

# VISITOR

CONNECTING COLUMBIA UNION SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2016 • VOLUME 121 • ISSUE 1

## Homeland Missions

Where  
Members  
Do Outreach  
Right Outside  
Their Front  
Doors

Plus: How Can  
We Avoid Litigation  
in the Church?



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### VIDEOS OF HOPE

Leaders and pastors from 100-plus Hispanic churches across the Columbia Union Conference territory baptized more than 620 during the recent Caravan of Hope evangelistic effort. Visit [columbiaunionvisitor.com/caravanofhopevideos](http://columbiaunionvisitor.com/caravanofhopevideos) to watch stories of several people impacted by the meetings.

### 7 PERSONS OF HONOR

During the Columbia Union year-end meetings, union leaders presented the fourth annual Columbia Union Notable Persons of Honor Awards to seven (four pictured), individuals for their work in advancing Christ's mission. Read full biographies of these winners at [columbiaunionvisitor.com/notablebios](http://columbiaunionvisitor.com/notablebios).



### COMPASSION 10 MILLION

The North American Division Ministerial Department is calling for Seventh-day Adventists to collectively invest 10 million hours blessing local communities with intentional, repetitive and relevant acts of love and service this year. Visit [compassionmovement.org](http://compassionmovement.org) to see how you and your church can get involved.



**"FEARLESS"  
CAMPERS**  
Attention,  
Pathfinders!  
The union  
Youth and  
Pathfinder  
Leadership

Advisory set the date and location for the 2016 Columbia Union Conference Pathfinder Camporee, themed "Fearless." Get the details at [columbiaunionvisitor.com/fearless](http://columbiaunionvisitor.com/fearless).

### WRONG ADDRESS?

Need to update your *Visitor* mailing address? Visit [columbiaunionvisitor.com/addressupdate](http://columbiaunionvisitor.com/addressupdate) to see how.

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*Sherry English*

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# VISITOR

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The *Visitor* provides news and information, inspiration for effective ministry, and insight on issues with a spiritual focus to help engage members in experiencing the mission.

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Volume 121 ■ Issue 1

## Where Are We?

Is it too early in the new year to talk about *where* we are? When in an unknown place, I'm always touching the location icon on my smartphone to determine where I am. Wouldn't it be helpful if our smartphones could also tell us where we are in the stream of time, where in Earth's destiny clock? It's the happenings of 2015 that have made me spend more time pondering this question. Do you also have these thoughts?



We just experienced an alarming year with unusual occurrences in our world. For example, the news reported this past autumn that the “most powerful” hurricane ever recorded was headed toward Mexico. Add that to the many typhoons and cyclones impacting other parts of the globe.

## SIGNS OF HIS RETURN

And, natural disasters are only one aspect of end-time signs. I could easily write about how terrorism and its proliferation, and a growing ecumenicalism among many Protestant churches—as many perceive its “mother church”—or its attraction to political leaders in our own country, are indicating to us the *same event*. What is going on? What's coming? Or, maybe not *what* but *Who*?

Jesus Christ informs His disciples about the signs of His return, stating in Luke 21, “There shall be signs ... distress of nations, the sea and waves roaring; men's heart failing them from fear ...” (vs. 25-26). And, Revelation 7 depicts four angels slowly letting go of “the winds of strife” upon our world. Could 2015 events be a fulfillment of these signs?

Adventist pioneer Ellen G. White also gives commentary on these events: “The restraining Spirit of God is even now being withdrawn from the world. Hurricanes, storms, tempests, disasters by sea and by land, follow one another in quick succession. The signs thickening around us, telling of the near approach of the Son of God” (*Maranatha*, p. 175).

## NOW IS THE TIME

Now is the time for our church, collectively and individually, to give the clarion call. Now is the time to be about prayer like never before. Now is the time for “all hands on deck,” to step up and take their place in proclaiming the good news of the blessed hope (see Titus 2:9), and to realize the true fulfillment of Joel 2:28: “And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.”

I am encouraged by our union's local conference presidents and associates who have chosen to challenge their nearly 1,000 pastors and churches—from 2016 through spring 2018—to intentionally focus on an intense time of prayer and purposeful outreach to the millions in our territory.

I hope you will join us in this endeavor, for it *is* time. Truthfully, I believe we are nearly out of it.

*Dave Weigley is president of the Columbia Union Conference based in Columbia, Md.*



## VISITOR ADJUSTS PRINT FREQUENCY

*Visitor* magazine staff continues making strides toward a more effective online presence through [columbiaunionvisitor.com](http://columbiaunionvisitor.com), where they keep members informed of current events and happenings around the Columbia Union. One decision *Visitor* publishing board made last fall to better reach their goals includes reducing the number of issues mailed each year. There are now two combined issues—January/February and July/August—which means members will receive 10 issues in 2016.

“We hope this decision will encourage you, our dedicated



readers, to visit our website and other social media platforms often,” says Beth Michaels, *Visitor* editor. “It’s all about giving members news in real time. For those of us who like perusing the print magazine,

you’ll still get to enjoy 10 issues of features, editorials, news, highlights and newsletters.”

## NEW UNION CALENDAR FEATURES HOPE

The new union calendar features pictures that illustrate some of the ways members in the Columbia Union share messages of love, ministries of grace and seeds of hope.



*Rob Vandeman, Jane Browning, Dolly and Frank De Haan, Cyril Hardy, Dave Weigley and Seth Bardu gather during the union’s year-end meetings to celebrate the notable person awards.*

“In each *Visitor*, we feature stories of how God is working in and through people in the Columbia Union to make life better for others, as Jesus did,” says Celeste Ryan Blyden, vice president for communication and public relations. “This calendar captures some of those memorable moments from our conferences, schools and ministries.”

For additional free copies, email [bweigley@columbiaunion.net](mailto:bweigley@columbiaunion.net).

## CHURCH SELECTS WAU SABBATH

The Columbia Union Conference has designated January 30 as Washington Adventist University (WAU) Sabbath. Offerings on this day will go to help support WAU’s 1,100 students and the university’s continuing efforts to engage minds and transform lives. Churches on this special Sabbath are encouraged to highlight the advantages of Adventist education and WAU’s accomplishments. Of note is the university’s recent Russian Bible translation, rolled out at the 2015 General Conference Session in San Antonio.

## UNION AWARDS NOTABLE PERSONS

During the Columbia Union Conference year-end meetings in November 2015, Dave Weigley, union president; Rob Vandeman, executive secretary; and Seth Bardu, treasurer, presented the fourth Columbia Union Notable Persons of Honor Awards to seven individuals. Awardees included Charles Edward Bradford, retired church administrator; Jane Browning, longtime Mountain View Conference administrative assistant; Eleazar De Gracia, New Jersey Conference pastor; Frank and Dolly DeHaan, philanthropists; Cyril Hardy, physician; and Olive J. Hemmings, Washington Adventist University professor.

“We recognize people who have taken seriously Solomon’s admonition and have given their all in the service of God,” said Vandeman. “We celebrate them today, not just for their earthly accomplishments in the church and the community, but because, through their work, they’ve helped advance Christ’s mission and build His kingdom.”

# 2.22%

The third quarter 2015 tithing increase over third quarter 2014, as reported by Seth Bardu, union treasurer.

## Caravan of Hope Brings in Record 600 Baptisms

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Columbia Union Conference welcomed 626 new members at the conclusion of the Caravan of Hope, a union-wide evangelistic effort. The Caravan of Hope, which wrapped up near the end of 2015, has been identified as “a milestone” for Columbia Union Hispanic churches. The effort, organized by Rubén Ramos, union vice president for Multicultural Ministries, and a team composed of local pastors, singers, elders and lay members, included international evangelist Alejandro Bullón as its main speaker.

In reference to the 626 baptized, Ramos says, “Each of the baptisms is a story of prayer, service, compassion and the fight against evil. The Caravan of Hope is just the moment of joyful triumph in the journey toward God. To bring a dear friend to Christ is the greatest joy that disciples of Christ can experience in this life.”

More than 100 Hispanic churches across the Columbia Union prepared the way for the Caravan of Hope team. The team, with Bullón, traveled for 10 days, with 16 stops, celebrating the evangelistic and small group efforts conducted by the local churches.

The Caravan of Hope motivated conferences to fulfill the mission of the church and prepare people for eternity. Some conferences held special prayer meetings in local churches, members conducted



*Jimmy Muñoz, a pastor at the Seabrook church in Lanham, Md., baptizes Kimberly Medrano at the Potomac Conference’s Caravan of Hope meeting in Richmond, Va.*

“friendship evangelism” in their homes; others conducted evangelistic meetings in anticipation of the Caravan of Hope. Members in New Jersey committed to praying individually for five special people. Each conference participated in this evangelistic endeavor in a variety of ways; and all reported baptisms.

The New Jersey Conference led the way with 272 baptisms, and Jorge Aguero, Personal Ministries director and New Jersey Caravan of Hope coordinator, says that “many more will continue to study the Word of God.”

David Velasquez, who attended meetings in the Allegheny West Conference and decided to join the church, says that “getting baptized and becoming part of the church family was a natural step to take. The church showed their love, acceptance and support, and I

*Dave Weigley, union president, baptizes Patricia Rivera at Allegheny West Conference’s Caravan of Hope stop in Sharonville, Ohio.*

couldn’t do anything else but join.”

The Caravan of Hope evangelistic effort also served as inspiration for long-time members. “This was the best motivation to continue working with more commitment in the Great Commission of reaching the lost,” says Wilmer Ocotan, head elder at the Columbia Spanish Company in Columbia, Md.

Bullón says, “This evangelism is not about numbers. Behind each surrendered life there is a story, and it is because of those lives that Jesus Christ died on cavalry. We are populating the kingdom of God. People living in despair, struggling in every aspect of life now have a life of happiness and hope in Christ Jesus—and this is priceless.”

Ramos concludes, “This year will be another year of strong emphasis on evangelism in our territory. We dream that every ministry of our congregations meets the needs of our communities, and that 1,000 lay members may be prepared to conduct evangelism in small groups and churches. ... Can you imagine what the Lord could do?”

PHOTOS BY JOHN BOSTON AND LEANDER TOMAZELI



## Más de 600 bautismos como resultado del esfuerzo “Caravana de la esperanza”

La Iglesia Adventista del Séptimo Día en la Unión de Columbia les dio la bienvenida a 626 nuevos miembros al concluir la Caravana de la Esperanza titulada, “Jesús, la gran esperanza.” Fue un esfuerzo evangelístico de toda la Unión. La Caravana, que finalizó casi al término del 2015, ha sido descrita como un “peldaño” para las iglesias Hispánicas de la Unión de Columbia. Este esfuerzo fue organizado por Rubén Ramos, vicepresidente de los Ministerios Multiculturales, y un equipo conformado por pastores locales, cantantes, ancianos, miembros laicos y el orador principal, el evangelista internacional Alejandro Bullón.

Haciendo referencia a los 626 bautismos, Ramos dice, “Cada uno de estos bautismos es el resultado de una historia de oración, servicio, compasión y la batalla contra el mal. La Caravana de la Esperanza es justo el momento de gozo triunfal en la trayectoria hacia Dios. Traer un amigo querido a Cristo es el gozo más grande que los discípulos de Cristo pueden



Sandra Rivera (izq., en la foto con su hermana, Leslie), 14, asistió a la última parada de la Caravana de la Esperanza en la Iglesia de Atholton en Columbia, Md., una de las iglesias de la Conferencia de Chesapeake. Ella no tenía planes de bautizarse, pero “Dios me llamó y por eso vine.” Agregó que asistir a esa la reunión la ayudó a tomar una decisión.

experimentar en esta vida.”

Más de 100 iglesias Hispánicas dentro del territorio de la Unión hicieron los preparativos necesarios para llevar a cabo la Caravana de la Esperanza. El equipo acompañado por el Pastor Bullón, viajó por 10 días e hizo 16 paradas, festejando en cada una los esfuerzos evangelísticos y de los grupos pequeños realizados por las iglesias locales.

### TODOS SE INVOLUCRAN

La Caravana de la Esperanza motivó a que las conferencias participasen en una variedad de maneras.

Las iglesias Hispánicas en la Conferencia de New Jersey iniciaron el año orando y rogaron que el Espíritu Santo prepare el camino para el evento. Animaron a que cada miembro ore por cinco amigos y que inviten a cada amigo a participar en un grupo pequeño.

Cuando llegó el momento de iniciar las reuniones de la Caravana, “51 iglesias Hispánicas, 21 pastores y cientos de miembros de iglesia, incluyendo a los Conquistadores, participaron dando estudios bíblicos, trayendo amigos a las reuniones, y/o hasta ayudando a organizar las playas de estacionamiento,” explica Jorge Agüero, director de Ministerios Personales y coordinador de la Caravana de la Esperanza en New Jersey. En New Jersey, la meta fue bautizar 250 almas durante los cuatro días de la Caravana. Agüero informa que bautizaron 272 y “muchos más continúan estudiando la Palabra de Dios.”

La Conferencia de Potomac realizó 13 reuniones evangelísticas antes del inicio de la Caravana y, como resultado, 122 fueron bautizados. José Esposito, director de los Ministerios Hispánicos y coordinador de los eventos en Richmond (Va.), Manassas (Va.) y Silver Spring (Md.), comparte que “las



Alejandro Bullón, evangelista de la caravana, habla con la congregación de la Conferencia de Potomac en Richmond, Va.

iglesias trabajaron diligentemente,” y que “la colaboración entre las conferencias es maravillosa.”

También menciona que la conferencia continuará abriendo nuevos hogares iglesias. “Hoy tenemos más de 330 en la Conferencia de Potomac,” explica Esposito, “pero nuestra meta es tener 500. Cuando abrimos la puerta de nuestra casa a Dios, Él abre las puertas del cielo y derrama bendiciones sobre la comunidad entera.”

Peter Simpson, director de los Ministerios Hispánicos para la Conferencia de Ohio y coordinador de la Caravana de la Esperanza, informa que 20 personas fueron bautizadas durante la reunión en Cleveland. “La Caravana de la Esperanza se ha ido pero permaneceremos aquí produciendo más frutos para el Maestro,” dice.

Las iglesias en la Conferencia de Allegheny West (AWC) se prepararon para la Caravana llevando a cabo varias series de reuniones de evangelismo. Sergio Romero, director de los Ministerios Multiculturales para AWC informa que 53 personas fueron bautizadas en las iglesias del área de Columbus.

Gabriel E. Montalvo, director de los Ministerios Hispánicos para

la Conferencia de Pennsylvania, informa que se bautizaron 88 personas durante las reuniones realizadas en esa región. En preparación para la Caravana, los líderes de la conferencia tuvieron varias reuniones de oración y condujeron un gran evento, “Fe para las Familias,” donde más de 1,000 miembros distribuyeron literatura evangelística en las ciudades de Reading y Philadelphia. Luego los miembros y líderes locales dieron estudios bíblicos con los que mostraron interés en el material. Inspirado por los resultados, Montalvo está organizando un programa especial para la primavera que incluye un blanco de iniciar 150 grupos pequeños y otro de bautizar a más de 300 almas en el 2016. Dice que “las iglesias fueron fortalecidas al unir esfuerzos y apoyar la visión con la misión.”



La última parada de la Caravana de la Esperanza fue en la iglesia de Atholton, una de las iglesias en Columbia, Maryland, que forma parte de la Conferencia de Chesapeake. El coordinador de los Ministerios Hispánicos de Chesapeake, Orlando Rosales, informa que muchos grupos pequeños y congregaciones realizaron por lo menos una semana de reuniones evangelísticas antes de la Caravana. En la noche de la reunión, 39 personas fueron bautizadas y 8 se unieron a la iglesia por profesión de fe.

Muchos también aceptaron el llamado especial que hizo Bullón a los que todavía no habían tomado una decisión por Cristo. Jeiny Rivera (en la foto de arriba), quien empezó a asistir en junio a las actividades de la Iglesia Hispana de Baltimore, fue

una de ellas. Rivera había sentido el llamado de Dios antes, pero estaba luchando en tomar una decisión final porque su trabajo requería que trabajara en sábado. Después del llamado de Bullón, estuvo segura de su decisión. Cuando Rosales le preguntó qué sucedería con su trabajo, ella inmediatamente le respondió, “Renunciaré... Confío que Dios me ayudará a conseguir otro trabajo. No esperaré más.” Esa noche pidió ser bautizada.

(Vaya a la página 19 para leer más sobre la historia de Rivera.)

### EL TRAYECTO CONTINUA...

El esfuerzo evangelístico La Caravana de la Esperanza también fue una inspiración para los miembros más antiguos de la iglesia. “Me maravillé al ver que tantas personas fueron bautizadas. Creo que esta fue la mejor motivación para seguir trabajando con un mayor compromiso en la Gran Comisión de alcanzar a los perdidos,” dice Wilmer Ocotán, primer anciano de la Compañía Hispana de Columbia, Maryland.

El Pastor Bullón comparte su última reflexión: “Este evangelismo no se basa en los números. Detrás de cada vida entregada existe una historia, y es por estas vidas que Jesucristo murió en el calvario. Estamos poblando el reino de

Dios. Las personas que viven sin esperanza, que luchan en cada área de sus vidas ahora tienen una vida de felicidad y esperanza en Jesucristo—y esto no tiene precio.”

Ramos concluye, “Este año será otro año en donde se pondrá un fuerte énfasis en el evangelismo en nuestro territorio. Soñamos en que cada ministerio de nuestras congregaciones supla las necesidades de nuestras comunidades, y que 1,000 miembros laicos estén equipados para realizar evangelismo en grupos pequeños e iglesias. Soñamos que cada creyente ore por cinco amigos. ¿Te puedes imaginar lo que podría hacer el Señor?”



*Sarah Capeles, miembro de la Conferencia de New Jersey, canta en la parada de la Caravana de la Esperanza en Reading, Pa.*



*David Velásquez (segundo de la izquierda), asistió a la Caravana de la Esperanza en la iglesia central de la Conferencia de Allegheny West y decidió unirse a la iglesia. Dice que “bautizarse y formar parte de la familia de la iglesia fue un paso natural para él. La iglesia me mostró amor, aceptación y apoyo y [mi esposa y yo] no pudimos hacer otra cosa que unirnos a la iglesia.”*

## Litigation in the Church: How Can We Best Handle Our Disputes?

**W**e are living in very litigious times. Born again Christians today in the United States file 4-8 million lawsuits every year, often against other Christians, spending \$20-40 billion. There are approximately 19,000 church-scarring conflicts in the U.S. each year (an average of 50 per day). Even if Christians sue at only half the rate of non-Christians, the number of lawsuits would be 4 million, reports Ken Sande, founder of Peacemakers Ministries, in his article “The High Cost of Conflict Among Christians” (Feb. 15, 2015, [peacemaker.net](http://peacemaker.net) project).

Bob Burrow, vice president and chief legal counsel for Adventist Risk Management, states that, as a result of rising interest in church-related claims, there is a proliferation of lawyers advertising on mass media today. The various reasons for lawsuits range from personal injury, to job loss to an abusive event.

But, what is the most effective way for Christians to handle disputes? Are there situations when the Seventh-day Adventist Church believes it appropriate to take a matter to litigation? Members may be surprised to learn that the Adventist Church has some solutions already in place for finding



“civil” resolutions to many serious disagreements—with each other and with the church.

### LESSONS FROM OUR PAST

Historically the Adventist Church has recognized the biblical admonitions regarding taking a brother to court, referring heavily to the adage found in Matthew 18:15-20, which reads in part: “Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more ... And if he refuses

to hear them, tell it to the church.” Church leaders knew there had to be a better way to resolve disputes and have encouraged members to submit their claims and charges to fellow members for resolution rather than litigation in a court of law.

During the mid-1970s, a number of Adventists took the church to court on disputes arising out of church employment. Litigation proved expensive with attorney’s fees and related costs of a court proceeding. Many of these disputes might have been resolved outside the judicial process if there had been an alternative dispute mechanism in place within the church structure, says attorney Walter Carson, vice president and General Counsel for the Columbia Union Conference.

Instead, the litigation route, where both sides hired attorneys to aggressively pursue their own client’s interests, often ended without full satisfaction for either side, and left the church member

### 10 Matters for the Court

There are some claims (e.g., marital differences) the church determined inappropriate for members to utilize the North American Division Conciliation and Dispute Resolution Procedures in resolving disputes. To read the full list, visit [columbiaunionvisitor.com/courtatters](http://columbiaunionvisitor.com/courtatters).



with bitterness toward their church, Carson adds.

## FINDING A BETTER WAY

Today the Adventist Church has much better options for helping members resolve issues in a Christian, Bible-based manner that often benefits both parties. Carson notes that church leaders seeking better methods for members to resolve their disputes, created a Conciliation and Dispute Resolution Procedure. The goal of this policy is “to provide a method whereby the church may resolve disputes between local church members; lay members and various church leaders; employees and church employers; church organizations (service organizations, departments, associations, etc.); and/or conferences and/or institutions.”

The church provided conferences within each union with important components of spiritual preparation and reconciliation, which supported the church’s historic tradition of amicably resolving disputes and helped members feel less need to involve the judicial process. Church leaders were prompted by a doctrinal concern based on the Bible and counsel given to the church by Ellen G. White and created a section in *The Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual* called “Safeguarding Unity of the Church (Reconciliation of Differences).”

This section points out that “Christians should make every effort to avoid tendencies that would divide them and bring dishonor to the cause. It is the purpose of God that His children shall blend in harmony. Every effort should be made to settle differences among church members and contain the controversy within the smallest sphere. If matters of difficulty between brethren were not laid open before others, but frankly spoken of between themselves in the spirit of Christian love, how much evil might be prevented” (p. 57).

## EXAMPLES OF SUCCESS

When church members utilize the dispute resolution procedures, now often directed within their conference to resolve their serious disputes, it often leads to a successful ending. For example, in a recent case, a contract dispute involving a church school and one of its teachers was satisfactorily resolved.

In another case, a dispute that arose between two churches from different conferences led to a successful resolution acceptable to both congregations. Burrow elaborates: mediation is a good alternative. This allows participants to meet with a neutral, third party to try to speak to each other in a respectful way and resolve differences, he says.

In both of these matters, a fair and open hearing was provided, evidence presented, documents reviewed and testimony given. The church provided a place for its members to obtain a hearing; and, provided qualified persons to hear and decide the matter. The “dirty laundry” of the church was not washed in the very public setting of a court of law; and, the persons involved in the process felt they had been provided a forum where their claims could be heard, states Carson.

Critics of court-based litigation efforts today contend that the only winners are the attorneys. Pursuit of a claim under the church’s dispute resolution provides a vehicle where the parties can have closure to the perceived injury; be made whole, where appropriate, by an award that can come out of the process; gain a sense of having a claim fully heard and considered by an impartial panel of fellow church members; and experience a sense, at the end of the process, that despite the differences created by the problem, the parties have kept their Christian brotherhood intact, and their spiritual lives strengthened rather than destroyed, concludes Carson.

## Religious Liberty— The Church’s Exception for “Getting Involved”

The church takes seriously every challenge to religious liberty and will pursue the protection of such liberty, including resorting to the judicial process and the use of litigation when necessary. Even there, however, the church, in protecting the rights of its members, uses the process to serve as witness to the unique, Bible-based beliefs of the Adventist Church.

With religious liberty increasingly under threat, Americans see these cases being litigated all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. Here are two such cases that made national news and why the church decided to go to court to protect religious liberty:

Earlier this year, the Adventist Church filed a “friend of the court” brief in the Supreme Court to support a young, Muslim, woman denied a job by the clothing line Abercrombie & Fitch for wearing her hijab—or a head scarf worn by many Muslim women—claiming violation of the retail store’s “look policy.” Adventist attorney Dwayne Leslie stated that, although this case “doesn’t directly impact me, other Adventist church members or even fellow Christians,” it impacts issues of religious freedom for all.<sup>1</sup>

In another case, Adventist attorney Alan Reinach represented the defendant and partnered with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to file a lawsuit against Maita Chevrolet of Elk Grove, Calif., who fired Adventist employee Anthony Okon—a man who had previously been recognized for his customer service and teamwork—for refusing to work on the Sabbath. According to a regional attorney, “The EEOC’s investigation found that Maita supervisors not only failed to accommodate [his] religious practice, but answered his requests with harassment, discipline and ultimately discharge.” Todd McFarland, an attorney with the world church’s Office of General Counsel, said the Adventist Church was “happy to partner with the EEOC in this action to ensure that employers honor their commitment to worker’s rights.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dwayne Leslie, “Abercrombie & Fitch, the Supreme Court and You,” April 27, 2015, huffingtonpost.com

<sup>2</sup> Mark A. Kellner, “Seventh-day Adventist Wins Sabbath Case,” Sept. 30, 2013, adventistreview.org

**T**he Columbia Union Conference is putting forward significant funding to help prove that mission trips don't require church members to cross oceans or enter foreign lands. Over the past five years, the union has donated \$1 million toward its Homeland Mission Initiative. These monies go back to local Seventh-day Adventist churches to fund creative ministries programs, outreach projects and mission schools—all designed to share the gospel message right outside their front doors.

Frank Bondurant, Columbia Union vice president for Ministries Development, and his team oversee the program, which enables congregations, large or small, to dream big—and do even bigger things. “Local churches want to do mission work, but they may not have the funds for it,” he adds. “This program allows local churches to partner with their conferences and receive union funding to take advantage of the expertise, guidance and direction we can offer.”

Here are five programs that received union funding in 2015—and all are proving there's lots of work to be done in our own neighborhoods:

### **SIMPLICITY URBAN OUTREACH**

Located in Allentown, Pa., Pennsylvania Conference's Simplicity Urban Outreach program is a center of “influence with a mission school, social service projects and religious programs to address community “and family needs.

“The project is based on Christ's method of reaching people through being caring neighbors. We are His hands, His voice and His calming presence in the neighborhood around us,” says Jeffrey McAuliffe, program director.

**Outreach:** Simplicity Christian Academy is just one arm of the program. It's a small elementary school



that opened this past fall with nine students; however, Simplicity leaders project more than 100 in five years.

“The school is only for non-Adventists because its purpose is to be a neighborhood mission school,” explains McAuliffe. After school, the place bustles with kids programs, such as homework help, and family services, including social service connections, job programs and Bible studies. Throughout the day, volunteers from local Adventist churches and the community visit neighbors to assess needs, provide health screenings and pray. “It helps to break down barriers when you have a neighbor with you,” says McAuliffe.

Simplicity Urban Outreach also includes Kidz Church, held each Sabbath. Church members feed the kids, teach them Bible stories and help them just have fun. More than 100 kids have come through the doors.

The program also includes Free Day for Simplicity volunteers to distribute food, clothing and toiletries. They have a host of other program offerings, including English as a Second Language and exercise classes, plus a choir.

# Homeland MISSIONS

*Sherry English*

## Where Missionaries Do Outreach Right Outside Their Front Doors

**Impact:** Simplicity's impact "has been profound," says McAuliffe. "It has brought local Adventist churches from several conferences together to provide programs like Adventurers club."

Some months they have more than 120 Bible studies going. On Free Day, they distribute more than 500 personal care items, leading them to connect with local organizations and companies, such as Wells Fargo, to solicit more for those they serve. And, though the mission was designed for families in a five-block radius, they are serving families across town.

### LATINA CHURCH

Allegheny West Conference's Latina church started as a small group several years ago. Today it is a mission with 50 members who minister throughout their Columbus, Ohio, neighborhood targeting Millennials and families. The Latina congregants work alongside the city's Iglesia Manantial deVida and Brazilian churches, all led by Pastor David Rilo.

**Outreach:** "My joy is to see how the church has embraced the concept of global mission," says Pastor Rilo. "We work side by side ... to go out and plan more effective and ambitious evangelistic programs."

The Latina church, along with the two other churches, envisioned hosting a large-scale event with music and preaching in the downtown area. This past November, they brought their dream to fruition when they hosted a gospel and theater extravaganza. Approximately 700 people attended; of them, 100 requested Bible studies or further information. "We are using music and art to draw souls," says Rilo. "People see it isn't just preaching; it is using all kinds of art to get the Word across."

Their outreach programming includes other activities, such as a youth retreat. Of the 2015 retreat's 50 attendees, 37 were not Adventist. There is also a Youth in Action program to feed the hungry; a water and literature distribution program, and a weekly fellowship meal. Pastor Rilo says it's more than "lunch;" it is an evangelistic tool for reaching people and making them feel welcome. The young people are now planning a 2016 walk-a-thon.

**Impact:** "We can measure success by the response we get with the community. We see the numbers who come to church and events, and we see growth," says Rilo. Though they started as a small group, many new members have been baptized. In fact, says Rilo, looking at his three churches, there are 75 new members.





*Members of the Latina and other area Hispanic churches in Columbus, Ohio, put on a gospel and theater extravaganza for the city.*



## ARISE CHURCH

A storefront church located in a strip mall in Silver Spring, Md., Potomac Conference's Arise Hispanic-American church has a mission to share God's call to "arise and live" with those searching or who have lost their faith.

"Arise started as an option for second- and third-generation Hispanics who have left the church," says Pastor Gamaliel Feliciano. "This group, Millennials, view the world differently. They are concerned about relationships and events happening in the community—racial and gender justice—and actively work to affect change."

**Outreach:** Arise has a strong community outreach program. If you're looking for something, you'll find it there, say leaders. They've implemented programs, such as Awakening, for sharing gifts through music, art or spoken word; Arise Care, a Friday night café where hot drinks, snacks and ministry information is shared; Humans of Arise, a program that highlights members' spiritual journey; Marriage Café, where they host

"date night" for couples to nurture marriage and family; and Guys Night and Ladies Night, bringing groups together for fellowship and prayer.

Arise members also host community prayer walks; evangelism weekends and movie discussion nights; Operation Christmas Child to provide gifts for children around the world; spiritual gift classes, and remembrance programs for groups, such as those who have lost a child.

**Impact:** Pastor Feliciano measures impact and program growth through four areas: attendance, community influence, fellowship and increase in membership and number of baptisms. From 20 members three years ago to 95 worshippers each week, the mission is making inroads.

"And, we're starting to develop alliances with community agencies and organizations," says Feliciano. "They have the tools and are established; we're using these connections to serve more people."

## CONNECTION COMMUNITY CHURCH

The Connection Community church is a Chesapeake Conference church plant in Laurel, Md., designed to reach and reflect the community; "[It's] not just another place for Adventists to worship," says Pastor Steve Leddy. "We focus on impacting the many ethnic [groups] that surround our church home." Those groups are now becoming members, with ethnicities ranging from Afro-Caribbean American, Hispanic American, Caribbean American, Caucasian and African-American.

**Outreach:** By using traditional outreach methods, such as mailers and door-to-door contact, as well as not-so-traditional methods, such as social media, Connection members have made inroads into their neighborhood.



*Connection Community church members and friends knitted and donated 70 baby hats to the Laurel Regional Medical Center in Laurel, Md., in 2015.*

One untraditional method, “kindness evangelism,” has members performing random acts of kindness. For example, twice a year, they distribute batteries for smoke detectors. “We want the community to know we’re looking out for them,” says Leddy.

This past spring, they hosted their first evangelistic campaign that yielded 10 baptisms, which continues to support the efforts of their Bible worker, Brittany Sherwin.

Leddy says 2016 will be the “year of compassion,” focusing on compassion outreach, such as hosting a banquet for single moms, hosting free car wash and yard work events, and offering to do minor house repair.

**Impact:** “We track impact by the number of disciples we create,” says Leddy. “Making disciples is our number-one goal.” From a core team of 18 Adventists and a few community members, they now average 50 attendees each Sabbath; about two-thirds are recently baptized members or not yet Adventist.

## REDEMPTION CHAPEL

New Jersey Conference’s Redemption Chapel, a church plant in Vineland, was born out of a need to reach and reclaim members who had left the church. They targeted Millennials, second- and third-generation Latinas, and the surrounding community. Through their programming, they have created an inviting atmosphere for the public to know more about Christ.

“We’re not a ‘youth’ church,” clarifies Pastor Paul Rivero. “We need and want people of all generations to worship here. I’m finding, though, that our youth like to serve and are great at reaching others!”

**Outreach:** Redemption instituted a monthly community breakfast (pictured below), which has provided many opportunities to reach neighbors, in particular, the homeless population. The breakfast, which is advertised via word of mouth, is always well attended. Afterward, the community is invited to stay for a seminar to learn more about God and the Redemption church.

The church also implemented a monthly visitation program, where they may worship with and provide services for local residents. This includes services for someone who may be sick and needs help doing chores, or a homebound member who can no longer attend the church. In addition, they use the facility to do a variety of activities and host gatherings for the youth from area Adventist churches.



**Impact:** “The small number of members are being used by God; they feel good about what they are doing,” he says. “And, I feel we’re doing more or equal to a large church. We always have former members, those disengaged for many years, coming to visit. Little things like this keep us going.” And, they continue to seek more outreach methods!



**LEARN MORE:** The Columbia Union Conference Ministries Development team, led by Frank Bondurant, says they’ve been funding homeland projects for seven years. To learn more about the program, visit [columbiaunionvisitor.com/homelandmission](http://columbiaunionvisitor.com/homelandmission).



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## Miracle Temple Adopts New Name, Purpose

The Miracle Temple church in Baltimore recently changed its name to Miracle City church. The change came after church leaders discussed how the church could become more outreach focused.

"I began sensing that a name change would help us better articulate our mission. After all, they say the first impression is the lasting one," shares Pastor David Franklin.

Miracle Temple began in 1968 with 10 charter members who had a passion for service and evangelism. "In those early days, the small group of believers trusted God for the impossible and, day after day, miracles continued to happen in southwest Baltimore," says Franklin.

The official relaunch date is January 30. That day they also launch their 100,000 Touches Outreach Campaign, where they plan to serve 100,000 people in one year. The campaign will begin with 30 consecutive days of service and other church-wide and individual projects throughout the year.

"We feel called to be part of seeing miracles



Miracle City church's new logo helps launch a yearlong campaign to serve 100,000 people.

happen, not simply in a building, but all throughout the city," says Franklin.

## Filipino-American Mission Celebrates Fourth Anniversary

The Filipino-American Oxon Hill Mission in Oxon Hill, Md., recently celebrated their fourth year of existence. The theme for the celebration was "People Preparing for Heaven Through Christ."

The service included a skit by the young people titled "Wake Up! The Lord is Coming," testimonies

of new converts and acknowledgements of community members. Stephen Richardson, Allegheny East Conference (AEC) ministerial director, shared the message "No Pain; No Crown."

The mission began after Joel Rizalono, a missionary from the Philippines, came to live with Pastor Ariel Matira. When Rizalono asked Matira if he was interested in church planting for the Filipino community, he responded affirmatively. After a planning meeting with Ronald Cho, special assistant to Henry J. Fordham, Allegheny East Conference president, and Charles Cheatham, former AEC president, the process began.

At the first service in 2011, there were only four members. Each Sabbath as they moved from location to location, more and more families joined. With the help of literature evangelists led by Rodolfo de Guzman, the membership began to grow and is now at 60 members.

Members continue working on their goals to nurture the faith of their members, evangelize, bring souls to the Lord, transition from mission to company and secure a permanent place of worship.

"We are returning the honor and the glory to the name of the Lord," says Matira.



Members of the Filipino-American Oxon Hill Mission, together with conference officials and supporters, celebrate four years as a mission.

## Prison Ministries Leaders Gather for Training

Nearly 100 individuals recently gathered for a weekend of information and inspiration at Allegheny East Conference's third Prison Ministries training.

Hasan Zarif, a former offender who now serves as a certified work force development professional at Goodwill Industries serving the Hampton and Central Virginia area, and LeRoi Mason, another ex-offender, presented the messages.

As a re-entry specialist, Zarif serves more than 20 prisons and institutions. "In Prison Ministries, our goal is to bring in ... new ideas so we can reach modern-day individuals," shares Zarif. In his sessions, Zarif spoke about how the church can help re-entering citizens.

"We hope that when the [volunteers] go back to their churches, the training and enthusiasm will overflow, and many more will be recruited to do prison ministry work," says Colin Brathwaite, Prison Ministries director.



Henry J. Fordham, AEC president; Hasan Zarif; and Colin Brathwaite join LeRoi Mason.



Presenter Hasan Zarif shares with attendees during the third annual AEC Prison Ministries training.

## Calvary School Reaches Record Enrollment

Enrollment has risen at Calvary Adventist School in Newport News, Va. In the spring of 2010, the kindergarten through eighth-grade school had only 14 students and faced the possibility of closing. This year they enrolled 47 students.

The school board and parents worked collectively to make cosmetic and technology upgrades to the classrooms. They started providing transportation, and they began a hot lunch program. They marketed and recruited in local churches and their community. They also began offering before and afterschool care, opened an early learning center and an annual summer camp.

"We have a dedicated team of teachers and staff that go above and beyond the call of duty to instill a love of learning in our children. Our children are achieving academically and demonstrating Christlike characters," says Trevor Kinlock, pastor of the Calvary church and school board chair.



Fourth-grader Cierra Guilford and fifth-grader Jhamal Nelson are a part of Calvary Adventist School's growing student body.

## Update Your Visitor Mailing Address

Allegheny East members, want to have your name added? Deleted? Have your address changed? Have multiple copies stopped?

Contact: **Your church clerk or Jacqueline O'Bryant**

Allegheny East Conference Membership Clerk  
P.O. Box 266, Pine Forge, PA 19548  
jobryant@myalleghenyeast.com  
(610) 326-4610, ext. 310



## Berean Church Hosts 25th Operation Jesus Feed

For 25 years, members of the Berean church in Uniontown, Pa., have sought to meet the needs of their community. One such endeavor occurs every year on the Sunday before Thanksgiving when the church hosts Operation Jesus Feed. The church serves a big community meal, distributes clothing and food, and provides a worship service. This year the church fellowship hall filled to capacity and Pastor Brandon White invited the overflow inside the church sanctuary, where he led testimonies and special prayer for all in need.

"This event has connected so many in our community," says Carl Rogers, Operation Jesus Feed founder.

"There are individuals from other churches, people from community service organizations and so many others who are not even members of our church that see what



*Member Edna Brown volunteers at Operation Jesus Feed.*



*Carl Rogers serves a community member.*

we are doing and just want to help."

When Rogers asked the attendees if there was anyone who had attended the event for all 25 years, Carloda Miracle was the sole respondent. Others have been coming for five to 10 years, but the majority of the 160 attendees were first-time recipients. "This is a church that would be truly missed if its doors were to close," adds Rogers.

## Cleveland Westside Baptizes Six

Pastor Derrick Thomas recently baptized six people at the Cleveland Westside church in Cleveland, following an intensive evangelistic series led by Jack McCrary, conference Stewardship director. Other individuals are still preparing for baptism.

McCrary delivered "stirring, revitalizing sermons at each nightly meeting," says Thomas, who traveled around the surrounding neighborhoods knocking on doors, inviting community members and transporting attendees to the church. Thomas also gave Bible studies to each baptismal candidate, making sure they learned what Seventh-day Adventists believe. "It was an exciting time for all who attended," he says.

The church hired a contractor to construct a baptismal pool for the occasion—and future use. While he and members are excited about the recent growth, Thomas says, "There are many in this thickly populated area who need Christ. They are tired of sin and crave a better life."

Thomas adds, "Pray that the Spirit of the living God

will fall afresh upon those who are looking heavenward for their eternal salvation and seeking the peace that passes all understanding as Westside takes ministry beyond the walls."



*Jack McCrary, Derrick Thomas and William T. Cox, Allegheny West Conference president, gather after a meeting at the Cleveland Westside church.*



## Charlottesville Church Distributes “Blessing Bags”

Pastor Nathaniel Drew and the Bethany church in Charlottesville, Va., recently started a quarterly Outreach Sabbath. Each quarter, members wear their church T-shirts and casual clothes while ministering in the community.

Church members have collected everyday essentials since the beginning of September 2015. This past fall, they collected and organized items into “blessing bags,” then distributed them to homeless individuals in the city. The blessing bags contained a blessing card with the church’s information and a Scripture verse, personal care items and a pack of granola bars.

Two local television stations covered the event. “Unfortunately, it rained the entire time, but the church was so determined to do the work of God that they weren’t going to let anything stop them,” reports Drew. “They took 50 blessing bags and passed out



47 of them! We had an amazing time during our outreach Sabbath, as we focused on intentionally meeting the needs of people. The biggest reward for us was seeing the smiles on the faces of the individuals [who received the bags].”

## Retreat Sparks “Movement” at Temple Emmanuel

Heart Feeders Ministry, a fall retreat for young adults held at the Allegheny West Conference campgrounds, recently inspired Carlos Jusino, a member of the Temple Emmanuel church in Youngstown, Ohio, to action. Jusino says that God placed a call on his heart to reach out to others so they could avoid some of his past experiences. “I grew up on the streets, wasted so much of my time and almost lost my life,” he shares. “If I knew that there was a better way, if I saw someone my age doing something positive, I would know that I had options and didn’t have to live this life.”

Jusino wanted to provide a safe, spiritual,

atmosphere that would provide young adults in the community a positive example and motivate them to be a force for good and change in their community. To meet this goal, he organized “The Movement,” an event for people committed to changing themselves and their community. Attendees enjoyed poetry, gospel rap, testimonies and refreshments.

Many young adults attended. For some, it was their first time inside a Seventh-day Adventist church.

Jusino reports that one individual even asked to be baptized and wanted to permanently change his life for God—for good. “The next event will be larger and greater, and more people will be exposed to our positive message. Ministry continues to go beyond the walls in AWC,” says Jusino.



Joy Richardson, a member of Temple Emmanuel, serves “mocktails” to guests.



Temple Emanuel members and new friends from the community gather for a night of fellowship.

# THE CHALLENGE

chesapeake conference newsletter

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2016

## Let's Fulfill Our Mission to Reach Out

Reach out. Reach out and touch someone." AT&T used this jingle in the 1980s. After all the years since the campaign was used, I can still hear the tune playing in my mind.

Jesus made it a practice to reach out and touch people, even those considered unclean and condemned. He reached out to the blind, the lepers, the prostitutes, the publicans and those struggling with their faith. And, when Jesus touched someone, their life was changed—they were never the same again.

Jesus still reaches out to people today. Most often, He chooses to reach out through the hands of people like you and me. What an incredible opportunity awaits each one of us as we become the ambassadors for Jesus.

This year we want to reach out to the 5.5-plus million people in the Chesapeake Conference territory and beyond. We're partnering with Shawn Boonstra, speaker/director for the Voice of Prophecy, in this endeavor. We will provide training events for members and pastors to learn more about reaching out to those around us.

There will be a variety of opportunities to connect with our communities. Pastor Boonstra and others will be at camp meeting in June. And, we have planned a fall reaping event for September 30—a coordinated opportunity for each member and church to reach out in their own neighborhood and community.

Jesus Himself tells us, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest" (Matt. 9:37-38, NKJV). He invites us to reach out and be a part of answering that prayer.



**Rick Remmers**  
*President*

## 43 Commit to Christ During Evangelism Campaign

More than 100 churches, including 12 in the Chesapeake Conference, participated in the recent unionwide Caravan of Hope campaign featuring evangelist Alejandro Bullón. Twenty-five people requested Bible studies, four joined the church on profession of faith and 39 were baptized, reports Orlando Rosales, conference Hispanic Ministries coordinator and senior pastor at the Baltimore and Columbia Spanish churches in Maryland.

At the final meeting, as Bullón closed his sermon, he invited those who had not yet made a decision for baptism to come forward for prayer. Jeiny Rivera made her way to the front of the sanctuary.

During the summer, Rivera joined in a few church activities and later started a small Bible study group that meets in her home, says Rosales. She felt the calling from God, but one thing was stopping her—her job. While well paid, she had to work on Saturdays, and the environment challenged a Christian lifestyle.

As she answered the call made by the evangelist, Pastor Rosales asked her, "What is going to happen with your job?"

"I'll quit, because I can't continue with it," replied Rivera. "I trust God will help me find another job because I won't wait any longer."

That evening she asked to be baptized. Her cousin Martha Reyes—in a similar work situation—also decided that evening to leave her job and start a new life in Christ Jesus. See more photos at [facebook.com/chesapeakeconference](https://facebook.com/chesapeakeconference).



*Awaiting baptism, Jeiny Rivera (left) and Martha Reyes stand with Orlando Rosales.*

NEWS

**Rising Sun Builds Community Through Music**

For about 25 years, the Rising Sun church has hosted Gospel Sing, a weekly nondenominational gospel music program. Every Friday evening, musicians, singers and listeners gather at the church tucked in the northeast corner of Maryland to praise God in song, share their testimonies and pray together. Stanley “Bo” Pierce, head elder at the church, acts as emcee for the event, sharing his original compositions and encouraging guests of all ages to use their talents for the glory of God.

Attendance varies each week, ranging from 25 to 50. Most who come are not Seventh-day Adventists, but many consider Rising Sun their church home.

At the end of each meeting, the group sings “Amazing Grace” and joins hands to form a circle and pray together. “It’s very much like having a third church in my district except I don’t preach to them, I sing,” says Ken Coleman, pastor at Rising Sun.



*Church members and community guests lead Gospel Sing at the Rising Sun (Md.) church.*

One new member, Rhea Karlsson, was baptized after attending the musical program and finding a spiritual home at the Rising Sun church. Friends from the Gospel Sing attended her baptism last June.

Trish Tome, a regular attendee, says that the Gospel Sing is a wonderful way to end the week. “It’s a time when you can put all the stress of life behind you and enjoy the peace and companionship of fellow Christians,” she reflects.

**Middletown Valley Marks 25th Anniversary**

The Middletown Valley church recently commemorated its 25th anniversary. Rick Remmers, conference president, was the guest speaker and former Middletown Valley pastors, Ken Denslow and K. Dick Thomas, participated in a celebratory worship service.

Nestled in the countryside of Jefferson, Md., Middletown Valley was founded in 1990 as a church



*Middletown Valley praise team members David Root, Heather Root, Robin Calfo, Paul Bauer and Todd Rozman lead the congregation in song.*

plant under the Frederick church. Along with vital charter members, pastors Denslow and John Kurlinski dedicated their time and efforts to establishing the church.

The congregation continues to focus on growth. Currently there are more than 15,000 people who live within a 5-mile radius of the Middletown Valley church. “God has given us this mission field to reach. I believe, if we are faithful in the harvest, we can reach 1 percent [150 people] in five years,” says Pastor Josh Voigt.—*Jeena Wycliffe-Injety*

**Baltimore White Marsh Spreads Happiness**

Residents of a nearby homeless shelter attended Baltimore White Marsh Adventist School’s recent fall festival with no means to purchase tickets for attractions such as the moon bounce and pony rides.

Several constituent church members quickly decided to cover the costs for the visitors. “It was a joy to watch the happiness on the faces of the children and the mothers as they participated in the different events,” says Rose Gamblin, school principal.



*A young visitor makes friends with the bunnies at the fall festival.*

PHOTOS BY ROSE GAMBLIN, TRISH TOME AND JEENA WYCLIFFE-INJETI

# MOUNTAIN VIEWPOINT

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2016

## He Filled My Cup

**H**ave you ever felt empty? Like God was far away? Have you ever found yourself just going through the motions? Have you ever been so busy that you just couldn't or didn't take time to do anything more than have a quick prayer in the morning as you walked out the door?

I've been there, even as the conference Prayer Ministries director.

Several years ago, our church voted to reopen its school, and I was going to be the teacher. Before long it was August and the school year began. Things were going well until my stepsister died after a fight with breast cancer. The wind was knocked out of my sails, but I managed to finish the year. I spent the summer taking two online classes, pouring over books and doing assignments. The second school year started. Again, the year flew by. Summertime came and again I was in school. I took only one class this time, but was just as busy as ever. School began for a third year and it was off to a great start. Then my mom passed away. Although she had been sick for a long time, her death took me by surprise. Somehow I made it through the next several weeks.

I "celebrated" Christmas with my family in a fog.



*Kathy Pepper leads a class at the Boulevard Adventist Academy in Charleston, W.Va.*

During the next three months, my husband and I struggled with whether to move to another conference. We didn't take the call. A week or so after we made that decision, we began an evangelistic meeting in one of our churches.

In the middle of that series, I had a full-scale school evaluation. Then it was on to Andrews University (Mich.) for our daughter's graduation, and later that same day, we traveled to Pennsylvania for a weeklong school field trip. School ended a couple weeks later amidst several other stressful events.

Despite being busy, I began to catch my breath during camp meeting. A week after camp meeting, my husband and I headed to Texas for the North American Division's ministerial convention and the General Conference Session. That's when I finally realized what kind of shape I was in. I recognized that I was empty. I knew I needed God. I began praying in earnest, and spending quality time with Him. I also began exercising, something I hadn't done regularly in a couple of years. Each day I prioritized an hour of worship and Bible study, and at least a half hour of exercise.

Slowly, my world improved. And months later, I feel more alive than I have in many years. I have been blessed with a closer walk with God than I have ever had. I am losing weight and feeling great. And, most amazing of all, I recently was made aware that, despite my busyness and emptiness, God used me to bless others as I was going through my dark valley.

I praise the Lord for the valleys that help us to grow. Most of all, I praise the Lord for filling my empty cup and making me whole once again.—Kathy Pepper



## Join the Weekly Prayer Line

Join the Mountain View Conference prayer line every Monday 7–8 a.m. The call includes a devotional thought, praises, requests and prayer time. Dial (712) 432-0232 and enter code 891437#.

## Churches, Members Make Prayer a Priority

Mountain View Conference members are discovering many ways to intentionally incorporate prayer into their churches. The men in one church meet for prayer after church each Sabbath. Another group of men from the Moorefield (W.Va.) church pray on the phone at 4:30 a.m. during the first seven days of each month.

The Spencer (W.Va.) church prayer group gathers each week a half hour before Sabbath School. They keep a prayer request book and enter the answers when they are received. An overhead screen is utilized in one church to project prayer requests.

Members at the Buckhannon, Grafton, Weirton and Wheeling (W.Va.) churches form a prayer circle at church each week. Several churches use a prayer box, placing the names of active and inactive members and guests.

Each Sabbath those in attendance pick a name from the box and pray for that individual during the week.

In many churches, prayer chains, email and text messaging are utilized to encourage prayer. Many churches also encourage members to collectively read inspiring books. Another church has a weekly prayer conference call. Still other churches hold 10 Days of Prayer sessions that teach children and adults about prayer.

The ways in which prayer can be incorporated into a church are as varied as the churches themselves. "Is your church a praying church?" asks Kathy Pepper, Prayer Ministries director. "If not, begin today with one of the above ideas; or you might even have an idea of your own. Why not pray about it right now?"

## How Do You Pray in Daily Life?



"I pray every morning and evening. As I read my Bible, I ask God to give me guidance in my reading."—*David Thaxton is a member of the Williamson (W.Va.) church*



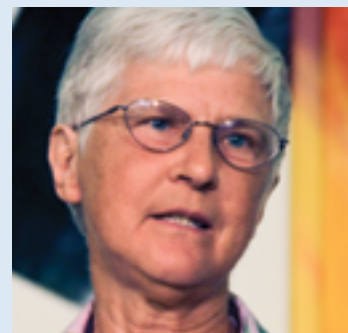
"I talk to the Lord while driving to work. I try to keep my mind upon Him. While I'm in my office, I ask Him what He thinks about certain situations and how to handle them. Really, prayer is constant throughout the day. Jesus is my confidant."—*William (Bill) Hunt is*

*the pastor of the East Pea Ridge church in Huntington, W.Va., and the Point Pleasant (W.Va.) church*

"I use praise, repentance, cleansing (by the Word), asking for the Holy Spirit, eating of the Bread of Life, intercessory prayer and submission to deeper cleansing—each day to guide my worship/prayer. Reaching out to God in this way has changed my walk with Him."—*Kathryn Styer is a member of the Romney (W.Va.) church*



"Years ago I heard a sermon about thanking God for the blessings at the beginning of my prayer time. Things as simple as another day of life, running water, that I can still drive my car—the things I tend to take for granted. Throughout the day, I continue to praise the Lord for all He's done for me."—*Bette Gerath is a member of the Buckhannon (W.Va.) church*



# NEWS NEW JERSEY

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2016

## Churches Baptizes 272 During Caravan of Hope

The Caravan of Hope in New Jersey was a celebration of the evangelistic efforts of local church members and the Personal Ministries and Evangelism departments in 2015. Since January members prayed that the Holy Spirit would guide them in preparing for the event. Jorge Aguero, Personal Ministries director, also urged church members to pray for five friends, have special Friends' Days in their churches and host evangelistic campaigns. This work resulted in hundreds of people "prepared ahead of time for the harvest and ready to make the decision for baptism," says Aguero.

The caravan made six stops in New Jersey: Newark, Vineland, New Brunswick, Paterson, North New Jersey and Andover. Fifty-one Spanish churches, 21 pastors and hundreds of members participated by leading Bible studies and bringing friends to the evangelistic and Caravan of Hope meetings. Pathfinders also helped direct parking lot traffic and ushered in attendees.

As a result of the yearlong effort, 272 people joined the church, and many more will continue studying the



*Diogo Alexandre Batista Santos and Gina Perez, members of the Mission Caleb company in Bound Brook, celebrate his baptism.*



*Crowds gather at the Vineland (top) and Jersey City Caravan of Hope stops.*

Bible. "God has been making miracles in New Jersey! We thank Pastor Rubén Ramos for the invitation to be part of this event with no precedent prepared by the Columbia Union. We thank Pastor Alejandro Bullón, who was used by the Holy Spirit and brought beautiful messages," says Aguero. "A special thanks to all the preachers and singers who participated in the caravan, and to all the New Jersey Conference pastors who worked hard for this event."

Gina Perez, a member of the Mission Caleb group in Bound Brook, was one of the members who helped prepare for the meetings. In her free time, Perez studies the Bible with friends from school. "I enjoy sharing the Word of God and helping other people know the beauty of Christ. My dad passed away about one year ago. He has left a good example of following Christ and keeping a good connection through prayer and the Word of God," she shares. Because of these efforts, her friend Diogo Alexandre Batista Santos joined the church during the New Brunswick Station meeting.



*Raul Rivero, pastor of the Vineland church, gets ready to baptize Fernando Hernandez at the Vineland Caravan of Hope stop.*

## First Children's Festival Brings Families Together

To celebrate Children's Ministries Emphasis Month, the New Jersey Conference Children's Ministries department prepared a children's festival for families at the Tranquil Valley Retreat Center in Andover. The admission for this event was an item of nonperishable food or a clean toy that the youth department later delivered to low-income families as part of the Compassion Christmas initiative. Because of the attendees' donations, about 20 families received a Compassion Christmas Box.



*Esther, played by Luisa Macena, a member of the Robbinsville church, and Moses' mother, played by Jessica Branda, a member of the Wayne church, flank a group of members and visitors from the Phillipsburg church.*



*David, played by Sebastian Campos, a member of the Union City Spanish church, and Moses, played by Lorenzo Sereno, a member of Browns Mills church, took photographs with the children.*

The festival started with a show of DoDad Lab, where the kids learned about science and God. Families then had the option to choose among 30 different activities, including crafts, games, a dunking tank, a photo booth, hay rides and bouncing balls. Children also met and took photographs with Bible characters, such as David, Moses, Solomon, Esther and Moses' mother.

PHOTOS BY RICKY MEDINA AND JORGE PILLOO

## Youth Worship and Pray at Event

Hundreds of youth and teens from around New Jersey traveled to the Lake Nelson School in Piscataway to participate in the first 2Pray JCI Youth event. Attendees left the event with "the assurance of God's presence," says Paulo Macena, New Jersey Conference youth director.

The conference worship team started the event by leading song service. Attendees then separated into small groups for discussions followed by a sermon from James Black, North American Division youth director.

Rosselin Morales, a member of the Atlantic City church, traveled two hours to attend. She was touched by the program, especially by Pastor Black's sermon. "I loved the sermon," she says. "Everything the pastor said came directly to me. I can use that in my daily life by trying to pray more. I think all of us should work on



that, to have a closer connection with God, and try to get that goal to be together forever."

The program continued in the afternoon and ended after pastors anointed hundreds of youth.



## Conference Sharpens Vision, Mission for 2016

The Ohio Conference leadership team praises God for all He did for Ohio in 2015 and looks forward to what He will do in 2016. The conference has been through difficult times, but the leaders praise God for the turnaround in their financial health.

The conference began in January with a focus on prayer, and will remain focused on prayer throughout this year. “God is good and He has answered the prayers of His people in mighty ways,” says Ron Halvorsen Jr., president (pictured). “It is with eager anticipation that we begin this new year with Him. We started it out right with a focus on prayer in January and will remain focused on prayer throughout this year. It is exciting to have come through a mighty storm and now be able to turn our attention to the work of sharpening our vision and the mission for God’s cause here in Ohio.”

In this new chapter for Ohio, the leadership team will focus on the “four E’s” by seeking to equip, engage, educate and evangelize. Below is an outline of their plan:

**Equip:** This year we want to focus on constant surrender to the Holy Spirit, allowing God’s Spirit to use us as tools in loving those within our immediate sphere. Leaders will be intentional about equipping



members for ministry. We will spend resources, energy, talents and time to equip God’s people for His service. We often use the phrase, “every member a minister.” With the Holy Spirit’s direction and power, this can become a reality.

**Engage:** We commit to working together, prayerfully seeking to engage with people for Jesus, asking ourselves how we can form holy and healing relationships that lead people to Christ and foster healthy, Christian communities. Our primary focus will be on finding ways to better engage youth and young adults within our church, as well as those not yet a part.

**Educate:** We will strive to find ways to have more of our Ohio young people receive an Adventist, Christian education. We will focus on both elementary and secondary education. The goal is to strengthen our ministry to young people and our schools. We have learned much from our journey these last 18 months—this will aid us in the future.

**Evangelize:** By God’s grace, we will find more ways to fulfill the gospel commission given to us by Christ Himself. We will prayerfully look at the territory God has called us to reach and be serious about reaching it for Jesus. This word is a reminder of the outward focus we need here in Ohio.

“This will be achieved not by our wit or wisdom, might or power, plans or programs, but by God’s Spirit,” says Halvorsen. “This is only a start, but begin in Christ we have. We look forward to where God will lead in this new year!”

Read more about upcoming plans at [ohioadventist.org](http://ohioadventist.org).



## Lay Leader Training and Equipping Continues

Last spring the Ohio Conference began a lay pastoral assistant (LPA) program for local church elders that enables lay leaders to receive an LPA credential through the conference after completing the course. This training continued last fall when Pastor Buz Menhardt of the Potomac Conference's New Market (Va.) church taught program attendees practical pastoral skills, ranging from conducting funerals and communion services to how to make hospital and home visits to members. Menhardt instructed through interactive exercises, and he emphasized personal connections, studying God's Word and praying together. "I believe it will only help our churches in Ohio for the local church leaders to come together for training and spiritual growth," says Ron Halvorsen Jr., president.

The LPA program continued in January, when special presenter Shawn Boonstra, speaker/director of the Voice of Prophecy, taught attendees how to give Bible studies and lead evangelistic visitations.



*Participants in the LPA training program pray together for spiritual renewal and growth before returning to their respective churches and districts.*

For more information or to register for the program, contact your local pastor or Oswaldo Magaña at (740) 397-4665.

## Hamilton Members Lay Wreath for Unknown Soldier

During a November 2014 visit to Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia, Hamilton church members Leanne Duman, Judy Northcutt and Dianne Northcutt witnessed a formal, public wreath laying at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The unknown soldiers laid to



*Hamilton church members Joshua Watson and Melvin Spangenberg lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier as Dianne Northcutt and Leanne Duman look on.*

rest at the tomb represent all missing and unknown service members who made the ultimate sacrifice—giving their lives and their identities to protect the nation's freedoms. The cemetery receives dozens of requests daily to participate in these services, but only a small percentage are selected.

After a discussion, members submitted a request to lay a wreath on the tomb. This past fall, the Hamilton church was finally chosen.

Church leaders chose Staff Sgt. Air Force Reserve Melvin Spangenberg; Sgt. E5 Joshua Watson; Leanne Duman; and Dianne Northcutt to participate. Several others joined the group to witness the event.

"In my 80 years of life, never was I so humbled in being given the honor to lay a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier," says Spangenberg.

Joshua Watson, a Purple Heart recipient, says, "This was the greatest honor and most humbling experience of my life. I still get chills just thinking about it."

Duman adds, "Being so young and having the opportunity to participate in an honor ceremony with my mother and my grandfather, three generations, is beyond words. I feel so very blessed. It was very humbling. God is good!"

# Pennsylvania Pen

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2016

## Churches Join Together to Share Christ

Last year the Pennsylvania Conference attempted a monumental goal: for thousands of members to show the love of Jesus through the Faith for Families initiative. Tim Bailey, director of leadership and spiritual growth, worked together with the pastoral team to create an evangelistic outreach that began with a Faith for Families day in the early fall. More than 1,100 members joined with conference staff, teachers, pastors and students from Blue Mountain Academy, going door to door across Philadelphia and Reading with literature and invitations for Bible studies and small groups.

The Hispanic pastoral team worked with Bailey and Gabriel Montalvo, Hispanic Ministries coordinator, and church members to create small Bible study groups with community members, family and friends. Several churches offered programs on growing relationships with community members interested in learning more. The Hampden Heights church in Temple even offered several practical seminars, including one on finances.

The Faith for Families initiative for 2015 culminated with evangelistic rallies. Hispanic churches across Pennsylvania and Reading joined evangelist Alejandro Bullón and the Columbia Union Conference's



*Gabriel Montalvo, Pennsylvania Conference Hispanic coordinator, and Pastor Saud Elias, prepare to baptize Teresa Pinto at the Maranatha Hispanic church.*



*More than 400 attend the Caravan of Hope meeting at the Maranatha Hispanic church in Philadelphia, where Alejandro Bullón preached and 51 chose baptism.*

Caravan of Hope at the Maranatha Hispanic church in Philadelphia, where more than 400 people listened as Bullón shared the Word of God. Sixty-five people were baptized, and 37 more are preparing for baptism.

The Hispanic churches began a follow-up series of 18 Bible studies and are praying for 150 small groups. They are praying for more than 300 baptisms in 2016.

Carlton Byrd, Breath of Life speaker/director, presented a one-day evangelism event for the English-speaking churches that included a concert with Cleveland-based singer Glen Burks and the Pine Forge Academy Choir from Pine Forge, Pa. Two people were baptized during the event and more than 15 are preparing for baptism.

"We are excited with the results of this endeavor, which has far exceeded our expectations," shares Bailey. "Our ministry team is already working and planning for this year's Faith for Families event that will be held in a different part of our state. We are excited about sharing the gospel with those who the Holy Spirit is already preparing and drawing."

## Pittsburgh Ministry, Simple Church Celebrate Baptisms

Pastor John Kent first met Teriann Fife when she attended the Carnegie Simple Church's St. Patrick's Day outreach event in Carnegie, near Pittsburgh. She was their only attendee. Trapped in a physically and emotionally abusive relationship, Fife, and her daughter, Haylee, did not visit the storefront church and outreach center for another 14 months, but God slowly and faithfully drew her back.

"We have been amazed at her determination to seek God and His solutions to her life problems," shares Kent. "When we approached her about preparing for baptism, there was not a bit of hesitation. 'Yes, I want to be baptized! I want to follow Jesus and be a member of the church,' she said. We are excited that she is on the journey to becoming a fully devoted disciple of Jesus."

Ron Shutt, another recent convert to the church, had a checkered past full of alcohol, fights, jail time and mental illness. But, along his journey, he began to turn away from his former habits and toward Jesus.

Kent baptized Fife and Shutt last fall. A little more than a month later, Shutt died. "For Ron, baptism was just another step in his growing walk with God," Kent says as he remembers Shutt's commitment to God.



*Pastor John Kent prepares to baptize Teriann Fife and Ron Shutt at the Carnegie Simple Church near Pittsburgh.*

"He loved to speak blessing and encouragement into the lives of members and attendees during the weekly Simple Church service, and he is greatly missed."  
—Belinda Kent

## Grace Outlet Hosts First Trunk-or-Treat

The smell of popcorn and the excitement of more than 400 children filled the air last October as members of the Grace Outlet church in Reading held their first Trunk-or-Treat event. Church members and the staff of the nearby Lauer's Park Elementary School



*Sharon Hand (left) of Lauer's Park Elementary School and her team invite children to choose a used book.*

worked together to host a family friendly alternative to trick-or-treating.

Members filled the school parking lot with open trunks revealing decorated, non-scary themes. At one trunk, children could feed a giant penguin with bean bag fish. They could test their observation skills at the "I Spy" trunk. An exotic Bedouin tent trunk featured a lemon tree that produced lemonade, while a Penske truck held Dr. Seuss characters.

Volunteers distributed bright orange treat bags and a Trunk-or-Treat passport that invited the kids on a scavenger hunt. If the kids collected four stamps on their passport, they received an extra treat as they exited. They received stamps for finding the school principal, who was dressed as a scarecrow; listening to Pastor Kris Eckenroth tell a parable about pumpkins; and for signing a poster card for a soldier, made by students at the Simplicity Christian School in Allentown. Volunteers also invited the children to sign the giant thank you cards for soldiers and donate candy for veterans and active military members as they visited trunks.—Denise Reinwald

# Potomac People

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2016

## English Camp Meeting Suspended in 2016

In November the executive committee voted to suspend the 2016 English camp meeting for one year and conduct an assessment. There was no discussion, interest or comments suggesting it be discontinued. Committee members value this event. Surveys indicate that, of the 34,000 conference members, an average of 600-800 attend English camp meeting during the week and 2,500 attend on Sabbath. The desire is to study the current practice of camp meeting and bring a recommendation that will preserve and grow its celebration of mission and connection.

“A committee has been appointed to understand camp meeting in the context of mission and with clarification from Ellen White’s instruction, and review the financial investment within the context of mission,” says Bill Miller, president. “Everything we do and every dollar we spend should help fulfill our mission. We will explore creative ideas to enhance the camp meeting experience, research effective models of camp meeting that are working elsewhere, and find ways to connect new generations to the faith and the Potomac family.”

Members are encouraged to complete a survey at [pcsda.org/campmeetingsurvey](http://pcsda.org/campmeetingsurvey). Progress reports will also be given.

Through every action, prayer and purposeful movement, the leadership of the Potomac Conference remains committed to the mission and vision of growing healthy, disciple-making churches by reaching people for Christ.

Hispanic camp meeting, which has already been reassessed and organized, will be held as scheduled, June 17-19.

## Arise Hosts Commemorative Service

Members from the Arise church in Silver Spring, Md., recently honored Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month by holding a commemorative event to foster a way for couples to find hope amidst loss.

“We’re a pretty tight congregation, so we’re often aware of what is going on in each other’s lives,” says church member Sylvia Urrutia. “Several of the couples, including my husband and me, have had miscarriages. We began to realize how common this was—one in four pregnancies. It’s a big loss, and we wanted to find ways to heal.”

Several months before the commemorative event, two guest speakers shared their experience with a miscarriage. “They shared their story, but also the promises they felt like God had given them,” says Urrutia. “Their message was encouraging—and concentrated on how God allows things to happen and on hope and restoration.”

At the service, those same guest speakers came back to share more on their journey to healing, and one husband shared a poem he had written after his wife’s miscarriage. Couples wrote what was on their hearts, a verse or words they felt they needed to say, tied the card to a candle and lit the wick in remembrance of the infant and in faith of God’s promises.

“It was a beautiful ceremony,” says Urrutia. “People felt like they were able to begin a bigger journey of healing, and they felt support by us all being able to share our own experiences.” Urrutia indicates that church members are planning to make the commemoration an annual event with more community involvement.



*At a commemorative service, couples at Arise church in Silver Spring, Md., write a piece of remembrance to the infants they lost.*

# Potomac People

## Couples “Hooked” on Retreat

After a miscarriage, a stillbirth and dealing with marriage troubles, Danielle Franks says she was struggling with her Christian experience. “I went through a period of about three years when I did not pray,” she shares. “I didn’t feel like a Christian anymore, let alone a Seventh-day Adventist. My parents had invited my husband, Audie, and me to a couples retreat to help our marriage, as well as for spiritual healing. We finally agreed to go, though, to be honest, I was expecting it to be a man-bashing event.”

Instead, Franks found a place to pray for the first time in years. “We were immersed in a loving and spiritual atmosphere the second we got [to Camp Blue Ridge in Montebello, Va.]. The love, openness and acceptance of the other couples drew me to reach out to God. My husband, Audie, was graciously and patiently at my side. It really changed me.”

The couple celebrated these changes two years later through a private vow renewal ceremony with Franks’ parents, Desiree and Tony Soto, and long-time retreat coordinators, Jo and Annie Benedetti and Scott and Melissa Meyerhoffer, acted as their witnesses. “In many ways, that has been the real beginning of our marriage,” says Franks.

Seven years later, the Franks continue to make the 11-hour drive from Massachusetts to attend each year,



*Tony and Desiree Soto, Melissa Meyerhoffer, Annie and Joe Benedetti enjoy a couples retreat at Camp Blue Ridge in Montebello, Va.*

picking up the Sotos in New Jersey on their way to Montebello, Va. Neither couple is a Potomac member. “I read about the retreat in the *Visitor* about 20 years ago,” recalls Soto. “Tony and I were celebrating our 20th anniversary and decided a retreat like that could benefit any couple. We met the friendliest of people, and the marriage presentation was outstanding. We were hooked!”

The Franks agree and say something truly terrible would have to happen to keep them away. “We’ve learned so many valuable things over the years. One tool we learned is the ‘knee-to-knee.’ You sit next to each other, with your knees physically touching and you talk out your problems until you’ve reached some sort of agreement, resolution or compromise. Having that physical contact makes you realize that these are real feelings from another person, not just words. It’s amazing the difference it makes in a conversation.”

This year, the Meyerhoffers are stepping down from their long-time posts as coordinators, but the Benedettis are already planning the next retreat, which will be held at Camp Blue Ridge, October 7-9. “Without a doubt, the Lord continues to lead this event,” says Annie Benedetti. “He continues to answer ‘yes’ in very big ways for us. We thank God for the opportunity to go, and look forward to many more.”

Visit [pcsda.org/couplesretreat](http://pcsda.org/couplesretreat) to read more about the retreat.



*Annie and Joe Benedetti, Glenda and Carl Ashlock, DeeDee and Audie Franks, and Bertha and Domingko Saladier celebrate after the Franks’ vow renewal ceremony.*

PHOTO BY DESIREE SOTO



## New ACT Prep Classes Benefit Students

Blue Mountain Academy (BMA) leaders are continually pursuing multiple avenues to help prepare their students for academic success, now and in the future.

To help meet this goal, Kerene Anglin Ogot, learning specialist and guidance counselor; Jennifer Cook, English teacher; and John Musselman, mathematics teacher, saw the need for ACT prep sessions and decided to take action. Ogot wanted to encourage students to prepare for the possible content of the tests and learn test-taking strategies.

Musselman was a National Merit finalist and received full tuition coverage at Andrews University (Mich.) because of his ACT and SAT scores. "The format of the ACT or SAT is one that is not often used in a typical classroom setting," says Musselman. "During a prep class, we can only review so much. We have to assume that they have seen enough math to be successful in the topic. What we focus on instead are things such as timing strategies, scoring and practicing multiple-choice questions."



Junior Jemuel Curameng studies in class.

Teachers host prep sessions on scheduled Sunday afternoons, multiple times throughout the school year. Thirty students attended the last session.

## Students Earn College Credits in New Program

Blue Mountain Academy currently offers students the option of enrolling in advanced placement, advanced/dual-enrollment and honors classes.

Students who maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 and maintain a grade of C (73 percent) or better at the end of each semester in the course may earn high school and college credits simultaneously while attending BMA. "Blue Mountain Academy understands that there are students who desire to get a jump-start on their future education while saving money on college tuition," says Diana Engen, registrar. "By currently offering five general education course classes, which total 29 hours of dual enrollment credits, we hope to enable our students to become better prepared for their college careers."

Senior Ashley Hernandez recently enrolled in the dual-enrollment program and received a scholarship from nearby Reading Area Community College because of her outstanding GPA. This scholarship helps cover Hernandez's enrollment credit tuition

while at BMA. Hernandez hopes to attend Walla Walla University (Wash.) next year and pursue mechanical or civil engineering.

Currently more than half of the student body maintain an overall GPA that places them on high honors, honors or the Principal's List.



## Students Score High on Standardized Tests

This past fall, Highland View Academy (HVA) students took the Iowa Assessment Test to measure their retained knowledge in the core subject areas of English, reading, math, science and social studies. The test measures a student's ability to decode and assimilate the formal education deemed important in today's society.

When the results returned, 98 percent of HVA students met or exceeded grade-level expectations. Even better, 28 percent of the students ranked in the 85th percentile or higher, and 17 percent of the students ranked in the top 5 percentile nationally. Riverside Publishing compares HVA with other Seventh-day Adventist and nonpublic schools, as the expectations, norms and test result outcomes for private and parochial high schools are typically higher than public schools.

In 18 of the 24 normed areas tested, HVA students' test results were one full standard deviation above expectations. "This outcome indicates that the students come from supportive homes, have developed into willing learners and benefit from quality and



Seventeen percent of the student population scored in the top 5 percentile on the Iowa Assessment Test.

effective teaching," says Mick Hutchinson, principal. "National testing is just one small way to assess our overall program, and HVA's faculty and staff always remember that each student is priceless in the eyes of God. We are ever mindful that 'higher than the highest human thought can reach is God's ideal for His children'" (*Education*, p. 18).

## Class of 2016 Hosts Annual Spelling Bee

The HVA freshman class sponsors had an idea for a fundraiser three years ago that has become a tradition for the Class of 2016. Every year the class hosts a spelling bee for students in grades 4-12. Students from

as far away as Maryland's Eastern Shore travel to HVA to test their spelling skills against peers from around the region.

The best spellers in three age categories earn prizes. The most exciting of these prizes is a scholarship to HVA for seventh- and eighth-graders. Educators and writers from the community, along with members of the Class of 2016, judge the contestants. Elijah Nacchio ('17), winner of the ninth- through 12th-grade category, entered the competition only because his friend joined. "I was so nervous that my stomach hurt," he says. "I was surprised that I won."

Class sponsor Lori Zerne adds, "Everyone who attends, competes and runs the event enjoys the blend of fun entertainment and academic skill that the evening provides."

As the Class of 2016 moves on to college next year, a new class will host the spelling bee, which has become a highly anticipated annual event for participants and student hosts alike.



Seniors Kaitlin Tiller and Andelena Jackson assist Jackie Benton, a teacher at Mt. Aetna Adventist School in Hagerstown, Md., as she gives a student a word to spell.



# Spotlight

## on Spencerville

*Highlights from Spencerville Adventist Academy*  
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2016

### Art Students Compete in Logo Design Contest

Spencerville Adventist Academy's (SAA) high school art students recently competed to see whose logo would be selected in a logo design competition. Last summer while Nancy Newball-Rivera, a graphic designer and art teacher at SAA, was vacationing at Camp Lawroweld (Maine), Mark Tamaleaa, Youth Ministries director for the Northern New England Conference, asked if Newball-Rivera could design a logo for their camp. The logo would be printed on the camp's T-shirts and other materials. "How about I have my high school art class design it, as part of a logo design competition?" she asked. And, that's what

they did. Students also competed for a cash prize.

Newball-Rivera, a graduate from the Pratt Institute in New York City, was thrilled to teach her students the process of logo design. They started by analyzing widely recognized, successful logos, studying the psychology of color, and sending Tamaleaa a questionnaire to learn his requirements and preferences for the logo. The logo was to allude to things Camp Lawroweld is known for, such as the lake, the lodge, the mountains and moose.

Autumn Uhrig, a 14-year-old freshman, won the competition. "It was interesting thinking about all the little pieces you don't usually think about, like how color affects people and how a small shape can change a whole logo," she says.

Sophomore Kevin Braun submitted several logo design options and came in second. He says, "I learned how to design simple but effective logos."

Newball-Rivera says, "I am so incredibly proud of my students. Any number of them could have won the competition—they were that strong. But in the end, Uhrig's logo, with the moose within the mountains, and the blue writing for the lake, captured the essence of Camp Lawroweld."

For their next project, high school art students are designing social justice posters for a cause they feel strongly about. "Art should be relevant," says Newball-Rivera. "You can change someone's mind with an image. Changing someone's mind is the first step to changing the world, one stroke at a time."



The three top place art students—Kevin Braun ('18), Matthew Kittleson ('18) and Autumn Uhrig ('19)—show their logo designs.

### New Members Inducted Into National Honor Society

Spencerville Adventist Academy's Chapter of the National Honor Society (NHS) recently held its induction ceremony for new members. This year 20 students were inducted, bringing the school's total to 38 active members. Sophomore, junior and senior students who meet the cumulative GPA requirement of 3.5 or above are eligible; and inductees are chosen for the excellence they exhibit in areas of scholarship, character, leadership and service. "This was one of the largest groups we've ever inducted into the NHS, and I'm so proud of the service, character and leadership each of them has displayed. They will each bring

their own unique abilities to our chapter," says Nathan Hess, NHS sponsor.



# SPRING VALLEY ACADEMY<sub>.ORG</sub>

# CONNECTIONS

## INSPIRING STUDENTS TO KNOW FOLLOW SHARE JESUS

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2016

### NEWS

#### Students Collect 5,000 Pounds of Food

Spring Valley Academy students recently collected more than 5,000 pounds of food for the Good Neighbor House (GNH) in Dayton, Ohio. GNH provides dental, medical, nutritional and educational services to low-income communities in Montgomery County.

This donation offers great encouragement, says Marcia Ehlers, assistant director of Human Services and Outreach. "It shows the heart of love that they would think of those in the community, not just focus on themselves."



*Fifth-graders Toby Cambigue, Isaac Collier-Freed, Mason Burns and Jaden Haywood organize canned goods they helped collect for the GNH.*

#### School Wins Community Blood Center Grant

Spring Valley Academy recently received a \$1,000 grant from the Community Blood Center, a blood bank that serves both the Miami, Ohio, and Whitewater, Ind., valleys. SVA won the grant for having the highest percentage of students participating in school blood drives in the 2014-15 school year. SVA had only 80 eligible donors, but supported the school's three blood drives with 100 percent participation.

Last year 40 percent of graduating seniors also earned and wore red cords at graduation. Students must donate blood at least three times during high school to earn a red cord. Trevor Ross, science/math teacher and school safety committee chair, says the students showed a commitment to community



*Kate Baldwin, vice principal; senior Belissa Etienne; and Trevor Ross display SVA's leadership grant award.*

service, "which demonstrates their responsibility in giving blood."

#### Senior Named Commended Student

The 2016 National Merit Scholarship Program recently named senior Peter Thomsen a commended student. The program recognized about 34,000 students throughout the nation for their exceptional academic promise. These students placed among the top 5 percent of more than 1.5 million juniors who entered the 2016 competition by taking the 2014 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®).



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# SHENANDOAH VALLEY ACADEMY HAPPENINGS

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2016

[www.shenandoahvalleyacademy.org](http://www.shenandoahvalleyacademy.org)

## Open a Door Giving Exceeds \$220,000

Since launching the SVA Alumni Association Open a Door campaign during the 2013 Alumni Weekend, Shenandoah Valley Academy (SVA) alumni have raised more than \$220,000 in tuition assistance for qualifying students. Alumni committees formed in early 2013 worked with administration to revitalize the alumni association and develop a plan to raise tuition assistance for current students.

“Known for their abiding loyalty, SVA alumni have a heart for our young people,” explains principal Dale Twomley. “They remember struggles to pay tuition and those who helped them. The alumni association-driven campaign to raise tuition assistance dollars through Open a Door means students are learning and thriving on campus today.”

Tony Williams ('82), a committee member who helped recruit volunteers and SVA board member, is president of the independent GHRoW Foundation that raises scholarship funds for SVA students who meet academic and leadership criteria. He recalls, “It was a blessing to partner with alumni to provide young people the life-changing opportunities I was afforded at SVA. It was [also] a blessing to provide all alumni the opportunity to join us in giving.”

Developed and promoted by volunteers Louise Phanstiel ('76), who is now an SVA board member; Janel Ware ('86); and Carin Bata ('96), the campaign



*Students like Sierra Anderson, freshman, benefit from the generous donations of alumni.*

launched as the alumni weekend offering appeal.

“The increase in alumni weekend giving over three years related to Open a Door is amazing!” says Ware. “The immediate response tripled prior alumni weekend offering totals. [We] quadrupled giving the subsequent year, and overall weekend giving was \$36,000 in 2015. It’s incredible how the open hearts of alumni are making an impact to help our students,” adds Ware, who subsequently served as alumni president and SVA board member, accepting the position of director of development and alumni relations in July 2015.

The follow-up appeal to alumni after alumni weekend resulted in numerous gifts and ongoing commitments, some of which will be honored into a fourth year. The Class of 2013 set a precedent for making the graduation offering call an appeal for Open a Door, and established a student tuition assistance endowment as a class gift. In 2014 Open a Door received a considerable boost when then principal John Wagner ('57) threw support behind the campaign, including a sky-dive to raise tuition dollars, which resulted in \$15,000 of the larger total.

Twomley expresses appreciation: “Thank you to alumni and everyone who is giving to significantly impact the ability of young people to attend SVA. There is no greater investment you can make than in the Christ-centered education of a young person.”



*Gifts to Shenandoah Valley Academy benefit all students, like Amaia Belgrave, junior; McKenzie Hanon, freshman; and Nick deSilva, freshman.*

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Phone: (540) 740-3161 ■ [shenandoahvalleyacademy.org](http://shenandoahvalleyacademy.org) ■ Principal, Dale Twomley ■ Editor, Janel Haas Ware

## Engineering Club Elevates STEM Program to New Heights

This school year Takoma Academy (TA) enhanced their STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) program with a new National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) Jr. chapter. The chapter is designed to inspire high schoolers to pursue STEM-related fields in college. TA students' STEM interests range from mechanical engineering to biomedical engineering, and biology to computer graphic design. Sponsor Sheri Thorn ('09), an aerospace engineer at NASA, uses these interests to plan activities and trips to demonstrate STEM career options and prepare the students for college and future careers.

Each month Thorn selects a different topic to explore. In September the students studied civil engineering. As one of the activities, students built bridges that supported a specific amount of weight and other given requirements.

This past October, the TA NSBE Jr. chapter focused on aerospace engineering. Students learned about the dynamics of flying airplanes and launching rockets into space. More than 30 members also visited the NASA Goddard Space Flight Center (Md.). Participants joined a discussion panel with several NASA Goddard employees who work in STEM fields, asking many questions and listening to discussions on how to accomplish their future scientific goals. The students also saw the current progress on the James Webb



NSBE Jr. chapter members develop an invention at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office in Alexandria, Va.

Space Telescope mission and some of the test facilities at NASA.

In November students built vision boards to show their goals and aspirations for the future. They also attended a STEM Education Expo coordinated by Ten80 Education at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (Va.). The expo provided the opportunity to learn about engineering and how to become innovators and how to successfully pitch their ideas to others.

The TA NSBE Jr. chapter has grown from 15 to 36 members for the 2015-16 school year. The group is currently raising funds to purchase engineering hardware, and also looking for individuals to help teach CAD (computer aided design) software and computer programming (coding) so the students will be well versed in all types of engineering.

Next semester members hope to attend the NSBE national convention in Boston and visit the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), one of the top engineering schools in the world.

**Correction:** In the November *TA Today*, we inadvertently included the wrong Web address for Darius Bridges' website. Visit [myppups.com](http://myppups.com) for more information about his book.



Members of Takoma Academy's NSBE Jr. chapter and robotics club gather at the school.



## Internships

At Washington Adventist University, we are 80 percent of the way to making the completion of an internship a graduation requirement for every student. Academic programs are recognizing the value of internships and are adjusting their program



**Weymouth Spence**

requirements to include internships. This requirement provides an opportunity for students to fine-tune teamwork skills, to experiment with jobs that match academic and personal interests, and the chance to develop industry-specific skills while enjoying the advantages of a liberal arts education. This is possible due to our advantageous location in the world's capital and being able to build relationships with local agencies and churches that support the growth and career development of our students. Internships help students become viable, experienced job applicants when seeking employment after graduation. In fact, many employers consider internship experience in the hiring process, and often look to their own interns as the best potential candidates for full-time positions.

This is Washington Adventist University.

—Weymouth Spence

## Social Work Professor Guiding Students to Become School, Community Leaders

Melissa Henley, professor and director of field education in the Department of Social Work at Washington Adventist University (WAU), joined the department two years ago. In that time, she has wholeheartedly devoted her time to teaching in the classroom, planning on- and off-campus events and mentoring students.

“I love social work, and I love working with students, helping them to become agents for change. My goal is to encourage and aid them in affecting change first on our WAU campus and then to branch out into our community,” says Henley, also the advisor for the WAU Social Work Club.

“Through a handful of events, about 30 undergraduate students in the social work program, have been making a difference,” says Henley. In October 2015, during National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, students partnered with the New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church in Gaithersburg, Md., to collect new or lightly used purses, fill them with personal hygiene items, and include a “note of empowerment.” Forty-four purses were donated to the Betty Ann Krahnke Center in Montgomery County, Md., the primary domestic violence shelter for women and children.

In September 2015, students recognized National Suicide Prevention Month by placing a sign on themselves relaying a provocative statement that someone considering suicide might be thinking. For example, a sign might read, “I hate my life.” “Often, someone is suffering in silence, and this exercise helps us to give a voice and recognition to what someone might be going through,” says Henley. The exercise was followed by a short public discussion about suicide and what resources are available to students and others both on- and off-campus.

Henley is also helping her students engage in civic activities and helps them in promoting their own events. For example, two WAU graduates serve along with her as board members for the D.C. metro chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. Also, at the request of one of WAU graduates, she was invited to speak at an annual conference entitled “Blossom Like A Flower.”

“I enjoy teaching social work concepts in the classroom and watching my students grab hold of the concepts and theories. However, my greatest joy comes from seeing them apply what they have learned in real-life situations that help others. They are becoming amazing social workers,” says Henley.



Brian White, '14 alumni, Janelle Walwyn, '14 alumna, Ruth Jorge, '15 graduate student, Melissa Henley, Director for Field Education for the Department of Social Work, Whitney Syriaque, '15 alumna, Jazmine Walls, '18 undergraduate student, Leland Pittman, '14 alumni.

# KETTERING COLLEGE



*Kettering College students, faculty, and staff gather to share a meal together, interact, and listen to a devotional.*



## New weekly ministry event meets in people's homes for worship, food, friendship

**By Jessica Beans**

A new Friday evening worship program called the Collective provides Kettering College students of any denomination with a relaxed, informal opportunity for spiritual growth, social interaction, and faith sharing.

This event is different from previous Friday evening worship programs hosted by the college because it is held in people's homes, creating a personal atmosphere where students can sing, converse, and share a meal together. Hosts have included college employees as well as Kettering Health Network executives.

"I think meeting in someone's home each week is awesome," said Ryan Lafave, a human biology student. "I have been able to get to know so many people that

I wouldn't have before—other students, interns, employees, and executives. It has definitely grown my community."

Chaplain Steve Carlson explained how he wanted to try something different. "We have found that meeting in homes has created a deeper sense of community and has made our vespers program more appealing to those who might not feel comfortable with a traditional setting like a chapel or church," Carlson said.

This event is organized through the Kettering College campus ministries department, but the discussions and worship talks are mostly student-led.

To stay up to date on all the things the campus ministries department is doing visit [kc.edu/campus-ministries](http://kc.edu/campus-ministries)



**KC.EDU**

# YOUR HEALING MINISTRY

KETTERING ADVENTIST HEALTHCARE NEWSLETTER

## Growing New Roots

I am amazed at the unexpected twists and turns that the Lord has led my family and I through. Born and raised in Southern California, I graduated from Glendale Adventist Academy. Eventually I was led to Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska where I studied accounting and finance and met and married my beautiful wife Duska. After graduating, we moved to Florida where I was privileged to serve a sister healthcare organization in various financial leadership roles for 13 exciting years.

As with most families, priorities evolve over time. With two young sons at home, we began to focus on making sure they were rooted in a good community, church, and school. Out of the blue, a chance encounter with an old friend provided an opportunity to become more acquainted with Kettering Adventist HealthCare. As my family and I visited, we were amazed at the large Adventist community in the Greater Dayton area, with many young families and the opportunity for quality Adventist education at Spring Valley Academy. When the visit led to a new opportunity, I knew our family would have a great community to put down roots when we moved from Tampa, Florida to Dayton, Ohio.

We are confident that God has brought us to this community of faith and healing for a reason. Serving the patients and community of Kettering Adventist HealthCare's Fort Hamilton Hospital is certainly a sacred calling.

We have been met with such warmth and acceptance since we joined Kettering Adventist HealthCare. We feel privileged to be a part of a wonderful health system and community that supports the church and school, recognizing the importance of its roots in Adventist ministry and of investing in our families for generations.



Member of the Kettering  
Seventh-day Adventist Church

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Mewhirter".

**Michael Mewhirter**  
Vice President  
Finance and Operations  
Fort Hamilton Hospital

*"... I knew our family  
would have a great  
community to put down  
roots when we moved."*



# YOUR HEALING MINISTRY

KETTERING ADVENTIST HEALTHCARE NEWSLETTER

## Connecting to Creation

By Christina Keresoma

Sharing our faith-based mission with the community and our employees is very important because it promotes healing of the whole person and defines who we are. It is what sets us apart from other healthcare providers in the area.

One way we share our mission is through our Creation Walls. The Creation Wall artworks consist of eight sculpted and painted bronze panels - one for each day of creation, and one to reflect the beginning of time. Three more Creation Walls have been installed at Sycamore Medical Center, Fort Hamilton Hospital, and Kettering College. This is part of a network-wide series, which will eventually be at each Kettering Adventist HealthCare facility. Kettering Medical Center, Soin Medical Center, and Grandview Medical Center currently have one, and Southview Medical Center, and the Cancer Center will be getting one in 2016.



The walls are all located in the lobby of each facility where heavy foot traffic flows. This allows anyone who passes it the opportunity to learn about who we are, and it contributes to our healing environment—mind, body, and spirit.







Patients, visitors and employees appreciate our intentional focus on Christ.

"I have often admired the Creation Wall in the hospital, and was pleased when I heard that Kettering College was going to get its own. It is a great testimony to our faith and our understanding of what it means to be created in God's image on this earth. Genesis is a far more important piece of scripture than is commonly appreciated!" says David VanDenburgh, D.Min., Professor/Chair, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at Kettering College.

Whether you are in the area or passing by, we welcome you to stop by and experience one of our six Creation Walls. They are wonderful works of art that connect us to Creation and our Creator.



# THE NEWS

## Serving with the Fruits of the Spirit

A warm coat during the winter, a nice meal after two days of hunger, or dental care to take away constant pain are just a few tangible examples of what the Good Neighbor House provides. For more than 30,000 local residents, this is a place of hope and healing.



The Good Neighbor House has spent the last year focusing on the Fruits of the Spirit. These nine tenets are the timeless qualities exhibited by all caring servants: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. These tenants have helped inspire substantial growth at the Good Neighbor House in their new location in downtown Dayton, Ohio. Clinic visits cared for over 3,200 people, which is up by 45 percent since 2014. The food pantry provided nutrition to more than 24,000 people, up 74 percent. Clothing and household goods were provided to more than 15,000 people, which is up by 78 percent. The Lord has truly blessed this organization to serve its community and build healthier futures for those who seek its care.



### Remembering a Servant Leader

God selected a servant who exemplified the Fruits of the Spirit to lead the Good Neighbor House to serve

so many mentioned above. Jonathan Leach became the Executive Director during the summer of 2014. Bringing his wife Judy and daughter Angelica from the Portland, Oregon area, it didn't take long for the community to fall in love with him and his family. Jonathan's kind and generous heart reached out to his elders, for whom he always had great respect, to babies, who happily settled in his loving arms-and to everyone in between.

A big hole was left in the community when Jonathan unexpectedly passed away in October, 2015. He was a faithful son, loving husband, encouraging father, trusted friend, lifelong scholar, respected colleague, compassionate pastor, and community advocate. He has touched so many lives in the Dayton area and across the United States.

We may have lost an amazing servant of God, but his impact leaves an indelible mark on every person he touched through both his personal and professional ministries.

To give, please visit [goodneighborhouse.org](http://goodneighborhouse.org) and click "Donate". Thank you for helping us to empower a community.

Educating students to make service a life calling and to view health as harmony with God in body, mind, and spirit.



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- Stephan, Listener in Ukraine

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# Bulletin Board

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## EMPLOYMENT

**WASHINGTON ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY** seeks a circulation librarian to manage the operation of the circulation department of Weis Library. The position involves managing the circulation functions of the integrated library system; supervising student library assistants; processing course reserves, consortium borrowing and inter-library loan requests; and providing reference assistance to library users. This is a faculty position with assigned rank dependent on qualifications of the selected candidate. To view the full posting and to apply, visit [wau.edu/careers](http://wau.edu/careers) (click on "Employment Opportunities" and search for the position).

**WASHINGTON ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY** seeks candidates for chair, Department of Health/Wellness/Physical Education. The chair leads and creates a visionary program plan and conducts classroom instruction, which affirms the Adventist ministry of teaching and which incorporates insights from the Adventist Blue Zone advantage. Requires: doctorate with curriculum awareness in one of the following: physical education, kinesiology, physiology of exercise, health education or exercise science; minimum 3-5 years of experience teaching physical education, health, wellness and related fields (kinesiology, exercise physiology, sports management or related disciplines); and at least two years of academic supervisory experience. Visit [wau.edu/careers](http://wau.edu/careers) to view position and apply.

**WASHINGTON ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY** seeks dynamic

nurse educator candidates for full-time nursing faculty. Rank is commensurate with the qualifications of the successful candidate. The university offers BSN, RN-MSN and MS in nursing programs. Nursing faculty will teach three courses per semester in both undergraduate and graduate programs, as needed. Candidates should have the flexibility to teach either day or evening courses. Visit [wau.edu/careers](http://wau.edu/careers) to view position and apply.

**WASHINGTON ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY** seeks candidates for full-time psychology faculty to teach courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Courses may include any of the following: General Psychology, Industrial Psychology, Adolescent Psychology, Forensic Psychology, Individual Counseling, Group Counseling, Motivation & Learning, Psychopathology and other courses as needed. Courses are held in the day and the evening. Requires doctoral degree in psychology or Counseling Psychology and teaching experience at the college level. Visit [wau.edu/careers](http://wau.edu/careers) to view position and apply.

**WGTS 91.9 FM** seeks mission-minded candidates for two positions: chaplain and major gifts officer. WGTS 91.9 is a listener-supported, FCC-licensed, noncommercial radio station. The chaplain will manage all aspects of the Chaplain's Department, ensure the spiritual care and well-being of the WGTS 91.9 team; and oversee the spiritual direction and tone of the ministry. The major gifts officer will identify, develop and strengthen relationships between major

donors and WGTS 91.9. Visit [wau.edu/careers](http://wau.edu/careers) to view positions and to apply.

**PLANT SERVICES DIRECTOR:** Shenandoah Valley Academy (SVA), New Market, Va., is seeking a person to be the director of plant services. This person will be responsible for the maintenance of campus facilities, grounds and an active transportation department. The director must have strengths in organization and project management, and enjoy being around teenagers. The successful candidate will have a trade-knowledge of HVAC, electrical, mechanics, plumbing and vehicle repairs. SVA uses local contractors to assist plant services personnel when necessary. Standard denominational salary and benefits are available. Please send your résumé to principal Dale Twomley, [dale.twomley@sva-va.com](mailto:dale.twomley@sva-va.com).

**UNION COLLEGE** seeks a Seventh-day Adventist master's-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 is June 1. Send CV and references to Jodi Chewakin, [jochewak@ucollege.edu](mailto:jochewak@ucollege.edu).

**LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY** seeks professors in ethics and relational areas. Loma Linda University's School of Religion invites applications for full-time, tenure-track positions in its bioethics and relational (chaplains, whole-person care) areas, to begin July 1. For more information, please contact [religion@llu.edu](mailto:religion@llu.edu).

**BIBLE WORKER** needed for the Decatur Seventh-day Adventist church in Illinois. Please contact Pastor John Lewis by email, [jelewis727@gmail.com](mailto:jelewis727@gmail.com) for details. One-year contract, full or part time. Need résumé and references.

**WALLA WALLA UNIVERSITY** is looking to fill several full-time, tenure-track, faculty positions in the areas of Educational Psychology, English Education/Children's Literature, Industrial Design, Nineteenth Century British Literature, Research Services Librarian, music, psychology and social work. For a detailed description of each position and to apply, please visit [jobs.wallawalla.edu](http://jobs.wallawalla.edu).

**ANDREWS UNIVERSITY** seeks faculty for Teaching Learning Curriculum. Assistant or full professor to teach, advise and direct student projects. Expertise in teaching reading, and/or special

education and/or science is desired. A minimum of three years of K-12 U.S./Canada teaching experience required. Position may require teaching in any/or all semesters including summers. Person chosen for this position is expected to be involved in research as well as teaching and supervision of student teachers or graduate internships. A wide variety of responsibilities are expected, including accreditation and assessment as required by the university and outside accrediting bodies. For more information and to apply, visit [andrews.edu/admres/jobs/735](http://andrews.edu/admres/jobs/735).

**ANDREWS UNIVERSITY** seeks academy principal. The principal is Andrews Academy's leader and is responsible for ensuring that the school fulfills its mission and goals. The principal provides leadership for Andrews Academy by ensuring the continuation of Andrews Academy as an excellent Seventh-day Adventist secondary school and positioning the school for a successful future. He/she administers the school consistent with the policies and procedures adopted by the operating board and will be responsible for all faculty and staff of Andrews Academy. For more information or to apply, visit [andrews.edu/admres/jobs/743](http://andrews.edu/admres/jobs/743).

**LA SIERRA UNIVERSITY** is seeking College of Arts & Sciences Dean candidates. Should hold earned doctorate or terminal degree, preferably in the arts and sciences; be a member of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination; and have demonstrated effectiveness as a teacher, scholar and administrator. Additional details and application instructions available at [goo.gl/ZTQRy2](http://goo.gl/ZTQRy2). Position open until filled.

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**6-DAY NATURAL REMEDIES & HYDROTHERAPY WORKSHOP:** July 31-August 5, at Andrews University. Details: [Andrews.edu/go/nrhw](http://Andrews.edu/go/nrhw), [janinec@andrews.edu](mailto:janinec@andrews.edu) or (269) 471-3541.

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## SERVICES

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**MARYLAND ADVENTIST DENTIST,** David Lee, DDS, FAGD, AFAAID, has practices located in Silver Spring, Ellicott City, and a new office at 9256 Bendix Rd., Ste. 202, Columbia, MD 21045. He is extensively trained in implant, cosmetic, TMD/TMJ, sedation and laser dentistry. Dr. Lee is an Associate Fellow of the American Academy of Implant Dentistry, as well as having many other certifications. For appointments, call (301) 649-5001. Mention this ad and receive a 10% discount on all services, excluding third-party payers. We welcome new patients!

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## TRAVEL

**NEW TESTAMENT ALIVE TOUR,** June 1-12: Rome, Greece, Patmos, Turkey. Coliseum, Catacombs, Mamertine Prison, Vatican, Corinth, Athens, Mars Hill, Revelation's seven churches, and ferry to Patmos. Co-led by Southern Adventist University professors Andy Nash and Greg King, dean of the School of Religion. \$2,150 plus flight. Email [andynash5@gmail.com](mailto:andynash5@gmail.com). (Israel tour June 12-22 also available!)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**"MAKING MAGNIFICENT MARRIAGES" MARRIAGE RETREAT,** February 19-21, at the Dunes Manor Hotel in

Ocean City, Md. Jared and Linda Pingleton, from Focus on the Family, will be the presenters of the sessions, which run from Friday evening to Sunday morning. For more information, email [MarriageEnrichment@comcast.net](mailto:MarriageEnrichment@comcast.net), or contact Mark & Peggy Lee, (301) 801-2344, or Jeff & Sandy Hartz, (443) 864-6328.

**LA SIERRA ACADEMY (LSA) ALUMNI WEEKEND,** April 22-23, on LSA campus. Please update your mailing address and contact info and to [JNelson@lsak12.com](mailto:JNelson@lsak12.com) or (951) 351-1445, ext., 244. Honor classes '56, '66, '76, '86, '91, '96, '06 and pre-50 year classes. For more information, [lsak12.com](http://lsak12.com).

## OBITUARIES

**MOHR, Bernyl "Bernie" G.,** 82, of Reading, Pa., died December 28, 2013, after a lengthy illness. He was born on a farm in Hillsdale County, Michigan, May 24, 1931, to the late Kenneth and Violetta Mohr. He received his secondary education at Adelphia Academy, Holly, Mich., graduating in 1948, and went on to receive his degree in theology from Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Mich. On June 7, 1953, he married Lois Feldbauer from Franksville, Wis. They were married for 60 years. He began his ministry in the Michigan Conference, where he served several churches before moving to Goodrich, N.D. From there they moved to LaCrosse, Wis., and remained there for six years before moving to the Pennsylvania Conference. Besides pastoring several districts in Pennsylvania, Bernie spent four years as chaplain at the Reading Rehabilitation Hospital in Reading, Pa. While serving in Gettysburg, Pa., he took several classes at the Gettysburg Seminary. After 44 years of pastoral ministry, Bernie retired in 1977. As a retiree, he volunteered as a chaplain. Pastor Mohr is survived by his wife, Lois R. Mohr; his daughter, Rana R. (Edward) Kane of Wilmington, N.C.; and his son, Steve B. Mohr of Baltimore. Also surviving are three grandchildren: Matthew S. Mohr, Taylor S. Kane and Lindsay J. Kane.

**WHEELER, Virginia Mae,** born January 23, 1937, in Lock Haven, Pa.; died June 16, 2014, at the Williamsport Regional Hospital in Williamsport, Pa. She was the daughter of the late William Joseph and Margaret McCracken White. She was a member of the Lock Haven church. Virginia was united in marriage to George Robert Wheeler in 1960, who preceded her in death August 9, 1997. She was a homemaker and is survived by three daughters,

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# Bulletin Board

Sharon (Douglas) Yahn of Lock Haven, Patti J. (John) Jones of Mill Hall, Pa., and Debora (Ernest) Hertzog of House Springs, Mo.; her two sons, Craig J. Wheeler of Avis, Pa., and Karl R. Wheeler of Castanea, Pa.; a brother, Fred A. White; two sisters, Donna R. Webb and Seri Ellen Avery; 16 grandchildren; and 20 great-grandchildren.

**LaGRONE, Robert**, born October 1, 1928, in Noxubee County, Miss., to James and Katie LaGrone, the fifth of seven children; died January 3, 2015, at the Crofton Care & Rehabilitation Center in Crofton, Md. He was a member of the Pine Forge (Pa.) church. He graduated from Central High School in Mobile, Ala., and was a graduate of Twentieth Century Business School in Mobile. In 1950 he met Evelyn Byrd at church, and they were married the next year. A year later they were blessed with the birth of a daughter they named Gloria, who was their joy. Robert served his country as a medic in the U.S. Army for two years during the Korean War, and was honorably discharged in 1954. After seeing all the suffering and pain in the Army, he decided to do something for his Lord by helping others see His love. That is when the Lord started Robert

on his journey of over 42 years in the publishing work. His first step into the work was in 1954 as a full-time literature evangelist and then associate publishing director for the South Central Conference in the Southern Union. In 1966 he accepted a call to the Central States Conference in the Mid-Atlantic Union as publishing director. In 1973 he received and accepted another call as the publishing director of the Allegheny East Conference in the Columbia Union, then in 1980 to the Columbia Union office as an associate director in the publishing department. He is survived by his wife, Evelyn, of Bowie, Md.; his daughter, Gloria (Larry) Holland, of Bowie; his grandson, Larry Robert Burks Holland, of Bowie; his brother William "Willie" LaGrone of Omaha, Neb.; his sisters, Bettie McBride of Omaha, and Mary Jackson of San Antonio; sisters-in-law, Lilly Hawkins and Bertha LaGrone of Mobile; and a host of nephews, nieces, relatives and friends.

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## Sunset Calendar

	Jan 1	Jan 8	Jan 15	Jan 22	Jan 29	Feb 5	Feb 12	Feb 19	Feb 26
<b>Baltimore</b>	4:53	4:59	5:06	5:14	5:22	5:30	5:38	5:46	5:54
<b>Cincinnati</b>	5:25	5:31	5:38	5:46	5:54	6:02	6:10	6:18	6:26
<b>Cleveland</b>	5:07	5:13	5:20	5:29	5:37	5:46	5:55	6:04	6:12
<b>Columbus</b>	5:16	5:23	5:30	5:38	5:46	5:54	6:03	6:11	6:19
<b>Jersey City</b>	4:39	4:45	4:52	5:00	5:09	5:17	5:26	5:34	5:42
<b>Norfolk</b>	4:58	5:04	5:11	5:18	5:25	5:33	5:41	5:48	5:55
<b>Parkersburg</b>	5:13	5:19	5:26	5:34	5:42	5:50	5:58	6:06	6:14
<b>Philadelphia</b>	4:45	4:51	4:59	5:06	5:15	5:23	5:31	5:40	5:48
<b>Pittsburgh</b>	5:03	5:09	5:16	5:24	5:33	5:41	5:50	5:58	6:06
<b>Reading</b>	4:47	4:53	5:01	5:08	5:17	5:25	5:34	5:42	5:50
<b>Richmond</b>	5:01	5:07	5:14	5:21	5:29	5:37	5:45	5:52	5:59
<b>Roanoke</b>	5:12	5:18	5:25	5:32	5:39	5:47	5:55	6:02	6:09
<b>Toledo</b>	5:14	5:20	5:27	5:36	5:44	5:53	6:02	6:11	6:19
<b>Trenton</b>	4:43	4:49	4:56	5:04	5:12	5:21	5:29	5:38	5:46
<b>Wash., D.C.</b>	4:56	5:02	5:09	5:16	5:24	5:33	5:41	5:49	5:56

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