atlantic Union Conference Office of Education, Youth Ministries, and ACS.

Prior to going on the trip, each student had to complete and become certified by the FEMA Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program in order to participate. Students paid part of their own way for the trip. While there, student and adult volunteers assisted in loading distribution pallets at an ACS managed warehouse

facility; preparing temporary housing at a local school for volunteers to stay who come to help with relief efforts; and installing Sheetrock and insulation at two private residences belonging to church members in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

“Some students just went to fulfill community service hours, but their mindset changed when they realized that they were really making a difference for people,” says Marlene Alvarez, Atlantic Union Conference Office of Education associate director who, along with Jerrell Gilkeson, education director, led the trip.

David Keith, plant manager for the Atlantic Union Conference office in Lancaster, Massachusetts, assisted on the trip, as well. Keith, a licensed contractor, oversaw repair work at Charlene Gould’s house.

Gould has been living with her parents since the flood waters ravaged her home in August. More than 35 members of the church were displaced by the flooding.

“Our pastor gave a sermon a few weeks after the flood and I was impressed with the fact that people don’t know what you need unless you ask for it,” remembers



Students, volunteers, academy sponsors, and Atlantic Union personnel pose for a group picture before getting to work helping flood victims.

Photos: Jerrell Gilkeson

Gould. Her house needed new Sheetrock. She told the head elder, who later came to the house and ascertained the damage. “Next thing I heard, a group from Massachusetts was coming over to put in Sheetrock and insulation! They were a direct answer to prayer!”

Gilkeson was impressed by the spirit of service displayed by everyone who assisted with this project, but especially the students. “The trip to Louisiana was arduous; in addition, they had to sleep in

close quarters with limited restroom and shower facilities at the warehouse. Yet, in spite of it all, they helped and encouraged one another without complaining. That is a complement to our young people, our schools, and the parents who helped them have that sort of spirit.”

Thank God for affording a safe trip where students were able to learn and people were given hope and help.

—Debra McKinney Banks, communication assistant, Atlantic Union Conference



The students are on their way to work on church members’ homes.



Students load a truck and prepare to distribute much-needed items to residents of the community.

Building a Bridge for Freedom and Religious Liberty

Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL) leaders from across the Seventh-day Adventist Church came together for a major emphasis in New York August 26-27. Experts in the religious liberty field dispersed to more than a dozen New York City churches, speaking on the theme “Building a Bridge for Freedom and Religious Liberty.”

In each borough, local congregations heard a mes-

sage proclaiming the gift of religious freedom and explaining the vital role the church plays in public affairs. Speakers included religious liberty leaders Ganoune Diop from the General Conference and Orlan Johnson from the North American Division. The 2016 New York Rally culminated with a Sabbath-afternoon area-wide event held at the Goshen Temple church in Brooklyn, New York. You can find video of the rally, as well as several of the sermons, at www.gnyc.org/parl.

Special honored guests from the community included the Honorable Una S.T. Clarke, who was presented with a special freedom medal. Robert Hall, pastor of the Bronx Household of Faith, was also recognized for his 20-year battle with the City of New York during which he fought for religious organizations to have equal opportunity to rent available space in public schools. G. Earl Knight, Atlantic Union Conference president; John Ashmeade, Atlantic Union Conference

explaining the relationship between religious freedom and civil rights. Miller’s presentation emphasized religious freedom as the first freedom and highlighted the church’s response to such current social justice issues as the Black Lives Matter movement and LGBT rights.

Lincoln Steed, LIBERTY magazine editor, clarified and reemphasized the church’s belief in the strong separation of church and state and the free exercise

Lawrence Brown from NEC, along with Claude Morgan from GNYC, honored local church religious liberty leaders with a special liberty pin. Abner De los Santos, General Conference general vice president, gave the final charge challenging members to enjoy, protect, and proclaim our religious freedom through love for others.

Following the service, attendees were able to



Atlantic Union Conference president, G. Earl Knight, center; Greater New York Conference president, Henry Beras, fourth from left; Northeastern Conference president, Daniel Honoré, fourth from right; PARL leaders and speakers, and other conference representatives pose for a picture during the 2016 New York Rally weekend.



Members from area churches participate in the Religious Liberty Rally in New York City.

Photos: Rohann Wellington

sage proclaiming the gift of religious freedom and explaining the vital role the church plays in public affairs. Speakers included religious liberty leaders Ganoune Diop from the General Conference and Orlan Johnson from the North American Division. The 2016 New York Rally culminated with a Sabbath-afternoon area-wide event held at the Goshen Temple church in Brooklyn, New York. You can find video of the rally, as well as several of the sermons, at www.gnyc.org/parl.

Special honored guests from the community

PARL assistant director; Daniel Honoré, Northeastern Conference (NEC) president, and Henry Beras, Greater New York Conference (GNYC) president; were also in attendance.

The rally featured a well-qualified line-up of speakers, helping members to better understand what religious liberty means for the church today. Nicholas Miller, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary professor of church history and the International Religious Liberty Institute director, opened with a presentation

of religion. Melissa Reid, North American Division PARL associate director and LIBERTY magazine associate editor, facilitated a panel discussion covering very practical ways church members and leaders are engaging in the work of protecting religious liberty through partnerships and coalition building. Panelists included Greg Hamilton, Northwest Religious Liberty Association president, Amireh Al-Haddad, Southern Union Conference PARL director; and Kevin James, Southern Union Conference PARL associate director.

personally meet the team of leaders at a special reception event sponsored by the North American Religious Liberty Association (NARLA).

The 2016 New York Rally served as a precursor to an ongoing collaborative effort to revamp the strategic religious liberty agenda of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in New York.

—Janice Da Silva, associate director, Greater New York Conference Office of Planned Giving and Development



Bermuda Conference Sponsors Community Health Expo 2016

The Bermuda Conference Health Expo 2016, held in Southampton on Sunday, August 28, was an inspiring and life-changing event for hundreds of participants and volunteers alike. The event was the second of its kind, and one of many community initiatives, spearheaded by former Government Health Promotions coordinator, now Bermuda Conference Health Ministries director, Leonard L. Gibbons. Under his labor of love, along with a team of committed fellow volunteers, the multipurpose auditorium at Bermuda Institute was transformed into a mindful medley of interactive stations depicting the theme “8 Keys to Wellness.”

Upon formally opening at 1:00 p.m., guests were greeted and given registration options by Calvin and Debra White from the St. David’s church. Next, a number of registered nurses, organized by Evelyn Brown, were very visible as they helped take participants’ blood pressure and blood sugar levels. Alongside them was the Bermuda Conference Adventist Community Services team, led by Dora Baker, who recorded height and weight, while they also digitally consolidated the data to produce the participants’ health age.

A group consultation session with Gibbons served several purposes. Participants got to enjoy a plant-based meal, prepared by the Southampton Health Ministries Food Services and

Preparation team, while their screening results were clarified. From consultation, smaller groups were released to explore the eight keys to wellness, one key at a time. Group leaders helped guide attendees through a rotation of intentionally interactive experiences:

- “Nutrition” with Wayne and Paula Williams of Southampton church featured the sampling of breakfast foods.
- The popular “Water” station, with Joan Robinson, also of Southampton, demonstrated the use of hydrotherapy to help promote healing; and, so did Colleen Williams’ herbal tea sub-station.
- “Air,” manned by Deanna Stowe of Pembroke church, with its assortment of fragrant mood-enhancing local plants, whetted appetites for future visits to the neighboring nursery.
- “Trust in Divine Power” with Claudette Fubler, from St. George’s church, pinpointed the remarkable reach that faith brings to healing. The prayer ministries team, with Pembroke church pastor Michelle Hill, stood by to facilitate private prayer for those who expressed a need.
- At “Temperance” Danice Mapp of Hamilton church highlighted abstinence, sobriety, and restraint. She reminded them that moderation, in good things contributed to optimum health.
- In “Exercise” Jaylon Roberts of the Rockaway church taught simple exercises applicable almost anywhere.
- The “Rest” station, with Troy Dill from Midland Heights church, featured siesta techniques, including soft music.
- Carl Mackenzie of Warwick church, showed an appropriately bright



Leonard Gibbons, Bermuda Conference Health Ministries director, shares information at one of the health stations.

display at “Sunlight,” while sharing about its healing benefits to mind and body.

Satisfied participants encountered Caren Fadlin, M.D., physical therapist Marta Tomaszek, and medical office manager Marilyn Simmons, of HOPE Healthcare and BWOC, as each went beyond their vivid display to work the crowd and to provide much-appreciated personal attention and gift bags.

Gibbons expressed a sincere “thank you” to the team of numerous volunteers, including William Tull, who remained available to provide structural help wherever needed; and to Debra King, who stood by as English/Spanish/Portuguese interpreter. For each of the hundreds of persons who flowed through the Bermuda Conference Health Expo, 2016; for the 100 persons who paused to complete the health age assessment; and, for the 160 individuals who accepted gift bags, the sentiments are, “To God be the glory!”

—Rosamund Williams-Gibbons, writer, educator, and health professional, Bermuda Conference Health Ministries Department.



Rosamund Williams-Gibbons, lends a hand where needed at Bermuda Conference's Health Expo 2016.

Roosevelt Pioneers Float Down the River

This year the Roosevelt Pioneers Pathfinder Club learned what it takes to be a pioneer. Coming from a church rich in Adventist history, they decided to work on the Pathfinder Pioneer honor and experience what their forefathers went through to survive over 100 years ago. The Roosevelt Pioneers studied what types of housing they would have lived in and the type of foods that were grown and how they were prepared.

They visited Fort Stanwix, in Rome, New York, to see how people would have dressed in that time period. The Pathfinders also learned Adventist history about how Adventist church leaders had to overcome difficulties in spreading the gospel,

starting a new church, and about how Adventist pioneers traveled between places using horse and buggy.

On August 28, they finished the honor by making a raft similar to what the pioneers would have made and floated down the Oswego river. It was a hot day, and a good day to be in the water! They had a blast lashing the logs together and then paddling down the river.

A special “thank you” to Robert Putman for the logs and to Jill Westcott for the use of her home to launch the raft.

—Steve Wheeler, Pathfinder director, and Barbara Hildreth-Bridgers, communication team member, Roosevelt church



The Roosevelt Pathfinders, from left, Emily Livergood, Celine May, Joseph Jerez, and Evan Holdren, paddle their raft down the river.



The Roosevelt Pathfinders, from left, Jocelynn Coballes, Celine May, Joseph Jerez, Emily Livergood, Earl Holdren, Evan Holdren, Sarah Livergood, and Elizabeth Livergood, are putting the raft together.



ANNOUNCING TO ALL Union Springs Academy Alumni

You are cordially invited to attend
ALUMNI HOMECOMING WEEKEND
May 5-7, 2017

Honor Classes

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1957 ~ 60 Year Class | 1987 ~ 30 Year Class |
| 1962 ~ 55 Year Class | 1992 ~ 25 Year Class |
| 1967 ~ 50 Year Class | 1997 ~ 20 Year Class |
| 1972 ~ 45 Year Class | 2002 ~ 15 Year Class |
| 1977 ~ 40 Year Class | 2007 ~ 10 Year Class |
| 1982 ~ 35 Year Class | 2012 ~ 5 Year Class |

For more information about alumni weekend, visit unionspringsacademy.org or check out Union Springs Academy Alumni on Facebook.



Announcing Union Springs Academy's 4th Annual Campus Renovation

WHEN? July 2-14, 2017

WHERE? Located at 40 Spring Street, Union Springs, NY

WHAT? A two-week renovation operation where volunteers will work together to renovate and improve the campus of Union Springs Academy.

WHO? Maranatha Volunteers International will be leading the team of volunteers, joined by USA alumni, and anyone with a willing heart and hands!

To register to volunteer or donate to our projects please visit unionspringscademy.org or call 315-889-7314.



Chosen and Ordained

“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you”—John 15:16.

The fall season ordination marked the first official act of the new president, Henry Beras; executive secretary, Alanzo Smith; and ministerial secretary, Reginald Barthelemy, since their election by the executive committee. Elvin Arriaga, Eddy

dates for ordination to think and act as Jesus would. “You are called to do the right thing for the right reason. It may not be popular and people may not applaud you, but you are not called to please the public, you are called to honor God,” Knight said to an audito-

than profession, it is more than career, it is more than position, it is a calling from God,” Beras said. Beras, who was accompanied by his wife, Angela, Ministerial Spouses Association leader, welcomed the newly-ordained pastors and their spouses. Smith,

ministers in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The following are edited excerpts from the life of each of the newly-ordained.

Elvin Arriaga, a Columbian native, is a product of Adventist Christian education. From 2009 to 2011 he was assigned the task of working directly with the student literature evangelists who came from Colombia to New York. From 2011 to 2013 he worked with the regular literature evangelists, and in 2013 he was assigned as district pastor for the Highbridge and Prospect Spanish churches. His extra-curricular activities include being a member of the 41st Police Precinct in the Bronx and a member of the ministerial fraternity in the Bronx as well.

Arriaga is married to the former Indira Gandhi Fierro, who has been a great blessing to his ministry. They have two children, Jordan and Melany, seven and four years old, respectively. They are happy as a family serving the Lord and Arriaga’s passion is to help prepare people, as well as his family, for the kingdom of God.

Eddy Benoit was born in Haiti. He is a lawyer by training and active member of the Massachusetts Bar. In 2009, he answered the call by walking away from a prosperous law career and enrolled at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological



Photos: Rohann Wellington

Participating in a litany for their ordination are, from left, Elvin and Indira Arriaga, Eddy and Marie Benoit, Gregory and Nickesha Carrol, and Desmond and Stacey Ann Haye.

Benoit, Gregory Carrol, and Desmond Haye were chosen and ordained on Saturday, September 17, as ministers in the 19 million-member Seventh-day Adventist Church. It also marked the first Sabbath that the new administration and directors were officially presented to the constituency.

G. Earl Knight, Atlantic Union Conference president, delivered a sermon titled “Having the Mind of Christ.” He challenged the candi-

rium full of supporters at Camp Berkshire.

English Ministries director Steve Cassimy gave the ordination prayer and invoked God’s divine blessing on their respective ministries and families. He prayed that they would have “a heart like Jesus to love all sheep (people),” and strive to be faithful under-shepherds of God’s sheep, instead of striving to be successful.

“Your ministry is more than vocation, it is more

presented the newly-ordained pastors with their ordination credentials.

Pastors from both the Greater New York and Northeastern conferences turned out in full support of the ordainees. An unique moment of applause erupted in the congregation when Eddy Benoit rose to approach the platform and was joined by his 77-year-old father, Alourdin C. Benoit, and uncle, Emmanuel C. Benoit. Both are ordained

Seminary at Andrews University, where he earned a Master of Divinity degree. He joined the Greater New York Conference in 2012 and is currently the pastor of the Huntington and Antioch church district in Long Island, New York. Driven by a desire to be better equipped for the challenges of the pastorate, he is pur-

University, where he obtained a bachelor's degree in religion and theology. He later attended Oakwood University in Huntsville, Alabama, where he completed a master's degree in pastoral studies, with a focus on church development. While there, he also compiled a resource manual on meeting the needs of, and how to wit-

family, they are committed to helping men and women establish stronger relationships with God.

Desmond C. Haye is the twelfth child of his parents, Madge and Leslie Haye.

A former Jehovah's Witness, Haye received the call to gospel ministry after serving for seven years in

During his time at Grand Concourse, Haye distinguished himself as a soul winner and a teacher on matters relating to prayer, health, family life, and spirituality. He has completed four units of clinical pastoral education, accredited by the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE), at the world renowned Calvary



Many supporters attended the Greater New York Conference ordination service held during United Camp Meeting at Camp Berkshire.



Standing with the newly-ordained pastors and their wives are, on the left, treasurer Ebenezer Agboka and his wife, Lorna; and president Henry Beras and his wife, Angela; and, on the right, executive secretary, Alanzo Smith and his wife, June.

suing a Doctor of Ministry degree with an emphasis in family ministries.

Benoit is married to the former Marie A. Graham, who is a family nurse practitioner and adjunct faculty at Molloy College.

Gregory Carrol was born in Jamaica, West Indies. His early career path saw him beginning as a military officer in the Jamaica Defense Force. He later migrated to Canada and was mentored by Joseph Bulgin, pastor of the then Philadelphia church in Toronto, where he developed his passion for preaching, evangelism, and pastoral care.

His academic preparation for ministry included attending Northern Caribbean

ness to inmates, ex-convicts, and gang members. Carrol is a staunch believer in professional development and as such, he will begin doctoral studies in January 2017 with an emphasis in church leadership excellence at Wesley Theological Seminary in the District of Columbia.

Currently he serves as pastor of the Shalom church in Bronx, New York. His objective in ministry is to heal relationships, equip the church for mission, and to show that it pays to serve the Lord. He is married to the former Nickesha Clarke, an electrical engineer project specialist with Consolidated Edison Company of New York, and together, they have a nine-year-old son, Malachi, and a five-year-old daughter, Meleah. As a

the Jamaican justice system as a clerk.

Haye is a graduate of Northern Caribbean University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theology and a minor in Counseling. He is also a graduate of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University with a Master of Divinity degree.

Upon completing graduate school, he was called to serve at the now closed Review and Herald Publishing Association as a coordinator for the Light America Mission project in New York City. In April 2012, he received a call from the Greater New York Conference to serve as the associate pastor of Grand Concourse church.

Hospital. He is a member of the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education.

Haye has led hundreds to Jesus nationally and internationally, and is a well-respected evangelist and health educator. He is married to the former Stacey Ann Linton, who is a trained teacher and a licensed social worker. Recently, they welcomed their firstborn, Caleb Netanel Haye. He is passionate about health, evangelism, and spirituality, and lives by his personally-coined motto, "The mind controlled by Christ is the measure of the man."

—Rohann D. Wellington, communication director and assistant to the president for strategic planning, Greater New York Conference

Student a Living Testimony of God's Miraculous Power

Olewasheun Balogun, a student of South Brooklyn Academy, had a brush with death on September 15. The regular humdrum events of Church Avenue, Brooklyn, New York, were interrupted by the loud impact of a motorcycle colliding with this 15-year-old young man and throwing him against a car. Balogun was on his way home from the school, which is located within four minutes walking distance from the scene of the accident, and was crossing the road when he was hit.

Some students who were present rushed back and notified the principal, Ivanhoe Douglas, while others called 911. On reaching the scene, the principal saw his student lying motionless with blood trickling from his ear. The police and emergency vehicles arrived, and the school's chaplain, Corey Marshall, volunteered to accompany Balogun to the hospital.

As the principal returned to school, he summoned an emergency meeting of all faculty members pres-



Olewasheun Balogun, a student of South Brooklyn Academy, is welcomed back by students and staff who prayed for his recovery from an accident.

ent, and they immediately initiated intercessory prayer for Balogun's life, as well as for all those who were impacted by this terrible event. A little later the principal and three teachers

who went to the hospital learned that "Things could go either way." The student's mother looked broken, and his father refused to leave his bedside for even the briefest moment.

The school officials at the hospital did not despair, because they knew that they serve a God who is able; nothing is too hard for Him. He is the Great Physician; He is the Creator of man and the universe.

The next day all academic work was suspended at school and counseling was provided for the school family and particularly, for Balogun's two sisters. Songs and prayers ascended continually during a special intercessory service conducted by the chaplains of Northeastern Conference and South Brooklyn Academy.

Prayers continued during the coming days and on September 29, South Brooklyn Academy's school family joyously welcomed Balogun back to school. He was ecstatic to be back and to be in good health. This student is a living testimony of God's miraculous power and the strength of faith-based intercessory prayer. May his experience encourage us all to depend on God through life's darkest scenes.

—Euradina Phillips, teacher, South Brooklyn Academy

Sharon Celebrates Community Services Day With a Difference

Sharon church's Adventist Community Services (ACS) department decided to celebrate Community Services Day with a difference this year. The church is located in the Wakefield section of the Bronx on a main thoroughfare that provides for many passersby from the neighborhood. On Sabbath afternoons during the sweltering summer months, the ACS leader would set up a table in front of the church to hand out bottles of cold water, as well as Christian tracts, books, and maga-

zines. It was not difficult to convince the church members that a free outdoor mini-mart would be ideal for the occasion. Church members were asked to either donate food items or contribute money for purchasing food. They expressed their enthusiasm by their overwhelming response.

On the afternoon of Sabbath, September 3, the church's parking lot was lined with tables laden with food items for distribution to the needy in the community. The church's Education



Members of Sharon church pose for a photo before working together at the Community Service food giveaway.

and Youth Ministries departments also provided book bags with back-to-school supplies that were greatly appreciated.

The members of ACS wore their yellow T-shirts with dignity, donning the church's name on the front and the ACS logo on the back. They respectfully assisted and served more than 50 families who turned out for the event.

All those who received a package expressed their sincere gratitude, some promising to attend church services in the future. After seeing the tremendous impact and success of the event, several church members asked for a repeat of the free mini-mart in the near future.

—William Bellot, Adventist Community Services director, Sharon church



Families from around the Bronx community receive canned goods, Christian magazines, and other food items.

South Brooklyn Community Witnesses the Changing of the Guard

The community of South Brooklyn witnessed the changing of the guard for South Brooklyn Academy on Sunday, September 18. It was an occasion on which they rang out the old: Excelsior school/Northeastern Academy Brooklyn Campus (NEABC), and rang in the new: South Brooklyn Academy.

It was a moment of mixed emotions, yet one of excitement and accomplishment. The process was not an easy one. It was tedious and strenuous, however, with God's help, the school succeeded.

Over the years Excelsior school and NEABC have graduated



Staff, students, parents, and other guests celebrate the changing of the guard from Excelsior school/Northeastern Academy Brooklyn Campus to South Brooklyn Academy.



Present for the dedication ceremony of the South Brooklyn Academy are, from left, James Gbolo, Elim church pastor; Ivanhoe Douglas, South Brooklyn Academy principal; and Baldwin Barnes, chairman of the school board.

hundreds of students. The students were not only prepared for life here, but also for eternity. Through His leadership, God has used human hands to lead His institution—Viola Brown, the late Laurent Servius, Colin Parkinson, Marlene Alvarez, Edward Jackson, Viola Chapman, and current principal, Ivanhoe Douglas.

As they embark on this exciting journey, the school family craves your prayers. May God continue to bless South Brooklyn Academy as it spreads its wings and soars to new heights.

—Natasha Lawrence, administrative assistant, South Brooklyn Academy

She Walked Past the Guard, Past the Gate, and into the White House — Without an Invitation

Margaret (Barrows) Russell is a member of the Oxford, Maine, church. She is 104 years old and lives with her daughter and grandson in Oxford, Maine. She's seen a lot in her life, but it is her early memories from the time her parents spent as missionaries in the Philippines, as well as her years in Washington D.C., that may be the most fascinating.

The president at that time was Warren Harding. His sister, Phoebe Votaw, was a close friend to mother and father and we attended the same church. Our family lived on Carroll Avenue and Mrs. Votaw, who lived on Tulip Avenue in Takoma Park, were our neighbors and we saw each other often. President Harding invited my dad to come and visit him, and he did, even

children would often be there and we wandered everywhere we could explore, even into the president's office. Most times no one even paid any attention to us. People were always very nice, but I do remember being told not to touch some things or sit on certain furniture. On one occasion daddy took me into the oval office and let me sit on the president's chair.

didn't seem to me to keep people out. If someone wanted to go in, all they had to do was walk through the gates, up the sidewalk and ask to come in.

"Often when I went into the White House I was with Daddy, but many times I went by myself. President Harding died on a west coast visit while he was in office. Daddy cried when he learned about it."



Margaret (Barrows) Russell at about eight years old.



Margaret (Barrows) Russell at 104 years old reflects on her early childhood days and visiting the White House.

My, how the world has changed since Margaret was a little girl! And the rate of change seems to be getting faster and faster, and the nature of the change is worth remarking on, too. The world is getting to be a more dangerous, more extreme, an altogether less loving place with each passing day.

If the world can change so much in less than a century, and if the pace of change is only accelerating, then we are at the point in history where the changes that will take place in the last days can happen relatively quickly. Let us yearn for heaven—where there are no gates, no fences, no guards, and the Lord of the universe is waiting just to meet and talk with us!

—Dorothy Page, member, Oxford church

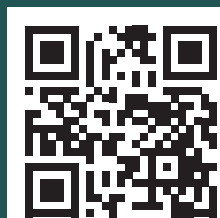
"After my father graduated from college, he and mother served as missionaries in the Philippines for three to four years starting in 1916. Daddy was treasurer for the Seventh-day Adventist Philippine Union. When we returned to the United States, he became senior assistant commissioner for the Federal Prison Industries, which was part of the Department of Justice.

stopping to see him on his way home from work.

"I was 8-10 years old when I made my visits to the White House. Sometimes I would roller skate over to Pennsylvania Avenue to meet dad and we would walk to the White House together. I wandered down the halls. I looked in offices, opened doors, and I found my way to the kitchen downstairs (I never went in). Other chil-

"I remember walking through the front door of the White House and not even being stopped, but usually I went in by a side door near the gardens. That's where most people entered. Many needed identification or were given a ticket, but I was just waved to come ahead inside. If I was with daddy, we just went in either door. Fences were there back then, but it

Visit nec.org online.



New Healing Program in NNEC Carries Health Ministry Torch

In 2015, Parkview Adventist Hospital in Brunswick, Maine, closed as an Adventist-affiliated full-service hospital. It was the last Adventist hospital in all of New England and it simply could not compete on a stand-alone basis against an array of affiliated competitors.

As the sisterhood of churches in Northern New England mourned the loss of the hospital, there was at the same time a recognition that our health ministry did not start or stop with a hospital, and that this right arm of the gospel effort must go forward with vigor.

In the year after the closure of the hospital, health ministry training programs, such as depression recovery, were held at Camp Lawroweld in Maine. Also, the Northern New England Conference (NNEC) Prayer Ministries team held retreats in 2015 that focused on health and healing.

As positive as these programs at Camp Lawroweld have been, there is still a desire to engage in even more types of health outreach at the local church level, and to offer programs that are strongly attractive to the community. With this in mind, the health ministries team worked with the innovation team at NNEC and sought out partners. The end result is a new program that features the healing properties of hydrotherapy (water therapy).

This new “healing project” teaches community members how to properly use simple hydrotherapy techniques. The rationale for the program is that people might be interested in learning how to prevent

lifestyle diseases at some point in time, but most people are interested in learning how to decrease suffering from these same diseases, and they want to decrease suffering right now! In this respect, the healing project is intended to serve as a bridge to bring people into the church for training seminars, and through this training to build relationships that can lead to further health training and to evangelism opportunities.

The healing project is set to be held at the Ellsworth church in Maine early in 2017. The Ellsworth church co-developed the healing project, with Josias Baez-Roman, the church’s pastor; the elders, and member Jai Hewlett taking a leading role in the co-development of the program. Hewlett is a young man who recently graduated from a two-year health training program at Uchee Pines Institute in Alabama. Technical training and assistance for the program was sought from Uchee Pines by NNEC, so Hewlett’s involvement became doubly important, since he is the skilled “bridge” between Ellsworth church and Uchee Pines.

The project that has resulted from the collaboration is a teaching and demonstration event held weekly for six weeks, with community members welcome for as many training sessions as they are interested in. The project is deliberately designed to encourage one-on-one interactions, and so while hydrotherapy techniques are taught by a single teacher, they are then demonstrated and re-taught by a member in a one-on-one or one-on-two setting.

The classes are small, with only a dozen or so community members enrolled at a time. For this number of students there are seven instructors, two prayer warriors, and the pastor. The prayer warriors circulate during the training and offer to pray for the community member throughout the coming week, and the pastor also circulates and visits with the community members.

The Ellsworth church has taken preparation for the event very seriously, conducting training for its program facilitators and holding a door-to-door needs assessment in the community in order to identify likely program participants. It is the goal to then make this program plan available to other churches so

that other communities and churches can also receive this blessing.

For every disappointment, such as losing a hospital, there is an appointment, such as finding new ways to reach people through medical missionary work. During 2017 NNEC will continue to expand its health-ministry efforts. If you would like to keep track of the Ellsworth Healing Project, e-mail Daniel Battin at dbattin@nnecc.org, and you will receive updates on results and learnings. Perhaps some of the work at NNEC will spark a greater vision.

—Daniel Battin, Health Ministries department coordinator, Northern New England Conference

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Pastor Assists Woman in Sinking Car



Cesar Perozo, pastor of the Stoneham church, made a split-second decision to assist a woman whose SUV plunged into the cold waters of a local pond.

While enjoying the scenery at a local pond, Cesar Perozo's afternoon took a shocking turn when he made a split-second decision to assist a woman whose SUV plunged into the cold waters on Friday, October 14.

Perozo, who is pastor of the Stoneham church in Stoneham, Massachusetts, was with a friend at Spy Pond in Arlington, Massachusetts, when 68-year-old Helen Joyce's SUV careened down the embankment. Perozo's friend called 911 while Perozo jumped into the water to rescue the driver. Bystanders recorded the incident and yelled instructions to Perozo as he swam toward the vehicle that was quickly filling up with water in the middle of the pond.

As he swam, Perozo thought, *If I can just get her out of the car, somehow, I think I can rescue her.* As he neared Joyce and saw her banging on the window, he realized she was not able to get out on her own. Finding an unlocked door, Perozo is heard on the video yelling, "You gotta come out!" as

water quickly flooded into the vehicle cabin. Perozo managed to grab her hand and began pulling her from the sinking SUV when suddenly she was snatched away and pulled under the water from the force that occurred as the vehicle sank into the 40-foot deep pond. "I didn't know if she got out [of the car], or if she was sucked back into the vehicle," Perozo recalled. "I had such a good, firm grip. I had her!"

Meanwhile, David Frasier of Boxford, Massachusetts, was swimming toward the accident scene to offer assistance. Perozo, devastated, exhausted, and cold, sadly began swimming toward the shore. Suddenly, Joyce's head emerged from the water and the bystanders yelled, "There she is!" Frasier took over and pushed a seat cushion that had become dislodged from the SUV toward Joyce, instructing her to grab it and use it as a floatation device. Frasier was later assisted by Kenneth Chapman of Sydney, Australia, to bring Joyce to shore. Chapman was the third person to jump in to assist the woman.

Perozo, in shock from the encounter, wanted to go home, warm up, and tell his wife and foster daughter about the day's events. He initially requested anonymity and declined to be contacted by the media so he could have some time to gather his thoughts. "I was just trying to catch my breath. I couldn't think straight; there was so much adrenaline," Perozo said. The next day, he contacted the Arlington police, giving them permission to release his name as one of those who assisted the victim.

"I trust that God is always at work," says Perozo. Back on shore, the rescuers stood with Joyce wrapped in blankets, holding hands while Frasier prayed. Perozo

remembers Joyce's grip leaving his hand. "I felt terrible as I lost her," he said. "As we all prayed together, I was holding her hand. I remember praising the Lord that I got to hold that hand again; and she is alive."

According to news reports, Joyce was taken to the hospital, treated for mild hypothermia, and later released. No charges have been filed, however police will notify the Registry of Motor Vehicles to review Joyce's ability to drive safely.

—Debra McKinney Banks, communication assistant, Atlantic Union Conference

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SNEC Women's Retreat Includes Teens

More than 200 women and teenage young ladies attended the 2016 fall women's retreat hosted by the Southern New England Conference (SNEC), October 21-23. The event was held at the Great Wolf Lodge in Fitchburg, Massachusetts.

Joy-Ann Nosworthy, SNEC Women's Ministries director, announced that this retreat was the first one in the conference that was open for teens to attend. Twenty-two teens participated in seminars and activities led by Andrea Hicks, Atlantic Union Conference Single Adult Ministries volunteer assistant director and founder of F.O.C.U.S.; and Jada Nosworthy (Joy-Ann Nosworthy's daughter), a biology major at Quinnipiac University, who enjoys working with teens.

Guest speaker for the adult women was Michelle Hill, Bermuda Conference Prayer Ministries and Women's Ministries director and pastor of the Pembroke church in Hamilton, Bermuda. Throughout the weekend, Hill spoke on the theme "Anchored." SNEC president, David Dennis, greeted the women and welcomed them to the conference during the opening session. Chenoa Vilfranc, administrative assistant to the SNEC president, set the tone before the spoken message with music each session.

Women attended from all over the Southern New England territory—Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and



Joy-Ann Nosworthy, SNEC Women's Ministries director, fifth from right, stands with Michelle Hill, speaker for the women's retreat, sixth from left, surrounded by the SNEC Women's Ministries team.

Connecticut—as well as a group of women who drove from Maine. Prizes and gift certificates to the upcoming 2017 spring women's retreat were also awarded. Seminars included such topics as handling relationship issues, managing finances, making time for self-care, and more.

Hill also conducted two special anointing services over the weekend for those desiring healing. Saturday night included a mini-concert by the praise team for the weekend: Sharon Genas, Michelle Menns, Michelle Hunte, and

Debra Banks, accompanied on piano by David Hunte, as well as a special praise dance performance from Jasper—a group of teen girls from Pleasant Street church in Worcester, Massachusetts.

The women and young ladies who attended the spirit-filled retreat were blessed, inspired, and recommitted to remain anchored in their faith, hope, and love for Jesus Christ.

—Communication staff, Atlantic Union Conference



Women stand in line waiting for prayer during a special anointing service at the Southern New England Conference women's retreat.



Michelle Hill, Bermuda Conference Prayer Ministries and Women's Ministries director and pastor of the Pembroke church in Bermuda, speaks to the women at the Southern New England Conference Fall Women's Retreat on the theme "Anchored."

Journey to Forgiveness

Throughout my ministry, I have seen many youth, young adults, and adults struggling with various battles in their lives. One of the most difficult battles is to be unforgiving. A young girl came up to me and said, “Pastor Peralta, I cannot forgive my mother; she hates me and she abandoned me.” A youth from the state of Michigan once said, “I hate my father for being unfaithful to my mother.” I remember on another occasion after I finished preaching to thousands at a youth retreat, a church elder told me that he can’t forgive his son for the horrible things he has done to his family. At one time or another we have been wronged by someone or someone has hurt us. The question is, “How can we forgive when it hurts so much?” The Bible says, “Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you”—Ephesians 4:32, NIV. The Bible is clear when it states that we need to “forgive one another,” but how and where do we begin?

What is forgiveness?

Forgiveness means dismissing a debt. Forgiveness is the act of pardoning an offender. In the New Testament, forgiveness denotes a dismissal or release of penalty when someone has wronged you. In other words, when you grant forgiveness, you dismiss the debt owed to you. June Hunt, author of *HOW TO FORGIVE WHEN YOU DON’T FEEL LIKE IT*, suggested that forgiveness is dismissing the demand that others owe you something, especially when they fail to meet your expectations, fail to keep a promise, or fail to treat you justly. Additionally, I say that forgiveness is to extend love and mercy; to give a gift of grace and compassion. Forgiveness is a decision to let go of resentment, bitterness, and thoughts of retribution. You might think that forgiveness is excusing the wrongdoer, but instead it is acknowledging that unjust behavior is without excuse, while still pardoning the offender.

How can we forgive when it hurts so much?

One thing to remember is that to not forgive will add more pain to your wounds. When you refuse to forgive you become stagnant and you are drained emotionally. A pattern of not forgiving will dominate and harden your spirit. It’s important to note that forgiveness is a journey: the deeper the wound, the longer the journey, but the deeper your relationship with God, the quicker this journey can take place.

So begin your journey with God. Ask God to do in you what you cannot do for yourself. Ask for the healing power of the Holy Spirit. Allow the Spirit to start a healing process in you, and recognize the benefits of forgiving. Louis B. Smedes once said that “When we forgive, we set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner we set free is us.”

Forgiveness is not something we do for others; we do it for ourselves. Mary Karen’s last words in her journal entry before her death in the Virginia Tech shooting was, “When deep injury is done to us, we never recover until we forgive; forgiveness does not change the past, but it does enlarge the future.”

Forgiveness is not something we do for others; we do it for ourselves.

Almost everyone has been hurt in life by the actions, words, and attitudes of others. Perhaps your father mistreated you, your parents’ divorce hurt you, your classmate offended you, a teacher dispraised you, a relative violated your trust, your mother criticized you, or you’ve experienced other offenses. These wounds can leave you with long-lasting feelings of anger, bitterness, or even revenge, but if you don’t forgive, you might be the one who pays the most. Pray for a heart of forgiveness toward those who have hurt you. Forgiveness is a supernatural response empowered by God. It takes time, that’s why it’s a journey, but when you let go, you become free. In the new year that is approaching, let’s embrace forgiveness, hope, and love. Shalom! ☺



Andrés J. Peralta is director for the Youth and Young Adult ministries, Pathfinder, and Adventurer departments in the Atlantic Union.

Sunset Table

January 2017	6	13	20	27
Bangor, ME	4:10	4:19	4:28	4:38
Portland, ME	4:21	4:28	4:37	4:47
Boston, MA	4:28	4:35	4:44	4:53
South Lancaster, MA	4:30	4:38	4:46	4:55
Pittsfield, MA	4:36	4:44	4:53	5:02
Hartford, CT	4:36	4:44	4:52	5:01
Providence, RI	4:31	4:39	4:47	4:56
New York, NY	4:45	4:52	5:00	5:09
Albany, NY	4:36	4:44	4:52	5:02
Utica, NY	4:42	4:50	4:59	5:08
Syracuse, NY	4:46	4:54	5:03	5:12
Rochester, NY	4:52	4:59	5:08	5:17
Buffalo, NY	4:57	5:05	5:14	5:23
Hamilton, Bda	5:29	5:35	5:41	5:48

Eastern Standard Time

OUT OF UNION

10 Days of Prayer, January 11-21, 2017. The prayer theme for the 10 Days of Prayer is "A Living Sanctuary." Register yourself or

your group at www.TenDaysOfPrayer.org. While there, you will find promotional materials as well as guidelines you can download for leaders that will enable a first-time leader to easily walk a group through an hour of prayer. Invite friends to participate.

Alumni Reunion La Sierra Academy (April 28, 29), 4900 Golden Ave., Riverside CA. 95th Year Celebration! Honor Classes 2's and 7's. Welcome Reception 7:00 p.m. Friday April 28, LSA library. Honor Class Services Registration April 29 at 9:00 a.m. Services at 10:00 a.m. Potluck luncheon. Alumni/varsity basketball at 8:30 p.m. Saturday evening. Please update your contact info. JNelson@lsak12.com; (951) 351-1445 ext. 244; www.lsak12.com.

Miguel; nine grandchildren, and 15 great-grandchildren.

TUGMAN, Devon St. Ives-67; b. June 18, 1949, in Berrydale, Portland, Jamaica, West Indies; d. Oct. 1, 2016, in Middletown, N.Y. A member of the Middletown church in Middletown, N.Y., he served as head elder, Sabbath School superintendent and teacher, and president of the Middletown church school board. He was actively involved in his community and was helpful to others. He is survived by his wife, Leonie Tugman of Middletown, N.Y.; sons Keane Tugman of Clinton, Mass., and Dale Tugman of Middletown, N.Y.; daughter, Tara French (Mark) of Henrietta, N.Y.; six brothers and sisters, Ruel, Leon, Lenox, Laura, Linda, and June, all in Jamaica, West Indies; two grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

OBITUARIES

ARAUJO, Edythe Sophia Bellem-90; b. Oct. 5, 1925, in Boston, Mass.; d. Apr. 2, 2016, in Avon Park, Fla. She was a teacher for 52 years and brought out the musical talents of many children. She is survived by her husband Charles Araujo; three children, Gary, Linda, and Karla; three adopted children, Aline, Maria, and

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EMPLOYMENT

ATLANTIC UNION COLLEGE seeks vice president for enrollment management and student affairs. Requirements: terminal degree from an accredited institution of higher education, 10 years experience at a senior level in enrollment management and/or student affairs with a commitment to shared governance, as well as

a proven track record in leading diverse populations; be a Seventh-day Adventist in regular standing, committed to the values, principles, and expectations of the Adventist Church and Atlantic Union College. Submit letter, addressing minimum and preferred qualifications, résumé, transcript, and three professional reference letters to: roberto.reyna@auc.edu. For details, visit: www.auc.edu.

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY seeks an Assistant/Associate Professor of Nursing. Responsibilities include teaching didactic and clinical nursing, skills lab, and simulation along with other applicable assignments to make a full-time position. Other duties include: teaching didactic and clinical nursing courses; teaching/supervising skills and simulation labs; attending all departmental meetings; advising students; attending pinning, dedications, and graduations; and participating in writing program self-study, and preparation for accreditation visits. For more information or to apply, visit: www.andrews.edu/admres/jobs/1135.

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SOUTHWESTERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY'S English Department is seeking applications for a full-time faculty member specializing in British literature of the 18th or 19th century. Preferred candidates will have a Ph.D.; a creative writing background is a plus. Send CV with cover letter to Dr. Judy Myers Laue (lauej@swau.edu).

UNION COLLEGE seeks an Adventist, masters-prepared PA faculty member. The ideal candidate will have clinical experience in Family Practice and Emergency Medicine. Prior teaching experience is desired but not necessary. Start date: June 1, 2017. Send CV and references to Jodi Chewakin, jochewak@ucollege.edu.

UNION COLLEGE seeks full-time professor of Communications and English with strong skills in magazine journalism, editing, and writing instruction for position beginning July 2017. Doctorate is preferred. Please submit curriculum vitae to Dr. Mark Robison, Humanities Division chair, at marobiso@ucollege.edu.

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WALLA WALLA UNIVERSITY has two faculty openings in the School of Education and Psychology. For details and to apply, please visit: jobs.wallawalla.edu.

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THE ATLANTIC UNION GLEANER

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Atlantic Union GLEANER Staff
E-mail: gleaner@atlanticunion.org

Editor Ednor A. P. Davison
Circulation/Back Pages/Proofreader Debra McKinney Banks
Copy Editor (off-site) Pat Humphrey
Layout & Design (off-site) Haziel Olivera

Contributors

Bermuda D. Randolph Wilson, drwilson@northrock.bm
Greater New York Rohann Wellington, rwellington@gnyc.org
New York Jeremy Garlock, jeremy.garlock@nyconf.org
Northeastern JeNean Lendor, jlendor@northeastern.org
Northern New England Scott Christiansen, schristiansen@nnec.org
Southern New England David Dennis, skypilot@sneconline.org
Atlantic Union College Emmanuel Ortiz, emmanuel.ortiz@auc.edu

Atlantic Union Conference Departments

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Children's Ministries, Assistant
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Prayer Ministries Yvonne Knight
Prison Ministries Trevor Forbes
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Public Affairs/Religious Liberty, Assistant John Ashmeade
Publishing G. Earl Knight
Revolving Fund Violet Bidwell
Sabbath School Dionisio Olivo
Stewardship Elias Zabala, Sr.
Trust Services/Inner City/Loss Control Elias Zabala, Sr.
Women's Ministries Lois King

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Music Clinic 2017
Featuring Choir**

March 1-4, 2017
Atlantic Union College Campus
338 Main St., Lancaster, MA 01523

Clinicians: Owen Simons and Antonie Brady


Concert:
Saturday, March 4, 2017
Time: 6:30 p.m.
College Church of Seventh-day Adventists
337 Main St.
Lancaster, MA 01523
Free Admission

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The greatest
honor God has
given to planet
earth was to
send His only
begotten son,
Jesus, born of
a woman, to
save humanity.

A woman with dark curly hair, wearing a light blue headscarf and a blue robe, is cradling a baby wrapped in white swaddling clothes. She is sitting in a manger filled with straw. The background is dark with a patterned curtain on the right.

“But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, . . . in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children.”

—Galatians 4:4,5 NRSV

Atlantic Union Conference Women's Ministries Department
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