


VISITOR

CONNECTING COLUMBIA UNION SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

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**Remembering
Henry and Sharon
Fordham**

**Plus: The Biblical Case
Against Racism**

Remembering the Fordhams



Words cannot express the loss and pain we feel in the passing of Henry and Sharon Fordham*, president and first lady of the Allegheny East Conference. Few leader-couples have touched our lives as much as they did, and our hearts are with their family and conference family.

President Fordham was a quintessential Christian gentleman and friend who demonstrated genuine love for Jesus, for his dear wife, Sharon, for his family and for everyone he encountered.

He served with heart, led with humility and blessed countless lives. He never passed up an opportunity to visit a member, pastor, employee or colleague who was sick, bereaved, in trouble or in need. Nor did he pass a hurting stranger without trying to help. I will never forget walking the streets of India with him during a mission trip. So many people sought financial assistance, and he gave everyone something.

He was a powerful preacher and mentor who wasn't afraid to tackle difficult topics or speak the truth with love. Many a Sabbath morning found him arriving to speak at churches disguised as a homeless man. The object lessons were poignant, as he later revealed his true identity, reciting with fervor Matthew 25:35-40: "For I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me. ... Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me" (NKJV).

President Fordham had a tremendous zest for life and adventure. His office resembled a museum, and he loved to regale all who visited with stories of each exotic item. He would point to something like a snakeskin, chuckle, and explain where he got it, how he got it and why he kept it. I can only imagine that in heaven his house—or should I say mansion—will be full of living creatures. I can't wait to visit him there!

My wife, Becky, who serves our Columbia Union as director for the Ministerial Spouses Association, describes First Lady Sharon Fordham as "one of the kindest, most gracious and thoughtful" persons she had ever met. I couldn't agree more!

Together, this dedicated couple, who served in our union for their entire 47 years of ministry, embodied the words of Jesus, who said, "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35, NKJV).

May the same be said of all of us!

Dave Weigley serves as president of the Columbia Union Conference.

**Read additional articles and tributes on pp. 4, 13-14 and 44.*



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5 Things You Should Know (columbiaunionvisitor.com/5Things)

1 On October 1–2, Washington Adventist University and the Columbia Union Conference will livestream “Overcoming Disunity in the Body of Christ: Concrete Steps,” a G. Arthur Keough Two-Day Summit. Speakers will discuss justice and renewal, cross-cultural and racial reconciliation, colorblindness versus dual identity, and more.

2 Could the recent Supreme Court decision in favor of Catholic charities refusing to adopt children to gay families impact civil rights for the Seventh-day Adventist Church? We recently interviewed Lisa Saveikis Burrow, Columbia Union vice president and general counsel, and other legal experts to learn more about this decision and upcoming cases that could impact religious liberty.

3 Earlier this summer, Emmanuel Asiedu, union treasurer, and his wife, Annette, hosted evangelistic and health seminars in Ghana, resulting in 10 baptisms and 50 Bible studies.

4 The New Jersey Conference recently celebrated 120 years of ministry. Originally part of the Atlantic Union Conference, it has grown into a family of 17,500 members, 116 churches, five schools and numerous ministries.

5 Columbia Union Executive Committee members recently voted the list of members to represent the union on the North American Division Executive Committee for the next five years. See the list of representatives online.



NEW JERSEY WELCOMES NEW TREASURER

Carlos Portanova recently accepted the call to serve as treasurer of the New Jersey Conference. He worked as the conference's undertreasurer until 2019, when he became treasurer for the Oklahoma Conference.

“I am very happy and excited to be back in New Jersey and to embark on this new journey,” says Portanova, who will be joined by his wife, Cinthia, and children: Yartzel, Carlos Jr., and Adolfo.—*Estefany Torres*

RALPH MARTIN REMEMBERED

Ralph Martin, president of the Columbia Union Conference from 1994–97, passed away June 19, 2021, at the age of 88. He was an administrator for 42 years—12 in the Columbia Union.

“Ralph was a very innovative leader, and one of the architects of the ‘Caring Church’ movement,” says Dave Weigley, current union president. “He was known for being fresh and creative in ministry, trying different methods to move the mission forward.”

Watch the memorial service on the *Visitor* Facebook page, September 25, at 7 p.m.



ALLEGHENY WEST APPOINTS NEW CFO

Keisha Stubbs-Bone has been appointed the new chief financial officer for the Allegheny West Conference (AWC).

Prior to joining AWC, Stubbs-Bone served as the senior accountant at the South Central Conference (Tenn.). She is joined by her husband, Jonathan, in this new phase of ministry.

“As the newest and youngest member within the AWC administrative team,” she notes, “I am looking forward to fully trusting God to lead as I dedicate my life to serving with the utmost humility and Christ-centered mindset.”—*Benia Jennings*

88.3 The frequency of WGTS’ new signal, WGBZ, which went live on air earlier this summer, thanks to generous donations from listeners who wanted to help reach Maryland’s Eastern Shore with Christ’s message of hope and wholeness.



Join our monthly **Visitor News Live** conversations, **Friday nights at 7 p.m.**, on Facebook and YouTube, as we delve into how Adventists relate and respond to today’s news through a spiritual lens.

UNION MOURNS PASSING OF ALLEGHENY EAST PRESIDENT AND FIRST LADY

Members and leaders across the Columbia Union Conference are mourning the tragic loss of Henry J. Fordham III., and his wife of almost 58 years, Sharon Fordham, following their passing in a house fire on July 18 at their Pennsylvania home. The Fordhams spent their entire 47 years of pastoral, administration and educational ministry serving in the Allegheny East Conference (AEC), the second-largest conference in the union's territory. At the time of their deaths, they were both 77, and Henry was in

his second, five-year term as president.

"We lost a giant, a legend in Adventist ministry—Elder Henry Fordham III—and his dear wife, Sharon. Together, they made an indelible contribution to the work of God," said Dave Weigley, Columbia Union president, in a statement. "Anyone who worked with Henry knew him to be a Christian gentleman who had a soft touch, big heart and a tremendous love for Jesus. Sharon, a gracious, kind and dedicated woman, was the quintessential first lady of the Allegheny East Conference and all the churches Henry pastored."

Tributes poured in from around the world, including from General Conference President Ted N. C. Wilson, who



wrote: "Pastor Fordham ... was a trusted church administrator and a longtime friend. He came from a long line of faithful Adventist leaders. His kind and godly leadership will be missed by all and by me personally."

G. Alexander Bryant, North American Division president, shared his condolences, adding, "May the God who is never shocked sustain the family and conference of these spiritual giants who have fallen."

Members and colleagues also remembered the Fordhams: "He loved everyone ... he loved the youth; I know he loved me. He was a listener and made time to ... encourage me," shared Patrick Graham, director of Children's and Youth Ministries at AEC. "I was his associate pastor for a year-and-a-half. During that time at DuPont Park church [in Washington, D.C.], he taught me how to have a Shepherd's heart. ... He taught by example."

Washington Adventist University announced they will rename their Department of Religion after the couple, stating in part, "We want to honor this legacy and motivate future generations to rise to the challenge of this couple's stature in Christian ministry."

On August 8, the couple was remembered by hundreds of in-person mourners at a service in Baltimore and thousands who watched online.

HEY KIDS! Can you help Victor the Visitor Mouse discover what Bible character the word search describes?

U	J	H	O	P	B	O	M	C	A	V	D	G	K
N	T	M	W	V	O	I	E	Z	V	L	B	N	H
W	B	I	U	L	R	L	W	P	A	A	A	D	I
G	E	R	M	B	R	L	R	B	L	D	Y	C	S
X	A	A	F	A	O	A	E	M	R	A	D	J	M
T	R	C	A	P	W	M	T	O	O	U	H	F	H
U	S	L	V	R	A	P	J	Q	K	A	H	P	X
J	W	E	E	O	H	X	O	C	A	W	I	A	N
B	F	V	S	P	D	P	N	K	F	J	V	X	B
G	I	D	N	H	S	I	W	U	D	T	O	E	B
R	W	I	Q	E	M	X	H	G	F	G	T	Q	L
U	R	G	G	T	Q	Z	W	B	O	Y	C	O	G
N	O	A	L	N	P	W	Z	S	Q	V	J	O	U
J	W	K	T	P	C	R	O	K	L	D	A	B	I

AXE JORDAN
PROPHET RIVER
BEARS BORROW
OIL LAMP WAGES
BALD MIRACLE

Scan the QR Code for the answer key and to read the Bible story.

THE REST OF THE STORY: Read full content at columbiaunionvisitor.com/upfront.

FALLECE RALPH MARTIN, EX PRESIDENTE DE LA UNIÓN DE COLUMBIA

Ralph Martin, presidente de la Unión de Columbia de 1994 a 1997, falleció el 19 de junio del 2021 a la edad de 88 años. Fue administrador durante 42 años, 12 en la Unión de Columbia. “Ralph fue un líder muy innovador y uno de los arquitectos del movimiento ‘Caring Church’”, dice Dave Weigley, actual presidente de la unión.



LA UNIÓN LAMENTA EL FALLECIMIENTO DEL PRESIDENTE Y LA PRIMERA DAMA DE ALLEGHENY ESTE

Los miembros y líderes de la Unión de Columbia están de luto por la pérdida de Henry J. Fordham III y su esposa por casi 58 años, Sharon Fordham, luego de su fallecimiento en un incendio el 18 de julio en su casa de Pensilvania. Los Fordham pasaron sus 47 años completos de ministerio en la Conferencia Este de Allegheny (AEC). En el momento de su muerte, ambos tenían 77 años y Henry estaba en su segundo mandato de cinco años como presidente.

“Perdimos a un gigante, una leyenda en el ministerio adventista, Henry Fordham III, y a su querida esposa, Sharon. Juntos, hicieron una contribución indeleble a la obra de Dios”, dijo Dave Weigley, presidente de la Unión de Columbia, en un comunicado. “Sharon, fue la primera dama por excelencia de la Conferencia Este de Allegheny”.

5 Cosas Que Debes Saber

(columbiaunionvisitor.com/noticias5cosas)

- 1** WGBZ 88.3, la nueva señal de radio cristiana de WGTS, salió al aire este verano gracias a las generosas donaciones de los oyentes que querían ayudar a alcanzar la costa este de Maryland con el mensaje de esperanza y plenitud de Cristo.
- 2** Del 1 al 2 de octubre, la Universidad Adventista de Washington y la Unión de Columbia transmitirán en vivo “Superando la desunión en el cuerpo de Cristo: Pasos concretos”, una cumbre de dos días de G. Arthur Keough.
- 3** ¿Podría la reciente decisión de la Corte Suprema a favor de las organizaciones benéficas católicas que se niegan a adoptar niños de familias homosexuales afectar los derechos civiles de la Iglesia Adventista del Séptimo Día? Recientemente, nos sentamos con la vicepresidenta y asesora legal general de la Union de Columbia, Lisa Saveikis Burrow, y otros expertos legales para aprender más sobre este y los próximos casos que podrían afectar la libertad religiosa.
- 4** Este verano, el tesorero de la unión, Emmanuel Asiedu, y su esposa, Annette, organizaron seminarios de evangelización y salud en Ghana, que resultaron en 10 bautismos y 50 estudios bíblicos.
- 5** La Conferencia de Nueva Jersey celebró recientemente 120 años de ministerio. Originalmente fue parte de la Unión del Atlántico y ahora se ha convertido en una familia de 17,500 miembros, 116 iglesias, cinco escuelas y numerosos ministerios.

NUEVA JERSEY DA LA BIENVENIDA AL NUEVO TESORERO

Carlos Portanova aceptó recientemente el llamado para servir como tesorero de la Conferencia de Nueva Jersey. Anteriormente trabajó como subtesorero de la conferencia, antes de convertirse en tesorero de la Conferencia de Oklahoma en el 2019.

“Estoy muy feliz y emocionado de estar de regreso en Nueva Jersey y embarcarme



en este nuevo viaje”, dice Portanova, a quien se unirán su esposa, Cinthia, y sus hijos: Yartzel, Carlos Jr. y Adolfo. —*Estefany Torres*

ALLEGHENY OESTE NOMBRA NUEVO DIRECTOR FINANCIERO

Keisha Stubbs-Bone ha sido nombrada como la nueva directora financiera de la Conferencia Oeste de Allegheny (AWC).

Antes de unirse a AWC, Stubbs-Bone se desempeñó como contador principal en la Conferencia Central del Sur (Tennessee). A ella se une su esposo, Jonathan, en esta nueva etapa del ministerio.

“Espero confiar plenamente en Dios para que me dirija mientras dedico mi vida a servir con la mayor humildad y con una mentalidad centrada en Cristo”, dice Stubbs-Bone.

—*Benia Jennings*

5 Choses à Savoir

(columbiaunionvisitor.com/nouvelles5choses)

- 1** WGBZ 88.3, la nouvelle station de radio chrétienne de WGTS, a émis en direct durant cet été grâce aux généreux dons des auditeurs qui voulaient aider à atteindre la côte est de Maryland avec le message d'espoir et de plénitude du Christ.
- 2** Du 1er au 2 octobre prochain, l'Université Adventiste de Washington et l'Union de Columbia diffuseront en direct « Surmonter la Désunion dans le Corps du Christ : des Mesures Concrètes », un sommet de deux jours de G. Arthur Keough.
- 3** La récente décision de la Cour suprême en faveur des organisations caritatives catholiques refusant aux familles homosexuelles d'adopter des enfants pourrait-elle avoir un impact sur les droits civils de l'Église Adventiste du Septième Jour ? Nous nous sommes récemment entretenus avec l'avocate générale de l'Union de Columbia, Lisa Saveikis Burrow, et d'autres experts juridiques pour en savoir plus sur cette affaire et sur les affaires à venir qui pourraient avoir un impact sur la liberté religieuse.
- 4** Cet été, le trésorier de l'union, Emmanuel Asiedu, et sa femme, Annette, ont animé des séminaires d'évangélisation et de santé au Ghana, résultant en 10 baptêmes et 50 études bibliques.
- 5** La Fédération de New Jersey a récemment célébré 120 ans de ministère. Faisant à l'origine partie de la Fédération de l'Atlantic Union, elle est devenue une famille de 17 500 membres, 116 églises, cinq écoles et de nombreux ministères.

DÉCÈS DE RALPH MARTIN, ANCIEN PRÉSIDENT DE L'UNION DE COLUMBIA

Pasteur Ralph Martin, président de l'Union de Columbia de 1994 à 1997, est décédé le 19 juin 2021 à l'âge de 88 ans. Il a été administrateur pendant 42 ans, dont 12 au sein de l'Union de Columbia.

« Ralph était un leader très novateur et l'un des architectes du mouvement « Caring Church », déclare Dave Weigley, actuel président de l'union. « Il était connu pour être informel et créatif dans le ministère, essayant différentes méthodes pour faire avancer la mission. »

NEW JERSEY ACCUEILLE UN NOUVEAU TRÉSORIER

Carlos Portanova a

récemment accepté l'appel à devenir trésorier de la Fédération de New Jersey. Il a travaillé comme trésorier adjoint de la Fédération, avant de devenir trésorier titulaire de la Fédération d'Oklahoma en 2019.

« Je suis très heureux et ravi d'être de retour à New Jersey et de me lancer dans ce nouveau voyage », a déclaré Portanova, qui sera rejoint par sa femme, Cinthia, et ses enfants : Yaritzel, Carlos Jr. et Adolfo.—*Estefany Torres*

NOMINATION D'UN NOUVEAU DIRECTEUR FINANCIER À ALLEGHENY WEST

Keisha Stubbs-Bone est nommée nouvelle directrice financière de la Fédération Allegheny West (AWC).



Avant de rejoindre AWC, Stubbs-Bone a occupé le poste de comptable principale à la fédération South Central (Tenn.). Elle est rejointe par son mari, Jonathan, dans cette nouvelle phase de son ministère. « En tant que membre le plus récent et le plus jeune de l'équipe administrative de l'AWC, j'ai hâte de faire pleinement confiance à Dieu pour diriger alors que je consacre ma vie à servir avec la plus grande humilité et un état d'esprit centré sur le Christ. », déclare Stubbs-Bone.—*Benia Jennings*

L'UNION PLEURE LE DÉCÈS DU PRÉSIDENT DE L'ALLEGHENY EAST ET DE SA FEMME

Les membres et les dirigeants du territoire de l'Union de Columbia pleurent la perte d'Henry J. Fordham III., et de son épouse pendant 58 ans, Sharon Fordham, après leur décès dans l'incendie de leur maison de Pennsylvanie le 18 juillet 2021. Les Fordham ont passé toutes leurs 47 années de ministère au sein de la Fédération Allegheny East (AEC). Au moment de leur décès, ils avaient tous les deux 77 ans et pasteur Fordham en était à son deuxième mandat de cinq ans en tant que président.

« Nous avons perdu un géant, une légende du ministère adventiste – Henry Fordham III – et sa chère épouse, Sharon. Ensemble, ils ont apporté une contribution indélébile à l'œuvre de Dieu », a déclaré Dave Weigley, président de l'Union de Columbia, dans un communiqué.

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Created in His Image

The Biblical Case Against Racism

What does the Bible say about racism? And why is it important to heal the rifts in our communities, churches, schools and homes—even if racism doesn't seem to personally impact you?

By Jiří Moskala

Amadeo Molnár, one of my favorite church history teachers, once said, “The history of the Christian Church is the history of the interpretation of the Bible.” Unfortunately, many modern problems arise from the misinterpretation of God’s Word. Divisions were created and wars fought because of certain dogmas; millions were tortured, killed or enslaved due to specific ideologies and wrong belief systems by believers. So many atrocities were committed in the name of God. And over the years, the Bible has also been used to justify racism.

Ironically, the original Bible text does not have a specific term for race, meaning there is no concept of race developed in the Holy Scriptures and that the Bible cannot be taken to justify any form of racism. Period. It’s important to remember that each translation of the Bible is already an interpretation of the biblical text. Some Bible translations put the term “race” into English versions, even though no words for “race” or “racism” are found in biblical Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek.

The King James Version translation, which was published in 1611, includes no term for “race” in the biological or ethnic sense. Not even once. The English term “race” is actually a modern term that was introduced in the late 16th century and then evolved in the 17th century. When colonization was established and anthropological theories were combined with evolution, only then did race vocabulary in the biological or ethnic sense thrive.

When one researches modern translations of the Bible, they will find the term “race” used more often. For example, “human race” appears in the

New International Version (NIV) six times in the Old Testament, describing there is only one humankind (Genesis 6:5, 7; Job 28:28; Psalm 12:1, 8; Ecclesiastes 3:10). This term is neutral because God created only one race—namely humans.

Without diminishing modern translations as a whole—for most terminology in them is translated from the original Bible text—there are a few verses that are dangerous and explosive. In Ezra 9:2, translators of the NIV, English Standard Version (ESV) and New Living Translation render the Hebrew words *zera’ haqqodesh* as “holy race,” meaning Jews returning from the Babylonian exile. But this Hebrew phrase simply means “holy descendants, offspring” (literally “holy seed”). In the New Testament, Romans 9:3 speaks about “people of my own race” (NIV), namely Jewish people. The word *genos* (people, kind, kindred, descendants) is rendered in Acts 7:19 as “race” in the sentence that Pharaoh “dealt shrewdly with our race” (ESV). So, the Jews are referred to as having a “special” race, and suddenly, the Jewish race is “created.”

In 1 Peter 2:9, the New American Bible, Revised Standard Version and ESV speak about Christians as being a “chosen race” (*genos eklekton* simply means “chosen people”). Thus, one may detect a trend in those translations—modern versions more often use the term “race” with its ethnic meaning.

Examples of Prejudice in the Bible

Even though the term “race” does not occur in the original languages of the Bible, the Holy Scripture does speak against racism in principle. God, through His writers, addresses attitudes and issues that lie at the root of racism or are very similar to racism.



Prophets and other writers speak eloquently against the spirit of antagonism, bias, prejudice, bigotry, xenophobia, ethnocentrism, hatred, discrimination, exploitation, unfairness and injustice.

Although the Bible does not have a specific term for race, it clearly deals with the same problematic attitudes—the spirit of racism. Four brief examples of this include: (1) Miriam and Aaron criticized Moses because he married a foreigner, a Cushite woman (Numbers 12:1); (2) Haman in the book of Esther wanted to annihilate Jewish people living in Medo-Persia because he hated Mordecai (Esther 3:5–6); (3) the Early Christian Church, consisting of Jewish believers in Jesus Christ, were not ready to open their doors to the believing Gentiles, so God had to specially intervene and give visions to Cornelius and Peter bringing them together. And then Peter was willing to baptize the believing Gentiles after the Holy Spirit was given to them (see Acts 10–11); (4) in the Early Church, there was a complaint by believing Greeks that their widows were neglected in comparison to Jewish widows, so deacons were elected to deal properly with this tension (see Acts 6:1–6).

Biblical Principles Against Racism

1 The first fundamental principle for dealing with racism is derived from the creation story (Genesis 1–2). God did not create races, but one humankind. We are one diverse family. Everybody is created equal by God because we are all created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26–27). This recognition does not rule out diversity; on the contrary, because diversity is God’s marvelous creation, it must be celebrated. God made us from “one” person, so we are one in plurality (Acts 17:26) and “God’s handiwork” (Eph. 2:10, NIV).

There should not be any discrimination based on gender or color, so we need to be extremely careful when we talk about race. I personally prefer to speak about diversity in color or ethnic diversity, but we need to underline that we are one humankind, one humanity. Different skin colors are not a result of sin or the tower of Babel incident. Diversity was already planned and planted by God during creation week.

2 The second principle of how to fight against racism is in recognition of the two greatest commandments of love: loving God and loving our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:37–40; Luke 10:25–37).

In John 15:12, Jesus explains how to love our neighbor as ourselves. The best interpretation of how to do so is in the parable of the Good Samaritan. When the teacher of the law asked, “Who is my neighbor?” Jesus answered in practical terms that it was the “person who is in need that you sacrificially help.” Jesus turns it upside down and asks, “To whom are you a neighbor?” Later, in 1 John 4:20, John says, “Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen” (NIV).

3 The third principle is the summary of the law and the prophets. Jesus summarized it in one sentence, known as the Golden Rule, found in Matthew 7:12: “Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you” (NLT). In Philippians 2:3, Paul is saying the same thing but using different words when he speaks about the ultimate model of humility by pointing to Christ’s incarnation and what He did: “In humility, count others more significant than yourselves” (ESV).

4 The fourth principle is connected to the nature of God. When God states that He is not a respecter of persons, then we should behave as He does. There is no partiality with God. We should be like God, who does not show favoritism (James 2:1). In other words, we should not pay special attention to some and ignore or denigrate others.

5 The fifth principle is that the Holy Spirit breaks all biases and prejudices, discrimination, unfairness, bigotry and hatred, without exception. The Holy Spirit is given to “all flesh” (Joel 2:28–29)—sons and daughters, old and young, men and women, slaves (female or male). Thus, the Holy Spirit is leading in equalizing human relationships.

6 The sixth principle is the plan of salvation. All are sinners and saved in the same way. There is one God, one gospel, one salvation, one people, one way of salvation—Jesus (Romans 3:22–24; Ephesians 1:10; 3:6; 4:3–6; Colossians 2:6–10).

7 And the seventh principle stresses our identity in Christ. When we are in Christ, we are a new creation. Our identity is in Christ, not in our nationality, color of skin, gender, culture, sexuality, education, position, social status or financial situation. In



How to Love Your Neighbor

The best interpretation of how to love your neighbor is the parable of the Good Samaritan. There was antagonism between the Samaritans and Jews, a relationship of deep tension and hatred. When the teacher of the law asked, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus answered in practical terms that it was the "person who is in need and you sacrificially help." The real question was and still is, "To whom am I a neighbor?"

2 Corinthians 5:17, Paul speaks about one family in heaven and on earth, when he says, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation" (ESV).

Theological Safeguards Against Racism

Seventh-day Adventist biblical theology has tools and anchors to forestall and fight wrong attitudes and racial prejudices. These very important theological defenses should keep us from the path of racism and bigotry.

- Our theological system is rooted and built on creation. And in creation, we are all created in the image of God. We are all equal.
- The second point, related to our first theological anchor, is the Sabbath—rest in God. On Sabbath, all are granted a new quality of life, liberation, freedom and equality.
- The great controversy explains the awful problem of sin and the wonderful plan of salvation to free humans from sin—we are all saved in Jesus Christ. Galatians 3:26, 28 plainly states that there are no social divisions regarding salvation: no nationality, ethnicity, sexuality or culture. Nothing plays a role. For in Christ Jesus, we are all children of God through faith. There is neither Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male or female, for all are one in Christ Jesus.
- To understand the theology of the Triune God is to understand a community of love. Understanding

God's loving community, and that we were created in His image, should help us understand that God wants to create within us a community of love with each other where all are equal as the heavenly Trio are equal. Therefore, in our community of love, we must seek to build a community of equality and unity in Christ. With the triune understanding of God, the Holy Spirit is given to all, uniting us all in love, in spirit and in truth (Joel 2:28–29).

- Our prophetic interpretation of the Scriptures is important, especially the cleansing of the sanctuary (Daniel 8:14). What does it mean when we speak about 1844, the 2,300 evenings or mornings and the sanctuary being cleansed? The main point is the restoration of truth. God's whole prophetic movement should restore the truth, and with the restoration of truth comes the restoration of right relationships. We have here a very important anchor involving restoring the truth, restoring right attitudes, restoring right motives and being cleansed completely.
- When it comes to the divine judgment, there is no partiality. No one has a special status before God. We are all equal, and God always has the last word when it comes to judgment.
- The three angels' messages, found in Revelation 14, is the remedy for our divided world. All our divisions are listed: different nations, tribes, languages and people. And according to Revelation, the beast of all these different classes wants to dominate. But the three angels' messages are calling for unity in the gospel message, which is the remedy for division and divisiveness. In the end, everybody who believes in Christ is saved. This is our message to unify, not divide.

Tearing Down the Walls

Philemon was a wealthy person, and his slave Onesimus, whose name means "useful," was a fugitive. Onesimus probably stole from his owner, deserted him and fled. The story tells us that all walls of separation and inequality must be torn down. Paul's letter is eloquent and teaches Philemon how to relate to his former slave.

Key statements from Paul's letter practically demonstrate the principles to apply in destroying racism. They also illustrate how these principles, if correctly interpreted, transform relationships and abolish slavery from within by changing attitudes



toward each other. Paul appeals to Philemon “on the basis of love” (v. 9, NIV). Paul states:

“I appeal to you for my son Onesimus” (v. 10). *Now Onesimus is not a slave but a son—a son of Paul.*

“Formerly he was useless, but now he has become useful both to you and to me” (v. 11). *Onesimus was once useless. (Notice the play on his name!)*

“You might have him back forever—no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother” (vv. 15–16). *He is now not only a brother, but a dear brother.*

“He is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a fellow man and as a brother in the Lord” (v. 16). *Wow! He needs to now accept him not only as a human being, but as “a brother in the Lord.”*

“Welcome him as you would welcome me” (v. 17). *Very practical point.*

“If he has done you any wrong or owes you anything, charge it to me” (v. 18). *Forgive him!*

“I am confident as I write this letter that you will do what I ask and even more!” (v. 21, NLT). *This is how the love of God is compelling and leading us. Thus, Paul’s letter to Philemon is a clear example of transformation of relationships. It is about the change from within in thousands of lives as the gospel was preached.*

Our Great Opportunity

During this special time before Christ’s second coming, Seventh-day Adventist Christians are called to model God’s character of love, impartiality and truth. The mission of the remnant is to restore God’s truth in real, loving relationships and model what it means to have beautiful and meaningful relationships in Christ Jesus as a community of faith. We are all responsible for creating and cultivating meaningful relationships in order to not be found guilty of neglecting these basic principles, because we are all accountable for our behavior to our Creator, Redeemer and Judge (Romans 14:10–12; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

The gospel changes lives. When biblical values, creation and redemption theology are accepted, a new identity in Christ is assumed, bringing a radical transformation of relationships where equality and diversity is celebrated. In this way, we can truly be one as Christ was, praying for His followers (John 17:20–23; Ephesians 4:1–3; Philippians 2:1–5). Only the Holy Spirit has a power to transform our thinking, emotions, desires, imagination, attitudes, goals, priorities and actions to create new, meaningful and lasting relationships. Ellen White aptly states, “A true, lovable Christian is the most powerful argument that can be advanced in favor of Bible truth” (*Review and Herald*, January 14, 1904).

Jiří Moskala serves as dean of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary on the campus of Andrews University (Mich.) and professor of Old Testament Exegesis and Theology.



Dig Deeper

● Join us September 24, 7 p.m., for a *Visitor News Live* discussion on “Why We Still Need to Talk About Race and Social Justice.” Tune in via our *Visitor Facebook* or *YouTube* pages.

● On October 1–2, *Washington Adventist University* will host the *G. Arthur Keough Two-Day Summit*, themed “Overcoming Disunity in the Body of Christ: Concrete Steps.” To watch or register, visit columbiaunionvisitor.com/keough-conference.

● On October 14–16, the *Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University* will host the *Congress on Social Justice*, an event designed to highlight global issues of imbalance and the biblical solutions that address them. Find out more at columbiaunionvisitor.com/socialjusticecongress.



Columbia Union Revolving Fund

MAKING MINISTRY POSSIBLE



A lighthouse is raised at Port Elizabeth

The Spanish church of Port Elizabeth in New Jersey was organized about eight years ago with the vision of evangelizing the people of one of the most important international ports in the United States. Several places had been rented for them to meet and worship, and, from the very beginning, each of its members longed to have their own temple to make evangelism more successful.

Thanks to divine providence; the commitment of the members led by first elder David Goris and treasurer Víctor Vía; the support from the conference administration; and the willingness of the Columbia Union Revolving Fund (CURF) to trust the church and facilitate the loan, they were able to purchase the property.

Since 1968 the Columbia Union Revolving Fund (CURF) has been providing low-interest loans and financing for Seventh-day Adventist church and school building and renovating projects so as to facilitate growth. What started as a \$200,000 fund with investments from members has grown to a \$185 million resource that makes ministry possible.

By providing loans for more than 2,000 projects to date, CURF has helped further the work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church all across the Columbia Union.

Learn more: (866) 721-CURF | columbiaunionrevolvingfund.org

CURF

Helping Finance the Gospel Mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church



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ALLEGHENY EAST *Exposé*

Conference Remembers President and First Lady

Henry J. Fordham III, president of the Allegheny East Conference (AEC) since 2012, and his wife, Sharon Elaine (Wright) Fordham, passed away July 18 due to a fire in their home in Douglassville, Pa.

CAREER

After graduating from Oakwood University (Ala.), in 1973, with degrees in Theology and History, Henry Fordham attended Ohio State University, where he obtained a master's degree in Jewish Theology. He spent his entire 47-year ministerial career serving the AEC as a teacher, pastor, departmental leader and administrator.

For two years, he taught history at Pine Forge Academy (Pa.), where he previously attended as a student. He then pastored the Sharon Temple church in Wilmington, Del., the Emmanuel-Brinklow church in Ashton, Md., and the Berea Temple church in Baltimore. From Berea Temple, he was elected as the Ministerial, Personal Ministries and Religious Liberty director for AEC, headquartered in Pine Forge. While in this role, he also served as interim pastor at several churches within the AEC territory. He later was elected to serve as conference executive secretary, a position he held for 12 years before becoming president in October 2012. As conference president, he chaired the AEC Executive Committee and served on the Oakwood University, Washington Adventist University in Takoma Park, Md., and Adventist HealthCare boards, among others.



He considered himself privileged to participate in evangelistic efforts in South Africa, East Africa, West Africa, England, Australia, Puerto Rico and South America. He also participated in several campaigns in India and had the honor of meeting Mother Teresa in Calcutta.

He was an avid photographer, collector and enjoyed sharing stories about his travel experiences.

Sharon Fordham came from a long lineage of musicians. As a child, she sang in a musical group with her cousins, and later developed a longtime friendship with famous gospel singer Mahalia Jackson. Sharon worked for the United States Social Security Administration for more than 30 years before retiring. Above all, she dedicated her life to raising her children and grandchildren.

As first lady of the Columbia Union's second largest conference, she was instrumental in supporting her husband's ministry. She often accompanied him to churches, meetings and itineraries abroad.

The Fordhams, who were both 77 at the time of their death, had been married for close to 58 years. Together, they felt blessed to dedicate their lives to loving God, family, ministry and people.

FAMILY

The Fordhams were affectionately known to family and friends as "Butch" and "Sherry." Family was of the utmost importance to them, as they were very close-knit. Sharon had recently been battling brain cancer, during which time Henry lovingly supported and cared for her with the help of their sons. They leave to mourn three sons: Henry J. "Joey" Fordham IV, Shawn Lamar Fordham and Donovan Fordham.



President Henry J. Fordham III, is surrounded by members of the Allegheny East Conference Executive Committee after a game night held during a weekend of orientation in 2019.

Their daughter, Danielle Fordham-Brown, preceded them in death. They also leave behind 10 grandchildren: Shane Brown, India Fordham-Brown, Brooke Fordham-Brown, Kaleb Marshall, Kristen Fordham, Henry J. Fordham V, Shawn Lamar Fordham II, Shane Fordham, Leila Fordham and Donovan Fordham; and three great-grandchildren: Journey Brown, Elijah Fordham and Alaina Fordham.

REMEMBRANCES

The loss of the Fordhams have been felt by many who knew and served with them, and tributes and condolences have poured in from around the conference and globe:

Pete Palmer, AEC's executive secretary, shares these sentiments: "Elder and Sister Fordham were more than colleagues and fellow administrators; they were our friends, mentors and spiritual parents. They poured into us, prayed over us and counseled us. To say that we will miss them is an understatement. Beyond their leadership role in the conference, they were the consummate examples of a Christian, loving couple, and their loss will be felt by all of us until Jesus comes."

Lawrance Martin, AEC's vice president for finance, expresses, "We are shocked by the loss of the Fordhams who truly demonstrated what it meant to be Christians by the example they set and the ministries they performed. They will be missed."

Gwendolyn Bradford-Norwood, Henry Fordham's executive administrative assistant, reflects, "He was a God-fearing Christian man and was a supervisor whom you didn't mind working with because he was always so thoughtful. He also loved his wife and strongly believed in family."

Pastor and longtime friend S. Peter Campbell, reminisces, "The Fordhams meant a great deal to me



and my wife, Joanne. We shared a close and endearing friendship for years. We traveled to some exotic places and saw many sights. We rode elephants in India, camels in Israel and donkeys in Jordan. We walked where Jesus walked in Israel and splashed around in the Jordan River, sailed on the Sea of Galilee and floated without effort in the Dead Sea."

STAFF

After learning of the news, AEC's administrative team recognized the immediate need for grief counseling for their employees. Juleun Johnson, director of Mission and Ministry at AdventHealth (Fla.) and certified grief counselor, facilitated sessions with the office staff, educators and pastors. Employees shared fond memories of the Fordhams and reflected on the impact the couple had on their lives. Pastors also received tools to help their members process this loss.

In addition, the office staff, who hadn't been together for more than 16 months due to the pandemic, gathered for a special prayer and worship service (pictured above). Afterward, staff members left flowers at the site of the Fordhams' home. "Coming together as an office family was very therapeutic. It was just what we needed to assist in our grieving process," says Patrick Graham, AEC's youth director.

SERVICES

The conference has held several memorial services to celebrate the life of the Fordhams. In addition, AEC's podcast, *The UpSet*, hosted several opportunities for constituents, friends and family to call in and share personal stories and reflections about the Fordhams.

For more photos of the Fordhams and to view the August 8 memorial service, visit visitaec.org.



New Chief Financial Officer Joins Conference

Keisha Stubbs-Bone is the new Chief Financial Officer (CFO) at Allegheny West Conference (AWC). A native of Nassau, Bahamas, Stubbs-Bone matriculated through Oakwood University (Ala.), where she achieved her Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting and Management. Upon graduating, she accepted a role within the General Conference Auditing Service (GCAS) organization, where she



audited numerous Seventh-day Adventist conferences, academies, universities and various entities.

Following GCAS, Stubbs-Bone accepted a call to the South Central Conference (Tenn.). As senior accountant, her duties included, among other things, the organization and oversight of the annual summer auditing program, the administration of accounting duties for the Supplemental Retirement Plan, management of the Plant Fund, and partnering with administration and legal counsel in association matters.

Stubbs-Bone is blessed to have her husband, Jonathan, and her pet Beagle, Hendrix, join her in this new mission field.

“Proverbs 3:5–7 so beautifully reminds us to trust in the Lord with all our hearts and lean not on our own understanding. In all our ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct our paths,” says Stubbs-Bone. “As the newest and youngest member within the AWC administrative team, I am looking forward to fully trusting God to lead as I dedicate my life to serving with the utmost humility and Christ-centered mindset.”

Dayton Church Member Receives Educator Award

The Ohio Department of Education recently presented Nathaniel Snow, a veteran educator and member of the Dayton (Ohio) church, with the 2021 Teachers of Ohio Representing Character and Heart (TORCH) award. TORCH celebrates teachers who model strong character and a heart for their students, colleagues and communities.

“I feel good about being recognized in this way, but I know it’s all God,” says Snow.

Snow works as a math teacher at the Withrow University High School within the Cincinnati Public School District, where he spends countless hours coaching and mentoring students. An advocate for recruiting and retaining more black males into the field of education, he also serves as a professional mentor to students at Miami University in Oxford. Additionally, he leads the Omega Psi Phi fraternity’s scholarship program for high school seniors.

Snow is currently pursuing his doctorate to expand his sphere of influence to promote more equitable practices in mathematics instruction: “My goal is to become a school district



superintendent to make some real changes to impact African-American students.”

Snow’s advice to the African-American students he mentors is to persevere: “Press on, keep moving forward. ... Find something you’re passionate about and ‘work that.’”



Akron Bethel Extends Bible Challenge to Community

Led by the Allegheny West and Ohio conferences, members from the Akron (Ohio) Bethel church participated in the Bible Reading Challenge earlier this year, in which they read the entire Bible in just one month.

As members shared this experience with their friends and colleagues, many opted to join the

challenge. “The faith and trust in God that these members exhibited attracted the attention of many of their co-workers,” says Rosanna Dean-Scott, the church’s Personal Ministries leader. “Individuals who had never opened the Bible ... were now reading it and joining the fun. The excitement grew and permeated Akron Bethel to the point that programming, such as Friday night Bible study and Prayer Ministries, attracted community members who were hungry for more knowledge of Jesus.”

Dean-Scott continues, “The fact that God allowed busy students, physicians, hospital workers and even a 98-year-old member to peruse the entirety of Scripture in 31 days is a testament to what the Bible says: ‘God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think.’ When we accept His assignments with open minds and hearts, a mighty work can be accomplished.”

Morris Carlyle, lead pastor, adds, “We’re excited to continue pressing forward in Jesus’ directive in fulfilling the Great Commission.”



Smyrna Church Launches Outdoor Small Group Ministry

Early this summer, the Smyrna church in Lynchburg, Va., began holding outdoor Sabbath worship services at Miller Park—one of the city’s largest public spaces. Their presence began drawing numerous visitors.

“We had full worship services, beginning with Sabbath School, where the public could walk up and listen to the service,” says Ian Jerome, lead pastor. “Without having done any advertising, people just came.”

The church plans to use these park sessions as a means of moving forward in evangelism. Jerome says they are currently reading the book of Acts. “[Acts 2] talks about the church growing daily by small group ministry. We believe that by being in the park and visible to the public ... they will want to learn more. We’ve been encouraging our members not to allow anyone to leave unattended, and that’s [why] our small group ministry is growing.”

During the worship services, the church sets up various tables for visitors to access evangelism resources. Jerome believes that having a table where visitors can receive information while interacting with members creates an opportunity to

assess each visitors’ needs and extend an invitation to an evening concert or Bible study in the park.

“The testimonies and experiences have been wonderful. We’ve just voted to have four more sessions in the park before the year is over,” Jerome shares.



Smyrna church members Jean Culpepper and Yvonne Tucker distribute brown bag lunches to members and visitors after a worship service at Miller Park.

The Just Shall Live by His Faith

What if we really lived by what Habakkuk says?

“Though the fig tree may not blossom,
nor fruit be on the vines”

I can find few reasons to hope for tomorrow.

“Though the labor of the olive may fail”

I have nothing to soothe my wounds.

“And the fields yield no food”

*I lost my job (or the one I have is not
enough to make ends meet).*

“Though the flock may be cut off from the fold”

I am vulnerable and afraid.

“And there be no herds in the stalls”

My rainy-day fund is depleted; what now?

“Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God
of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength; He will
make my feet like deer’s feet, and He will make me
walk on high hills” (Hab. 3:17–19, NKJV).

The faith that strengthened Habakkuk is the
same faith that strengthens and sustains God’s
people today, no matter how unfavorable or dire the

circumstances of life. And just like the prophet, our
faith in God may be renewed day by day as we enter
into His presence by prayer and meditation on His
Word, for “the just shall live by his faith” (Hab. 2:4,
NKJV). The prophet assured himself that, ultimately,
all would be well as he remained, by faith, in the lov-
ing care of his heavenly Father. We, too, may have
the same assurance because of the faithfulness of
our God. Imagine then, living in a state of complete
contentment and joyfulness, no matter what. You
would no longer doubt but believe in God’s good-
ness. You would no longer feel afraid but calm when
He says, “I’ll never leave you or forsake you. You can
walk through the valley of the shadow
of death with Me. You will have trouble
in this world, but I have overcome the
world. My grace is sufficient for you.
Trust Me.”

So, friend, be of good cheer, and
remember that the story of the faith-
ful has an ending that is too amazing
to describe!



Jerry Lutz
President

Urban Life Center Opens in Baltimore

Two Chesapeake Conference churches recently
opened the Urban Life Center in Baltimore, as part
of a new initiative to create a center of influence
in the city. The Urban Life Center is the result of a
strategic partnership between the Ellicott City (Md.)
church and the Baltimore-White Marsh church in
Baltimore, aiming to be a place for making friends
and serving the community as a bridge to presenting
the gospel message.

The Urban Life Center contains a juice bar where
patrons can enjoy juices while learning more about
health in a relaxed atmosphere designed for making
friends. The center also offers classes, seminars
and workshops in the areas of wellness, health and
leadership, as well as project opportunities for serv-
ing the wider Baltimore community.

“The Urban Life Center is a place for growing in
all aspects of human life: physically, intellectually,
emotionally, socially and spiritually,” says Paulo
Macena, lead pastor of Ellicott City. “It is an exciting
opportunity for us to do incarnational ministry.”

The Urban Life Center is designed to be a
center of Chesapeake Conference’s ongoing
church-planting efforts in Baltimore. Chesapeake

has a conference-wide goal to plant 35 churches
by the year 2025.

“There are many neighborhoods in Baltimore
with no Adventist church or ministry,” says David
Klinedinst, Evangelism and Church Growth director
for Chesapeake. “The Urban Life Center is seeking
to meet that need and ultimately be a launching pad
and missionary center and catalyst for other church
plants within Baltimore.”



Pastor's Email Leads to Ministry in Salisbury

Cesar Gonzalez, pastor of the Beacon of Light church in Salisbury, Md., wanted to learn how his church could more meaningfully minister to the community, so he decided to take a simple step: He sent an email.

"As we came to the middle of the summer of 2020, it was very clear to me that the world had changed," says Gonzalez. "Even though we didn't know when the pandemic restrictions would be over, it was plain to see that we could not go back to normal. I spent months praying and studying, and God gave me a simpler, clearer understanding of the gospel. The gospel is about healing, and we achieve that healing through humility before God and—just as importantly—our fellow human beings."



In February 2021, Gonzalez emailed the city of Salisbury inquiring about service opportunities for his church to minister to people in need. He received an immediate reply.

The city of Salisbury informed Gonzalez that there was a new community center on Newton Street that was ready to open, but they needed community partners to help run the programs after the original partners backed out during the COVID-19 pandemic. Gonzalez reached out to Greg Carlson, pastor of the Park church in Salisbury, Md., and Jean Pierre, pastor of the Salisbury (Md.) Spanish church. After meeting with their church boards, the three churches decided to partner to run programs out of the new community center.

The city agreed to allow the three churches to use the Newton Street Community Center for free, even covering the costs of utilities and insurance. They also helped to fund various programs. The center will be used as a food pantry and as a center for youth and children's programs, including FLAG (Fun Learning About God) Camp and Pathfinders.



Salisbury Mayor Jacob Day (center) cuts the ribbon at the grand opening of the Newton Street Community Center.

Additional plans are underway to hold seminars on practical topics such as personal finance and health.

"We often talk about Christ's method alone, which undoubtedly should be our only guide in ministry, but, as good as we are at inviting people to 'follow me,' we are generally not great at mingling, showing sympathy and ministering to their needs," says Gonzalez. "What I came to realize as I prayed for a way to move forward post-pandemic is that the greatest benefit of the first part of Christ's method alone is not to the people we are ministering to, but to ourselves—it changes us, and that change is a deeply needed one."

Gonzalez is excited about what the future holds for ministry at the new community center: "My church members are so excited for this outreach opportunity. This has given the congregation a new spark. God was there waiting for us to ask, and here it is."



MOUNTAIN VIEWPOINT

Conference Invites: 'Tell Somebody About Jesus'

The Mountain View Conference (MVC) camp meeting at Valley Vista in Parkersburg, W.Va., has impacted hundreds of individuals through the years. This year was no different for those attending in person or viewing online.

Conference leaders believe that everyone needs to be involved in sharing Jesus with others; it should be a coveted desire, not an option, to reach out to others with the good news of Jesus Christ and His wonderful love. That's why, for the next few years, "Tell Somebody About Jesus ... Go Tell It on the Mountains" will be MVC's theme.

"We need to have Jesus bubbling out of us every day," says Tim Bailey, conference president. "We can tell our family, friends, neighbors and co-workers about Jesus. Not just a few scattered members among isolated MVC churches. We need the power of the Holy Spirit to enable us to have such a love for others that we cannot contain ourselves. That love will connect us with others as we tell them about Jesus. Total Member Involvement is what is needed."

During a sermon at camp meeting, Dave Weigley (pictured praying with Tim and Liz Bailey), Columbia



Union Conference president, affirmed the conference's mission: "I have seen leaders step up to the plate and lead in a remarkable manner. This conference is on the right trajectory. God is going to do great things because of what He can do and because of your trust in Him, in putting on the whole armor of God and bathing everything you do with sincere, supplicating, persevering prayer."

This year, the evangelism offerings and the Past President's Pocket Fund showed remarkable evidence of God's providence. The pocket fund was an idea Randy Murphy, former MVC president, instituted during his first camp meeting at Valley Vista in 1989. It was a fun way for people to stuff his shirt pocket with money for various projects that were promoted at camp meeting.

Murphy still wears a pocketed shirt at camp meeting for that very purpose. This year's project, "Kidz to Kamp," resulted in the largest pocket fund total ever. Attendees donated more than \$35,000 to assist kids who want to attend Valley Vista's summer camp but don't have the financial resources. Two teenagers emptied their savings accounts of \$400 each to contribute to this fund. Another person donated \$10,000 because he was blessed at summer camp and wants other children to also hear about Jesus.

Bailey shared that about \$96,000 was raised for evangelism at this year's camp meeting. With these funds, leaders are formulating plans to hold evangelistic meetings in every MVC church that wants to grow and tell others about Jesus and His love.

"Please pray as we prepare for growth and revitalization in each of our churches," says Bailey.

Connect the Dots
Trusting Jesus When the Picture Isn't Finished

Women's Retreat ~ 2021
Mountain View Conference

Oct. 8-10, 2021
Valley Vista Adventist Center
Huttonsville, WV

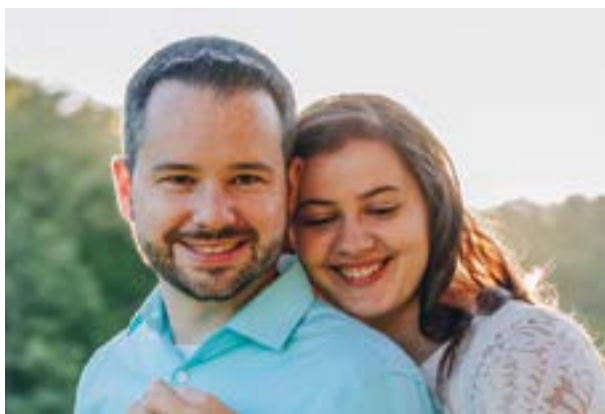
Guest Speaker
DeeAnn Bragaw, Dir.
Women's Ministries for
North American Division

For more information:
mtviewcon.org/ministries/womens-ministries
304-422-4581 (office)

Conference Thanks Retirees, Welcomes New Hires

Rick Cutright, who retired in mid-June, was an underground coal miner for 22 years before accepting a call to pastoral ministry in 1997. He began pastoring Mountain View Conference's (MVC) Buckhannon (W.Va.) church and later added the Glenville (W.Va.) and Braxton (W.Va.) churches. During Cutright's tenure, his wife, Bonnie, taught at the Brushy Fork Adventist School in Buckhannon for more than 10 years.

Daniel Morikone, who retired in early September 2020, became a pastor in the MVC September 2000, adding the role of Health Ministries director in 2001. The MVC Wellness Camp became a reality under his leadership. He also worked as a literature evangelist in the MVC and Kentucky-Tennessee conferences.



Donna Nicholas, who retired in late June, attended Southern Missionary College (now Southern Adventist University) in Tennessee, graduating in 1974 with a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and a minor in Home Economics. After several years of teaching in the public schools in Richwood, W.Va., she became a stay-at-home mom to her two daughters, Kim and Amy. Several years later, Nicholas assisted at the Summersville Adventist School (W.Va.), eventually teaching there full-time for more than 30 years.

Jane Browning began working at the conference office in 1984. She has worked in the education, youth, Pathfinders, communication and health departments, as well as the Adventist Book Center, and, since 2002, as administrative assistant to the president. Browning has served under seven presidents during her 37 years at MVC. Although retiring from full-time employment in late July, Browning continues to work part-time in the office and for Valley Vista events.



The Mountain View Conference thanks retirees Rick Cutright, Daniel Morikone, Donna Nicholas and Jane Browning for their many years of ministry.

Clayton Powell and his wife, Melodi (left), are the new pastoral couple for the Weirton and Wheeling (W.Va.) church district. While doing summer literature evangelism, Clayton felt the call to ministry, and later took a year off from his studies to be a Bible worker in Michigan. In May 2021, he graduated from Southern Adventist University with a bachelor's degree in Theology and married Melodi in June 2021.

Daniel Venegas and his wife, Samantha, are the new pastoral couple for the Buckhannon, Braxton and Glenville (W.Va.) church district. Daniel recently graduated from Southern Adventist University with a bachelor's in Theology. An Australian native, he has lived in the United States for nearly 10 years and married Samantha in November 2020.



NEWS NEW JERSEY

Lost and Found

In February, my family and I experienced one of the worse snowstorms in recent years. With over three feet of snow, I wasn't sure if my tractor was powerful enough to clean the long driveway. So, instead of staying indoors sipping on my herbal tea, I ventured out into the cold to see if I could get it to work.

As a lover of snow, when I got outside, I began photographing and recording the beautiful, white-covered hills and trees. As I walked toward the garage to move the tractor, I fell three times. Unharmful, I jumped onto the tractor, wanting to take more videos. I reached inside my pocket to retrieve my cellphone. To my dismay, it wasn't there! I had lost my phone during one of the falls. I frantically went into search mode. My daughter even helped me look for it, but to no avail.

I resigned to the fact that I had lost a perfectly good-working phone, with all of the recent photos of my twin grandkids' birth, new music that I had not backed up and the fact that I would now have to purchase a new phone.

Fast forward two months. The snow finally melted, and my husband found my phone! After plugging it in and charging it, it still worked, without a single photo or song missing. Having already bought a new phone, my husband decided to keep the lost one, and, to this day, it still works perfectly.

This experience got me thinking of all the young prodigal sons and daughters of God who are wandering and lost in the world, just waiting to be found. The Bible says in Proverbs 22:6: "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (KJV). This verse gives me hope for all the parents whose children have abandoned Jesus and the church. The seed has been planted, and the data is still in their hearts. The missing ingredient? A connection and a recharge to Jesus Christ! Let us go out and find these prodigals. Let us bring home the lost. And may they, in turn, plug into Jesus again.



Sarah Capeles Frodelly
*Executive Assistant to
the Executive Secretary*

Perdido y Encontrado

En febrero, mi familia y yo experimentamos una de las peores tormentas de nieve de los últimos años. Con más de un metro de nieve, no estaba segura si mi tractor era lo suficientemente potente como para limpiar el largo camino de entrada a la casa. Entonces, en lugar de quedarme en casa bebiendo mi té de hierbas, me aventuré al frío para ver si podía hacer que funcionara.

Como amante de la nieve, cuando salí, comencé a fotografiar y grabar las hermosas colinas y árboles cubiertos de blanco. Mientras caminaba hacia el garaje para mover el tractor, me caí tres veces. Ilesa, salté al tractor, con ganas de grabar más videos. Busqué dentro de mi bolsillo para recuperar mi teléfono celular. Para mi consternación, ¡no estaba allí! Había perdido mi teléfono durante una de las caídas. Entré frenéticamente en modo de búsqueda. Mi hija incluso me ayudó a buscarlo, pero fue en vano.

Me resigné al hecho de que había perdido un teléfono que funcionaba perfectamente, con todas las fotos recientes del nacimiento de mis nietos gemelos, música nueva que no había guardado y el hecho de

que ahora tendría que comprar un teléfono nuevo.

Dos meses pasan. ¡La nieve finalmente se derritió y mi esposo encontró mi teléfono! Después de conectarlo y cargarlo, siguió funcionando, sin que faltara una sola foto o canción. Después de haber comprado un teléfono nuevo mi esposo decidió quedarse con el teléfono perdido y, hasta el día de hoy, todavía funciona perfectamente.

Esta experiencia me hizo pensar en todos los jóvenes hijos e hijas pródigos de Dios que están vagando y perdidos en el mundo, esperando ser encontrados. La Biblia dice en Proverbios 22:6: "Instruye al niño en el camino que debe andar, y cuando sea viejo, no se apartará de él" (KJV). Este versículo da esperanza para todos los padres cuyos hijos han abandonado a Jesús y a la iglesia. La semilla ha sido plantada y los datos todavía están en sus corazones. ¿El ingrediente que falta? ¡Una conexión y una recarga a Jesucristo! Salgamos y encontremos a estos pródigos. Traigamos a casa a los perdidos. Y que ellos, a su vez, se conecten a Jesús nuevamente.—Sarah Capeles Frodelly

CONFERENCE HIRES NEW TREASURER

The New Jersey Conference Executive Committee recently voted Carlos Portanova as the conference's new treasurer. Portanova accepted the call and will return to the conference where he previously worked as undertreasurer. Prior to his return, Portanova served as treasurer and Planned Giving & Trust Services director for the Oklahoma Conference.

"I am very happy and excited to be back at the New Jersey Conference and to embark on this new journey as treasurer," says Portanova, who will be joined by Cinthia, his wife of 18 years, and their three children: Yaritzel, Carlos Jr., and Adolfo (family pictured). "I look forward to working together to finish the work that the Lord has set before us."



Born and raised in Peru, Portanova has a Bachelor of Arts in Accounting from Universidad Peruana Union and a Master in Business Administration with an emphasis in accounting from Southwestern Adventist University (Texas).

Jorge Aguero, New Jersey Conference president, says that Portanova's talents extend beyond finance: "He is a very spiritual man, dedicated to the church, very humble and always ready to serve wherever he is called."

Emmanuel Asiedu, Columbia Union Conference treasurer, describes Portanova as a "wonderful treasurer with strong technical abilities. His strong background in auditing and accounting will be a huge blessing in the New Jersey Conference."

SINGER GIVES PRAISE FOR GOD'S PERFECT TIMING

Estefany Flores, who attends the Robbinsville church, has gone through many struggles in her life that have tested her faith when it comes to God's timing.

After losing her mother at a young age, Flores had to adjust to the absence of a mother figure. She

began to find comfort in friendships and relationships that ended in betrayal and heartbreak. These disappointments caused her to drop out of college, and she began to question God's presence. Little did she know, He was right by her side, wiping away every tear.



As time passed, she felt God's promptings and started trusting in His timing. She returned to college and received a degree. She also had faith that God would prepare someone special for her. A few months later, she met Edgar Flores, and they've been married for two years.

Estefany understands the struggles she faced were necessary in her walk and faith in God. A vocalist, her favorite song is "Wait on You" by Elevation Worship and Maverick City. Today, she boldly sings: "I'm gonna wait on You. I've tasted Your goodness. I'll trust in Your promise."

Estefany says the biggest lesson she has learned in life is to be patient: "God's timing is perfect."

LET'S CELEBRATE!



President Jorge Aguero (center) ordains Joe Daniel Navarro (left, with his wife Yayris), pastor of the Jersey City Spanish, La Esperanza Spanish and Union City Spanish churches and the Bayonne Company; and Anthony Baffi (right, with his wife, Tatiana), Communication and Media director for the conference.

2021 Summer Camp Brings Youth to Christ

At the end of the 2021 summer camp season at Camp Mohaven in Danville, a total of 40 campers gave their lives to Christ through baptism. What's more incredible is the story of how God led the summer camp ministry that usually averages about six to 10 baptisms per season.

In early spring 2021, Ohio Conference President Bob Cundiff encouraged pastors—with their board and leadership team—to set a goal of how many baptisms they wanted to see during the year. At that moment I thought, “If the pastors are encouraged to set a goal for baptism, why not the Youth Department and summer camp too? So, I set an ambitious goal of 10 baptisms—not too low, but not too high.

With 10 in mind, my team went into staff training week intentionally recognizing that the purpose of summer camp ministry was not only to share Jesus but invite campers to follow Him. We also intentionally encouraged each week's camp pastor to make appeals for our young people to make decisions for Jesus. And God blessed each week! Junior camp finished with 17 baptisms. Tween camp—which usually has one or two decisions—finished with 13 baptisms. Family camp—another event with usually low to no responses—saw two young people and a staff member be baptized. With one week of camp left, our total was at 33 baptisms!

It was then that I made a new, bold prayer for our final week of teen camp. I prayed that God would give us 40 baptisms in total. I didn't share this prayer request with anyone. On Friday evening, during the final appeal, God blessed, and seven teenagers stepped forward and made decisions for Christ. On Sabbath, as the final camper stepped out of the baptismal pool, God had brought our season total to 40, just as I had prayed!

I believe what made the difference this year was both the work of the Holy Spirit and the passion each staff member felt for mission when we first set our baptism goal of 10. Praise God for each life brought to Christ! Praise God that He didn't just give us the 10 that we originally prayed for, but multiplied it by four!



Edward Marton
Youth Director

Camp Meeting Celebrates Baptisms, Sets 2023 Goal

This summer, Ohio Conference members gathered for the first in-person English camp meeting since 2019. More than 600 people worshipped and fellowshiped at the Mount Vernon Hill church, as well as under the “big top” tent at Camp Mohaven in Danville—reigniting connections and faith.

Themed “Included in God's Kingdom!” the highlight of camp meeting was baptisms. “What better way to start camp meeting than with baptisms,” praised Bob Cundiff, conference president, as he stood next to the baptismal pool. “It's a reminder for us that ... the purpose of church is to do mission!” In total, six people committed their lives to Jesus through baptism.

Cundiff, addressing the conference for the first time in person since taking office during the pandemic, introduced the conference's new mission plan: Initiative 2023. Voted by the executive committee this year, the bold goal is to see 2,023 new baptisms across the state of Ohio by the time the next constituency meeting rolls around in 2023.

Churches in Ohio are pressing forward with

evangelistic ministry in support of Initiative 2023, with 617 people joining the faith this year alone. “We have baptized more people in the first six months of this year than we ever have in an entire year of our conference's history,” reported Cundiff. “That number [already] puts us at 30 percent toward our goal!”



‘Something Great Comes’ to Hispanic Ministries Team

This year, the Hispanic Ministries Department has experienced many stories of how God has worked in people’s lives across Ohio: an entire family making the decision to give their lives to Jesus; a lady who resisted her friend’s invitation to church finally attends and decides to be baptized; a daughter who takes a trip to see her mother be baptized ends up being touched by the Holy Spirit and gets baptized too; 10 young people get baptized together; a pastor baptizes his own sister; a man who suffers from addiction and sleeps in a cemetery finds new life and hope by giving his life to Jesus.

Every story reflects the message and mission of a well-known Spanish Christian song—the rallying cry of the Hispanic Ministries team this year. Translated, the refrain calls to:

“Extend your hands to receive what is to come.
A strong word burns inside of you,
challenging you to widen your place
because soon you will grow, you will grow.
Something great is coming for you,
something great will come.”



Oswaldo Magana (left), conference executive secretary, and Peter Simpson, Hispanic Ministries coordinator (center), pray over baptismal candidates at the Bosworth church in Cleveland.

The team recently set out with seven Spanish-speaking pastors to enact a mission plan to reach the four metropolitan regions of the state: Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton and Toledo. Each church set their own goal for baptisms, totaling 84 people statewide. Through the first half of the year, members united in mission with personal

evangelism, small groups and evangelistic weeks of prayer, everyone working under the motto (translated): “My YES is ON.”

This summer, Ohio Conference Hispanic churches gathered to host a one-day baptismal service where baptismal candidates committed their lives to Christ, each congregation holding their own services. That day, 182 people entered the waters of baptism, more than doubling their initial goal of 84.

The Hispanic Ministries team witnessed that “something great has come!” as they continue to move forward in faith, believing that even more is to come.—Peter Simpson, Hispanic Ministries Coordinator



Baptismal candidates from the Revive Bilingual church in Cleveland prepare to be dipped into the water.



Albert Perez (standing with microphone), pastor of Ohio Conference’s north/central districts, prays over baptismal candidates at Camp Mohaven.

Pennsylvania Pen

Why I Came to the Pennsylvania Conference

In 1997, I left the Pennsylvania Conference to pastor in another part of the country. Twenty-four years later, I've returned to serve as the ministerial director and evangelism coordinator. Many have asked, "Why leave It Is Written to return to Pennsylvania?"

"God," I tell them. But there is a little more to the story.

For the last several years, I've been hearing great stories of how the Holy Spirit is moving across Pennsylvania. The key indicators of a healthy conference were all pointing up: baptisms, church attendance and tithes/offerings. That intrigued me. What is happening?

It did not take long for me to find the answer: a passion for evangelism from the top down. And when I say evangelism, I'm not just talking public evangelism, but the whole cycle of evangelism, including personal and corporate revival, training, bridge-building ministries, friendship evangelism and giving Bible studies.

Now that I've been here for several months, I can honestly say that what I saw from a distance is really what is happening here. Members, pastors and conference leaders are indeed into reaching people for Jesus. Our camp meeting evangelism offering reached an unprecedented level: more than \$300,000! Amazing. These generous gifts are funding more than 120 evangelistic meetings taking place across the state this year.

Something special is happening here in Pennsylvania. It's good to be back.



Yves Monnier
Ministerial Director

Organizers Invite 'FRAN' to Evangelistic Meetings

This spring, Alex Dubee, now retired pastor of the Pottsville and Hamburg churches, partnered with the CORE school of evangelism and local Bible worker Jack LaCamera to hold evangelistic meetings at both churches.

Instead of distributing handbills or going door to door with invitations, members invited FRAN—friends, relatives, associates and neighbors—to attend the evangelistic meetings. An average of 40–50 people attended each night of the monthlong series. Twelve people committed to baptism at the end of the program, with several continuing studies.

Dubee was especially touched by the story of a couple who had their membership removed from the Seventh-day Adventist Church books: "Anne* was praying for God to send her a godly husband after she met Jesus again. Mark*, a classmate of hers from many years ago, was attending the [evangelistic] meetings. The messages changed his life. Their friendship was rekindled. God truly brought them together."

The Hamburg and Pottsville churches are gearing up for meetings again this fall and plan to continue to invite FRAN. "It is exciting to see Hamburg and Pottsville begin a cycle of evangelism," shares Lillian Torres, assistant evangelism director for the



Alex DuBee (left), pastor of the Hamburg and Pottsville churches, along with Dee Casper, director of the CORE school of evangelism, celebrate the baptism of Erica Finnerty, a CORE student who is now serving as a Bible worker in the Pennsylvania Conference.

conference. "The members are already praying, preparing to invite more FRAN to meetings."

—Natalie Lilly, *Communication Intern*

*pseudonyms

Conference Family ‘Prays the Mission Forward’

As part of the prayer initiative, “Praying the Mission Forward,” members, church families, schools and conference leaders accepted an exciting challenge earlier this year as they prayed daily for 30 days.

Spearheaded by assistant to the president Shawn Shives, conference leaders joined executive committee and association committee members via phone each night to pray for the eight strategic initiatives, as well as for the upcoming camp meeting and any concerns the prayer partners raised.

Using daily videos highlighting the week’s focus, leaders encouraged churches and schools to also pray for the eight strategic conference initiatives. Members from the Hampden Heights church in Temple met every night via phone. Intending to pray from 8–8:30 p.m., the initial group of 10 quickly grew to 30, requiring them to extend the prayer time to 9 p.m.

When the 30 days of prayer ended, organizers invited people to spend one more day in prayer—praying nonstop for 24 hours. Pastors and



conference leaders took turns leading out in prayer each hour throughout the day and into the night, with others joining in.

“We saw so many miracles happen because of our prayers,” says Shives. “There were sick people in the hospital that were never supposed to leave, but we prayed for them, and they were released, completely healed.”—*Natalie Lilly, Communication Intern*

A poster for an event titled "Stand Firm". The background shows a person's legs in blue jeans and brown hiking boots standing on a large, weathered log. The text is overlaid on the image.

Pennsylvania Conference
Youth Ministries invites
young people ages 13-19+ to:

Stand Firm

September 25, 2021
10:00 am-6:00 pm

Harrisburg First
Seventh-day Adventist Church
424 N. Progress Av. Harrisburg, Pa.

Lunch and supper are provided.
A \$5 cash donation is requested.

A poster for a women's retreat titled "Expectant Hope". The background shows a young woman with long dark hair, wearing a denim jacket and black pants, sitting on a grassy hill and looking up at the sky. The text is overlaid on the image.

Pennsylvania Conference Women's Retreat

Expectant Hope

September 17-19, 2021
Laurel Lake Camp, Rossiter, Pa.

Register at paconference.org/womensministries

Pennsylvania Pen is published in the *Visitor* by the Pennsylvania Conference ■ 720 Museum Road, Reading, PA 19611
Phone: (610) 374-8331, ext. 210 ■ paconference.org ■ President, Gary Gibbs ■ Communication Director, Tamyra Horst



Family Takes Vacation Bible School Beyond the Walls

Some might say Vacation Bible School (VBS) is synonymous with summertime, and this summer was no exception. William Ovalle, pastor of the Manassas (Va.) Central Spanish, the Manassas (Va.) Battlefield Spanish and the Centreville (Va.) Spanish churches, along with his wife, Tetiana, and their sons, Vitaly and Matthias, decided to take a step of faith and expand the concept of VBS.

The family organized a VBS event for their entire district and community, instead of hosting an event solely for their church members. It was the first VBS for the area since the pandemic hit in March 2020. William ran the program, Tetiana organized the event and Vitaly and Matthias, along with other volunteer children, led in song service.

VBS was conducted in person and live on social media for those who felt more comfortable watching from home. Under the theme, “Heroes,” more than 50 children from the churches and community participated in the event. Additionally, more than 300 families connected online via YouTube, various church Facebook pages and Kids Spot—a Facebook page created by the Ovalle family during the pandemic to bring kids closer to Jesus.

“When we realized that some kids would still not be able to come and enjoy VBS, we decided to have a live transmission as well,” says Tetiana. “It gave more opportunities to reach out ... because every child matters!”



Vacation Bible School volunteers and kids get fresh air during “Heroes.”

During the week, children experienced life in the biblical city of Bethany, replicated with decorations throughout the Manassas Spanish church. They learned how to be brave like Mary and dedicated like Samuel. The participants also learned new songs, listened to interactive Bible stories, made crafts, played games and more. By the end of VBS, they presented Jesus—the greatest Hero of all—to the kids. The children later had the opportunity to dedicate their lives to Jesus through prayer.

“It was a great VBS week,” says attendee Christopher Fuentes. “I learned how to help others by the examples of the Bible heroes. My two cousins and I could not wait for each meeting. In the mornings, we were ready with our team T-shirts and bags.”

Throughout the week, the children had the opportunity to write prayer requests on a special prayer wall. They presented these petitions to the Lord through prayer at a special service on Sabbath morning. When VBS officially ended, many children inquired if there would be another VBS the following week.

The event received immense praise from the families and surrounding community who connected through social media. Led by the Ovalle family, this project provided them with the opportunity to serve others, as this year’s district-led VBS went “beyond the walls.”



William Ovalle, pastor of three Hispanic churches in Virginia, along with six helpers, share a memory verse during Vacation Bible School.

Conference Appoints First Female Lead Pastor

Lola Moore-Johnston grew up in Newark, N.J., and at an early age felt God's call on her life. Her leadership gifts were evident early in her spiritual development, as she led out in her local church and while attending college at La Sierra University (Calif.). In her youth, God was preparing her to be a change agent and a history maker.

Moore-Johnston joined the Potomac Conference in 2018 as the pastor of the Woodbridge (Va.) church. On July 1, she was installed as the senior pastor of the Restoration Praise Center in Bowie, Md. It is the first time in the history of the Potomac Conference that a female has been selected the lead pastor of a congregation.

"The fact that Lola has the distinction of being the first female pastor in Potomac to lead her own team is not lost on anyone who is aware of the calling that God has placed on her life and the gifts and abilities that he has given her to live out that calling," says Charles A. Tapp, conference president. "As the lead pastor of the Restoration Praise Center, I am confident that Lola will continue to help direct her congregation, as they seek to expand the kingdom of God 'beyond the walls' of their church and into the homes and hearts of those in their community."

In addition to her pastoral duties, Moore-Johnston is a trained chaplain, author and entrepreneur. As founder and CEO of the Bloom Movement, she has created a safe space specifically to help women discover and unearth their buried potential.



Far West End Members Beautify Community

Earlier this year, members of the Far West End church in Rockville, Va., went "beyond the walls" in ministry to help beautify their community. The group responded to a request from a local community

member who needed help keeping the area around the church and beyond remain in pristine condition.

The group, consisting of youth to senior citizens, gathered early on a Sunday morning to pick up trash that had been discarded along the roadside. Member Lin Jones (pictured, wearing purple shirt) says, "We climbed through prickly branches to gather an amazing amount of trash, including a used battery ... and the seat from a tractor, just to name a few."

When community residents witnessed what they were doing, they joined the cleaning efforts. Others shouted thanks as they drove by in their vehicles.

This small but significant act of service allowed Junnie Ree Pagusan, pastor of the Far West End church, to introduce some community members to the church and its members.

Members say they enjoyed participating in the clean-up venture, and they want to do it again. Already involved in many local community activities, the Far West End plans to continue to seek ways to minister "beyond the walls."



Junnie Ree Pagusan (right), pastor of the Far West End church, along with 10 other members, take a break in the middle of cleaning the surrounding church area.

PHOTO BY DAMION DUNLAP



THE BMA EXPERIENCE

BLUE MOUNTAIN ACADEMY

Class of 2021 Chooses Mission Over Entertainment

“Our senior class didn’t want to do just any class trip; we wanted to serve,” shares Catarina Falcao, a Blue Mountain Academy (BMA) 2021 graduate. “Since we couldn’t go out of the country because of COVID-19, we decided to serve in Florida.”

Students served local Seventh-day Adventist churches and their communities in a variety of ways. “What was really impressive about these BMA students is how they worked in the hot sun to help several churches stripe their parking lots and paint their fencing. They worked fast, accurately and joyfully, [without complaining], despite a heat index of over 100 degrees,” states Gary Gibbs, Pennsylvania Conference president. “Even more impressive was the morning and evening worships they led. ... I am extremely grateful for the influence BMA is having on young people!”

Graduate Ossie Vidal shares, “It was really a blessing to be able to work and make an impact, not only on the community, but on each of its members individually.”

Principal Burney Culpepper adds, “It is an exciting thing to be a part of a school where students



are choosing to experience a mission trip for their senior class trip. I observed the sense of Christian accomplishment that each senior showed as they ministered.”

Visit bma.us to learn how your teen can experience a Christ-centered, Adventist education that will equip them to grow academically and with a service-oriented perspective on the world around them.

WINTER ENROLLMENT

OPEN

AUGUST 30TH - DECEMBER 20TH
WWW.BMA.US

*Classes begin 1/10/22

The BMA Experience is published in the *Visitor* by the Blue Mountain Academy ■ 2363 Mountain Road, Hamburg, PA 19526
Phone: (610) 562-2291 ■ Fax: (610) 562-8050 ■ bma.us ■ Principal, Burney Culpepper ■ Editor, Esther Hernandez

Pioneers Remembered for Advancing Adventist Education

If you were to walk the grounds of Highland View Academy (HVA), the names of the buildings might remind you of those dedicated Seventh-day Adventist workers and members who had the foresight to build a place where generations of young people could obtain an Adventist Christian education.

In February 2021, HVA lost its last pioneer, Irving Barr, former director of maintenance, who, with his wife, Elsie, former business manager, worked for many years to build, maintain and grow HVA. The E & I Barr building—named after the founding pioneers (pictured right)—houses the school’s cafeteria and Music Department.

A year before Irving’s passing, HVA lost former principal Harvey J. Byram (who the gym is named after). As reflected in the July/August *HVA Highlander*, Byram tirelessly worked to build up both student population and buildings.

These workers continued the growth of Adventist education started by other people whose names are on the buildings throughout the campus. Built on the former Negley family farm, HVA became a reality when people like Marion and Ralph Hartle—for whom the boys’ dorm is named after—and Frank and Dolly DeHaan (below)—whose daughter the girls’ dorm is named after—worked to raise funds for the new school buildings and program.



For several years, these families played an integral part in providing in-house industries for student workers, with the Hartles building a nursing home in nearby Williamsport, Md., and the Hadley Farms Bakery, built on campus by the DeHaans and later in nearby Smithsburg, Md. These families, along with lay people, conference officials, local Adventist churches and the nearby Review and Herald Publishing Association, helped students along the way to obtain their own Adventist education.

Work-study programs, offered by the Williamsport Retirement Home and Hadley Farms Bakery, as well as other campus jobs, helped guarantee that students could afford their education. Today, students are blessed by scholarships donated by HVA’s alumni, board, faculty/staff and friends. Along with their committed family, every student who wishes to attend HVA has a way to afford it.

These pioneers just scratch the surface of those who built up Adventist education for the young people at HVA. Many believe that every church, whenever possible, should encourage their eligible young people to attend an Adventist high school such as HVA. As the biggest youth evangelism tool (as many believe), Adventist education—from kindergarten through college—supports the church in educating students for eternity. With your help, more Adventist Christian young people will have that opportunity.





the LEGACY

OUR JOURNEY

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF LAKE NELSON ADVENTIST ACADEMY

Academy Launches Satellite School Program

In 2013, the high school expansion at Lake Nelson Adventist Academy (LNAA) opened windows of opportunities for students and teachers alike. The school is now a place where high school students can receive honors, college credits in several courses, awards and other opportunities in a Seventh-day Adventist environment. With the recent development of a new satellite school program, LNAA will now be able to share these opportunities with students from another school.

The idea for the satellite school program materialized when Ruth Nino, principal of the Waldwick Adventist School (N.J.), reached out to LNAA principal Elisa Maragoto last fall. Maragoto thought it was a great opportunity and a beneficial addition for the schools to partner, allowing 11–12 grade students to receive live instruction, expanded leadership and social-emotional learning opportunities and have the ability to have an academy experience, says Maragoto, all while completing high school graduation requirements and receiving a diploma under LNAA's provision.

Once the two school boards approved the idea for the satellite program, the process to develop



Lake Nelson Adventist Academy class of 2021 students Timothy Herrick; Jorge Pontarelli, senior president; Juan Cueto, senior class pastor and Student Association sports coordinator; Ismael Nunez and Axel Villa dress up for the combined high school banquet.

each component, including curriculum, financial implications and the opportunities for the partnership began, with guidance from the Columbia Union Conference.

After completing the Substantive Change Program Report—a necessary part of the process—and hosting a visit from the North American Division Office of Education, the partnership program was officially approved and implemented for the 2021–22 school year.

LNAA continues to modify this new venture, expanding the educational opportunities offered to students across the territory. The new satellite program is a great way for students from two different schools to unite at events like the combined High School Banquet. It also gives an opportunity for teachers to learn as they work together and continue to grow in their teaching abilities. By God's grace, this will be a long-term project from which many students and teachers will benefit.
—Sierra Breanna ('21)



Students at Lake Nelson Adventist Academy and Waldwick Adventist School share a meal together.

PFA POST



Visit us online at PINEFORGEACADEMY.ORG. *Excellence is no accident.*

Academy Welcomes 6 New Team Members

Pine Forge Academy (PFA) is pleased to introduce six new team members for the 2021–22 school year:



Martine-Erica Bermingham serves as the Spanish and French teacher, as well as the Creative Arts director. An alumna of Greater New York Academy, Bermingham studied at the Official School of Languages (Spain) and the French Alliance (France), where she received certifications in Spanish and

French languages, respectively.

Bermingham also trained at the New York University Tisch School of the Arts and the American Academy of Dramatic Arts (N.Y.), where she became a disciplined thespian.

Ernest Romain Medley II is the new dean of young men. After graduating from Oakwood University (Ala.) with a Bachelor of Science in Fitness and Wellness, Medley served as the physical education teacher and later assistant dean at Forest City Adventist School. More recent, he served as athletic director at Forest Lake Academy. Medley has also worked with disadvantaged youth as a juvenile detention officer.



Dominique De Abreu moved to PFA to share her passion for chemistry with students. She received her Bachelor of Science from Oakwood University—where she fell in love with this subject matter—and her Master of Science in Education from Northcentral University (Calif.). De Abreu previously served as

the chemistry, biology, and anatomy and physiology

teacher at Potomac Conference's Shenandoah Valley Academy in New Market, Va. She has a desire for helping students to understand and appreciate the intricate interactions that take place between the smallest units of matter. As a chemistry teacher, she encourages students to apply their knowledge of chemical principles to everything, from innovative problem solving to everyday decisions regarding their health and safety.



Ja'Chin Holness is the new chaplain and religion teacher. Holness obtained his Bachelor of Arts in Ministerial Theology from Oakwood University and his Master of Divinity from the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary on the campus of Andrews University (Mich.).

Prior to arriving to PFA, Holness served as an associate pastor at the New Life Fellowship church on Andrews University's campus, as well as the religious vice president of the Black Student Christian Forum.

Reginald Lee, the new business manager, is a graduate of Oakwood University with a Bachelor of Arts in Business Management. Lee attended the Tom & Vi Zapara School of Business at La Sierra University (Calif.), where he obtained his Master of Science in Accountancy degree. Prior



to arriving at PFA, Lee was the senior accountant at the Barnes-Jewish HealthCare system (Mo.).



Jimmy Charles serves as the facilities manager. Charles joined the PFA team with the intent of having the facilities reflect the standard of excellence for which Pine Forge models.

Spotlight on Spencerville

Highlights from Spencerville Adventist Academy

LOVE TO LEARN
LIVE TO SERVE
ALL FOR CHRIST

STEM Department Hosts Summer Camp

Spencerville Adventist Academy's (SAA) STEM Department recently hosted a weeklong STEM camp for ages 9–12. The 12 campers who attended participated in hands-on STEM activities.

Exploring various areas of STEM, campers created paper marble roller coasters; tested



parachutes using wind tunnels; learned about fish anatomy and owl pellets; and built 3-D models of DNA using 3-D printers.

Campers such as Sarah Rajarathinam (pictured) also designed, built and tested a drop and rescue helicopter for a living creature trapped in a natural disaster.

The group also visited the International Spy Museum in Washington, D.C., to learn about different applications of STEM skills.

The STEM-focused worships, led by Ophelia Barizo, STEM coordinator for the Chesapeake Conference, were one of the highlights of each day, as well as a worship presentation by Matt Piersanti, youth pastor of the Spencerville church in Silver Spring, Md.

“We had busy days with STEM activities that also included breaks with snacks and physical activities,” says Paty Serrano, SAA STEM coordinator. “And COVID-19 guidelines were followed by [everyone].”

Academy Welcomes New Staff Members

The Spencerville Adventist Academy (SAA) community welcomes three new faces to the 2021–22 school year. **Carmen Alejandra Esposito** is SAA's

new school counselor. Esposito, an experienced teacher, vice principal and counselor, has worked in both North and South America. She has a Master of Arts in Professional Counseling Psychology. “My ultimate career goal is to inspire every student in such a way that I will see each one in heaven,” says Esposito.



Ingrid Rivera is SAA's new third-grade teacher. Rivera has a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary/Special Education and is certified in ESOL. Trilingual, she desires to help bridge language barriers and has a passion for helping students who struggle in this area. “We have been part of the Spencerville



community for eight years and pray to continue to be for many more years,” says Rivera.

Jason Martz, who holds a Master of Arts in Education, joins the middle-school team as the eight-grade homeroom and grades 6–8 math and science teacher. “I have a special love of math, and

I have a strong desire for kids to love it too!” says Martz.

Tissiana Bowerman, SAA's head principal, says, “Combined, these talented professionals bring 45 years of educational experience, a passion for Seventh-day Adventist education and a love for Jesus.”



SPRING VALLEY ACADEMY^{ORG} CONNECTIONS

INSPIRING STUDENTS TO KNOW FOLLOW SHARE JESUS

With Growing Numbers, Academy to Expand High School

God has blessed Spring Valley Academy (SVA) with unprecedented growth over the past several years. With an enrollment nearing 500 this school year, the current facility is at maximum capacity. As SVA completed the first phase of the Fritzsche Center for Worship and Performing Arts in 2018, it became clear that the next project needed to address the need for more classroom space. Plans began for a new high school addition along the southwest corner of the existing facility.

With more than half of the projected cost of \$6 million raised, SVA recently broke ground ceremonially. The project will commence September 1, with an expected completion date of July 2022, just in time for the 2022-23 school year.

The new high school addition will be approximately 15,000 square feet and will include six

new classrooms that open onto a large atrium with plenty of space for studying, small groups and other gatherings. There will be an activity room with ping pong tables, as well as a beautiful patio space.

With this new addition, current high school classrooms will be available for middle schoolers to use, as the student body continues to grow.

“We knew we needed this space,” says Darren Wilkins, principal. “God has blessed us to the point of stretching our current capacity. It’s a good problem to have, but one that needs to be addressed so we can continue to educate as many young people for the kingdom.”

For more information or to support the high school expansion project, contact Angie Peach at (937) 433-0790, or visit springvalleyacademy.org.



Connections is published in the *Visitor* by Spring Valley Academy ■ 1461 Spring Valley Pike, Centerville, OH 45458
Phone: (937) 433-0790 ■ springvalleyacademy.org ■ Principal, Darren Wilkins ■ Editor, Vicki Swetnam



IMPACT Shenandoah

Serve God – Value Knowledge – Accept a Life of Service

2021 Graduates Reveal It's All About Relationships

The Shenandoah Valley Academy (SVA) school family is nurtured and established in Christian love—focused on building lifelong relationships with God, family and friends. Reflections from the Class of 2021 year-end survey reveal the incalculable value of SVA relationships in 2021 and every school year (see full 2021 profiles on SVA Facebook and Instagram pages).

Most important lesson(s) learned at SVA:

I've become much closer to God here, more than in my whole life. ■ God makes a way, so we can have confidence He will get us through anything. ■ I have learned to relate better with others after meeting such a diverse group of people. ■ Life is complicated. Cherish the time you have with the people you love. ■ I've learned to give everything to God and rely on Him for strength.

Most inspirational faculty/staff:

Mr. Lowe for his dedication to students. He has a smile on his face and a willingness to help. He makes SVA feel like a home. ■ Ms. Wiedemann, Dean Powell and Mrs. Patrick for fighting for me when I didn't have the strength to fight for myself and for encouraging me to never give up. ■ Mrs. White encouraged me to do my best and gave great advice about future life. ■ Mr. Biaggi helped me so much and is a good, spiritual example. ■ Mrs. Dean is



Ceiry Flores ('21) receives congratulations from Joe Lowe, recruiter and business teacher.



At his baptism, Class of 2021 senior Kevin Ruiz (center), receives support from Dean Ryan Knight (left); Dean Vernal Roseval; Peter Petrie, intern pastor of the New Market church; and Dean Jordan McCullough.

always there for me. She gives her all in everything she does. ■ Pastor Harley's enthusiasm, kindness and positive attitude makes class, mission trips and Sabbath activities super fun. ■ Dean Powell for the long hours she put in for each girl. It is a true measure of love. ■ Ms. Wiedemann's passion and enthusiasm for music radiates through everything she does. Her nonjudgmental attitude helps me be open with her. ■ Mr. and Mrs. Raymond have helped me so much and care about me. ■ Mrs. Heidi inspires me by treating others with kindness, displaying the love of Christlikeness to everyone around her. ■ Mr. Lechler is kind and encouraging. He is more than a teacher; he is a friend.

Thank you to:

God, my church, my parents. I am here because of their support. ■ Every faculty and staff member who helped me and believes in me. ■ My parents for letting me decide to attend SVA. The amazing faculty and staff for making me feel like I belong. ■ My teachers for teaching me for four years. My deans for their hard work and patience. Most importantly, my family for their support and for allowing me to come to SVA.

www.ta.edu **TA TODAY**

News you can use from Takoma Academy

Student-Led Podcast Fosters Spiritual Development

The Living Room TA, a podcast hosted by several students, as well as Leah Burgess, Takoma Academy's (TA) chaplain, served as TA's weekly chapel experience due to the school's continued virtual learning experience during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020–21.

Episodes were recorded one to two weeks in advance. Every other Friday, the team hosted a virtual two-hour recording session. The first hour was split into four 15-minute episodes that coincided with TA's four-day school schedule. Using a different host and topic, the second hour was also split into four episodes for the following week.

The spiritually enriching podcast takes a collaborative effort. While topics are preselected, conversation isn't scripted, and the co-hosts are free to add their own thoughts and ideas to the topic they're discussing. Shiloh Starling ('23) comments, "As a result of the TA podcast, I have been able to grow and talk to people that I connect with. It also has deepened my connection with God."

In late August 2020, the team launched season one of the podcast. What felt like fun conversation at the time ended up leading to some very insightful dialogue. During the first season, they discussed topics ranging from improving your relationship with God to healthy lifestyle habits. They also tackled much deeper subject matters, such as harassment, mental health issues and activism.

With 16 guests across 66 episodes, it was an



Jaydon Mabena, podcast host and audio engineer, edits an episode of The Living Room TA podcast.

unforgettable season. Gabriel Morency ('22), a member of the podcast team, says, "I was told that the podcast would be for the students listening. Little did I know how much it would affect me as a host. The knowledge that there may be students listening ... motivated me to continue to host the podcast."

Following winter break in early January 2021, they launched the second season, kicking off the year with an updated cast, expanding from six to 15 team members. Their inaugural discussion included student-led messages, as well as an interview with Renée Battle-Brooks, an assistant state's attorney for Prince George's County, Maryland.

Season two featured 24 special guest appearances. By the end of the season, they had reached listeners from 15 countries, including Brazil, Kenya and Singapore. Burgess, executive producer, concludes, "An idea for a podcast was on my mind. A few months later, a student wanted to talk and pray about his gifts in ministry. Fast forward two months and we were face-to-face with the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges of encouraging spiritual development in the lives of our student body. In August 2020, we witnessed an idea transition into prayer and later into good fruit—*The Living Room TA* podcast."—Jaydon Mabena ('21)



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Phone: (301) 434-4700 ■ ta.edu ■ Principal, (vacant) ■ Editor, Salena Fitzgerald

The Story Stewards

Children love to hear the words, "Once upon a time" because they know a story can't be far behind. Spend a few minutes listening to kids at play and you quickly realize delightful narratives shape their interactions.

And it's not just for kids. Four of the most powerful words I know are "Tell me a story." I deeply value the time I spend in our hospitals – interacting with our patients and their families and listening to our team members. Each of us has a distinctive history and point of view. So many insights are in the stories we share.

Our shared values of respect and integrity are paramount throughout our work in healthcare, and we are trained to be protective stewards of the stories our patients and families share that help us understand more clearly how we might be of service.

I believe that listening and learning from one another through stories deepens our compassion and may result in better results and outcomes. It certainly impacts the patient experience. Our patients come to us at the most extreme moments of life, moments filled with emotional intensity. Understanding their stories is vital to our interaction and effectiveness.

We are also stewards of the information we share with one another, our own stories. Each of us brings a unique set of circumstances and experiences with us, and we are also part of the stories we are creating together. Our individual perspectives help shape how we participate in the teams that we belong to.

There is so much to learn from each other! Be mindful of the diverse narratives that are swirling around us – the stories being written at every moment, the simple and the sublime, the immediate and the epic. Look at how they generate so much lively energy and opportunity for engagement with one another. Poet Mary Oliver puts it so succinctly in her work entitled "Sometimes." In one of the stanzas, she writes:

*Instructions for living a life:
Pay attention.
Be astonished.
Tell about it.*

Good advice for story stewards.

Terry Forde
President & CEO
Adventist HealthCare



Washington Post Top Workplace

Only Healthcare Provider to Make the List

Adventist HealthCare earned a spot on The Washington Post's list of Top Workplaces 2021 in the Washington, D.C., area. Adventist HealthCare was the only provider of medical services on the list of 200 employers from public and private industries, nonprofits and government agencies. Moreover, Adventist HealthCare was one of only 12 organizations that The Post honored in the largest company category.

Rankings are based on a survey of employees conducted by The Post through its research partner, Energage LLC. The anonymous survey asked employees to rate their companies in areas related to workplace culture, including connection, leadership, engagement, pay and benefits. The Post invited 3,511 employers in the region to participate.

"We understand the significance of this notable honor being awarded to our organization during a pandemic," said Terry Forde, President and CEO of Adventist HealthCare. "The recognition is a true testament to the incredibly hard and diligent work of our healthcare workers, leaders and partners across our entire system."

"Our goal is to be the best place to work and grow," said Brendan Johnson, Senior Vice President of Human Resources for Adventist HealthCare. "We are grateful and humbled that our caregivers feel supported and connected during this incredibly challenging time – and thank The Washington Post for this recognition."

Adventist HealthCare is one of the largest employers in Montgomery County, Maryland, with more than 6,000 employees and nearly 2,000 physician partners serving patients in 59 locations in the D.C. region.

"The Mission and Values of Adventist HealthCare resonate with my personal values and that has made my 10-year journey very enjoyable and fulfilling," said Avni Jain, MD, Family Medicine, Adventist HealthCare Adventist Medical Group.

The Post noted Adventist HealthCare's mission of whole-person, faith-based healthcare. "I have the opportunity to care for patients physically, mentally and spiritually," the Post said an employee shared in the survey. "I enjoy talking with my patients and leaving them uplifted and hopeful."

**TOP
WORK
PLACES
2021**

The Washington Post

Living Our Mission to Extend God's Healing

Hospitals Commemorate Zero-COVID Milestone

Two of Adventist HealthCare's acute care hospitals celebrated a significant milestone in June: zero COVID-19 inpatients for the first time in over a year at each location.

White Oak Medical Center reached their milestone on June 15 after 452 days of consecutive COVID-19 patient care and gathered the following evening at the lake behind the hospital. The Spiritual Care team offered a moving devotion and prayer before nurses, physicians, techs, environmental services, dietary and administrative team members released paper lanterns that floated together onto the lake, each carrying special messages and reflections. Hospital President Anthony Stahl said the gathering of people at the lakeside gave him a feeling of God's constant presence. He expressed gratitude for the strength and perseverance of team members and thanked God for protecting the hospital and lighting the way through the many challenges of the pandemic.

Shady Grove Medical Center achieved their milestone on June 22 and commemorated the moment with a luminaria ceremony for team members in the hospital's Healing Garden on the evening of June 24. The garden was aglow with 462 bags lining its walkways, one for each day of consecutive COVID-19 patient care before the break. Departments were invited to decorate luminaria bags and add to the display. Colorful bags circled the garden's fountain at the sunset, honoring the hard work of colleagues and remembering those impacted by the pandemic. Hospital President Dan Cochran opened the ceremony with words of thanks to team members. He also acknowledged the support from our community since March 2020. Manager of Pastoral Care Stephanie Grant offered a prayer of thanks and healing, and guest singer Tim Allnutt, father of a team member, closed the ceremony by singing "Amazing Grace."

At both ceremonies, leaders honored our team members for their hard work, expressed appreciation for the vaccine, and encouraged community members to get vaccinated to keep COVID-19 case numbers low.



Paper lanterns launched on the lake at White Oak Medical Center (above) and luminaria lighting Shady Grove Medical Center (below) marked zero COVID-19 inpatient milestones.



Serving the Mission Field Close to Home

By Christina Keresoma

COVID-19's impact is still being felt around the world. Changes were made to accommodate new routines, and unfortunately, sometimes the economic toll was just too heavy, causing many businesses to close their doors. One of the most tragic losses caused by the pandemic was charities who serve those in need. Reach Out Montgomery County, who served the uninsured in the Dayton area, lost funding in the wake of COVID-19 and had no other choice but close. This meant that many adults had lost an important support system and source of medical care.

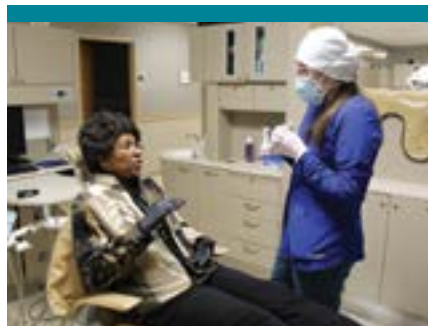
The Good Neighbor House, a non-profit charity organization established by multiple Dayton area Seventh-day Adventist churches, worked to find solutions to fill this new void. They quickly partnered with the county, local universities, and a pharmaceutical dispensary in May 2020 to get resources for prescriptions, behavioral health services, and physical therapy services.

Two months later, another partnership was created with the Soin Family Residency Program, a program within Kettering Health (formerly known as Kettering Adventist HealthCare). This residency program allowed Good Neighbor House to increase the number of people they can help and double available appointments. Average visits have grown from 24 per month to 41 per month, with some months seeing more than 50 patients. What was once a clinic of volunteer doctors, who could come in their off-time one or two times per month, is now growing into a robust clinic providing greater continuity of care. Clinic days have already increased from two-to-four per month to at least four per week. This has allowed Good Neighbor House to shorten the wait time from about two months to two weeks.

The Good Neighbor House is now reaching more of the community—but their current building cannot support this volume and need. Space has run out at the Good Neighbor House and a much-needed expansion is underway. Plans have been drawn for a 2,600-square-foot expansion for a medical wing and a remodel of the 4,200-square-foot dental wing that would include two additional chairs, bringing the count to six. The additional upgrades along with the expansion and remodel would also modernize the clinic.

I'm personally convinced that the passion at the Good Neighbor House is incredibly contagious. As soon as someone sees what you're doing, they can't resist wanting to help. Thank you again for the amazing work you do and the opportunity to join in those efforts.

—Matthew McLaughlin, Midmark Corp (contributing donor)



Routine dental and medical checkups are vital to the health of a community, so the Good Neighbor House has been a great place for dental and medical residents to gain a rich educational experience while providing a

much-needed service to the community.

For more information on the Good Neighbor House and the services they provide, visit their website goodneighborhouse.org

Taking Care of Women

Grandview Medical Center (which will be called Kettering Health Dayton) leaders gathered to celebrate an expansion at the Grandview Women's Center. Percy Frasier, MD, who has delivered more than 10,000 babies over 40 years, and two midwives, will ensure the center continues to meet the healthcare needs of women in the Dayton area.



Doors Open at a Second Years Ahead Health Center

Kettering Health has opened a second Years Ahead Health Center this summer in Kettering, Ohio, giving senior community members more access to healthcare services. Services include primary care, lab and imaging, and educational, wellness, and support programs. Another Years Ahead Health Center will be opening in the Greater Dayton area in Harrison Township, which will make it the third senior center in the Dayton area.

World-renowned Orthopedic Surgeon Thomas Graham, MD, Joins Kettering Health

Thomas Graham, MD, has joined Kettering Health as senior vice president and chief innovation and transformation officer. Dr. Graham is a world-renowned orthopedic hand surgeon, healthcare executive, author, inventor, and entrepreneur.



As senior vice president and chief innovation and transformation officer, Dr. Graham will focus on defining and translating the creative, innovative culture established in the spirit of Kettering Health's namesake, Charles F. Kettering, and ensuring Kettering

Health continues to deliver advanced, high-quality care to those they serve.

Throughout his career, Dr. Graham has continued to innovate, holding more than 60 patents, publishing over 100 scholarly articles, and founding four medical device companies. He also has extensive clinical expertise in surgery of the hand, wrist, and elbow. He has served as the hand surgery consultant, team physician, and medical director for numerous professional sports teams in the NFL, NHL, NBA, MLB, and PGA. During his short time at Kettering Health, he has already provided care for multiple professional athletes from across the country.



*Congratulations to Kettering College's 2021
spring and summer graduates!*

Kettering College Celebrates 2021 Graduates with Two Commencement Ceremonies

By Lauren Brooks

Kettering College conferred degrees and certificates upon 66 students at the spring commencement ceremony on April 29, at SouthBrook Christian Church and 146 students at the summer commencement ceremony on July 16, at the Benjamin and Marian Schuster Center in downtown Dayton.

For the spring ceremony, two programs graduated—Radiologic Technology and Occupational Therapy. Both programs held their dedication or pinning ceremony before participating in the commencement ceremony. Students had a few limitations because of COVID-19 protocols. Only a few family members and friends per student could attend each ceremony, but each ceremony was livestreamed for friends and family to watch from the comfort of their homes.

By the summer ceremony, the majority of COVID-19 restrictions had been lifted in Ohio. This ceremony also marked the first large campus-wide event since the onset of the pandemic.

“Over the last 18 months, while most of humanity was trying to figure out how to keep toilet paper in the house, you [graduates] were persevering and persisting through the most incredibly disruptive period of time in the history of healthcare education,” said Kettering College President Nate Brandstater in his address to the graduates. “Bask in the glow of this moment, and may that glow light the path for what lies ahead.”

Between both ceremonies, President Brandstater awarded 24 associate degrees and 123 bachelor's degrees, including 75 Bachelor of Science in Nursing degrees. Fifty-five students graduated with a Master of Physician Assistant Studies degree, and 27 students graduated with their doctorate in Occupational Therapy.

Eastern Shore Expansion Brings Joy to the Region

WGTS 91.9 is celebrating the realization of a dream: the expansion of the ministry to the Eastern Shore of Maryland and Delaware, which will reach over 500,000 residents, as well as tourists and college students in that region.

On June 24, donors, staff, and listeners joined together in-person, on the air, and online to dedicate this new part of the ministry. The staff was lead in prayer by Terry Johnsson, board member and former station chaplain, as the station was brought on-air.

Several team members also participated in the program with their thankfulness and joy for this new part of the ministry as the station was launched and dedicated to reaching more listeners with encouragement, hope, and joy. In March, generous donors gave the funds needed to purchase station WRAU from American University in Washington, D.C. The station's new call letters are WGBZ, and it can be heard at 88.3.

"This is a dream that has been 20 years in the making," says WGTS general manager Kevin Krueger. "We can't wait to see how God uses this signal to reach our listeners as they vacation on the Eastern Shore. We hope that hearts may be even more open to the gospel when people are unwinding. This is a brand-new opportunity to touch existing listeners as well as full-time residents of our beach communities."



Top photo: WGTS engineer Joshua Pierce turns on the transmitter, bringing WGTS programming to the Eastern Shore for the first time.

Bottom photo: General Manager Kevin Krueger and morning producer Spencer White welcome the new listening family on the Eastern Shore during a sign-on dedication time on June 24.

WGTS 91.9 Launches *NightLight with Brandi*

With the belief that greater ministry happens when we are live and local, WGTS 91.9 started a new evening program in July, *NightLight with Brandi*. Hosted by industry veteran Brandi Lanai, the program features stories of God's love, music and a voice that reminds listeners they are not alone.

From 7 p.m. to midnight, *NightLight with Brandi* takes WGTS 91.9 listeners from stressed to rest while pointing their hearts toward Christ. Lanai will be joined by Tom Miner, senior producer to create an experience that pulls those in the Washington, D.C., area into the atmosphere of encouragement and hope.

Lanai shares, "I'm so honored to launch this program. I'm so excited to serve the Nation's Capital with this amazing WGTS 91.9 team, live and full-time."

Miner says, "*NightLight* will be an opportunity for our listening family to feel refreshed and take a deep breath each evening. Miner was previously with the afternoon WGTS team for three years.

"Having this live evening program is a significant step that gives us an opportunity to connect with listeners as a friend and to offer them encouragement through music and conversation, as well as praying with them and spending time interacting on the phone with them," shares general manager Kevin Krueger.



PRAISE GOD!



“**T**he LORD is my strength, the reason for my song, because he has saved me. I praise and honor the LORD—he is my God and the God of my ancestors.”
Exodus 15:2. CEV

This is a verse of the song that Moses and the Israelites sang in praise to the LORD. As we prepare to welcome our employees and students back to campus for the 2021-2022 academic year, the WAU learning community is joyously joining Moses and the Israelites in giving praise to God. My friends, the same God who provided and cared for Moses, the Israelites, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego also provided and cared for WAU during these challenging times of COVID-19.

Our priority from the very onset of the pandemic was, and continues to be, the health and safety of our students, employees, and visitors. The COVID-19 Taskforce met weekly to ensure that we were in compliance with established local and national standards. Much appreciation to the members of the Taskforce for providing timely and oftentimes difficult recommendations. One of those recommendations was to transition from face-to-face instruction to virtual. Even with the anticipated loss of 10-20 percent of our annual revenue, the cost of housing students who had nowhere else to go, this action was implemented. In order not to lay off and/or furlough employees, we sought and successfully obtained a Small Business Administration loan (SBA) of a little under \$2.4M with the understanding that this loan could become a grant. For such an outcome, this required some diligent and detailed work from VP Patrick Farley and his accounting team.

It is a joy to report that relative to COVID-19, there were no involuntary employee furloughs or layoffs, no loss of life, and no major infection on campus. We complied with all the local and national health and safety standards and the almost \$2.4M loan along with an interest payment of \$25K from SBA was forgiven on June 23, 2021. To God be the glory and much appreciation to the entire WAU learning community for their flexibility, commitment, and support to our valued students.

This is why we can sing with Moses and the Israelites the praises of God. The Lord is our strength, because He continues to provide and care for us. We praise and honor the Lord. He is our God and the God of the Universe.

This is Washington Adventist University.

Weymouth Spence, President

HONORING THE FORDHAMS

Dr. Henry J. Fordham III and his wife, Sharon Fordham, have been truly inspiring in their unwavering dedication to living their daily lives through Christ and undertaking His ministry to share with others. It is with a heavy heart to report that on Sunday, July 18, 2021, the Fordhams were tragically lost in a house fire. Therefore, we take this moment to reflect on their lives and honor them for what they have done for Christian education and the positive impact of their ministry to the larger community worldwide.

Elder Fordham has served the Seventh-day Adventist church and Christian community diligently throughout his life. After graduating from Oakwood University in 1973, he immediately went on to complete his master's degree at Ohio State University. Then, he received a teaching position at Pine Forge Academy, before being called to minister as an ordained pastor. At the time of his passing, he had been serving as the President of the Allegheny East Conference (AEC) in Pennsylvania, a position that he held steadfast since October 2012. He was also a part of several conference committees and university boards, including being a valuable member of Washington Adventist University's Board of Trustees.

His wife, Sharon Fordham, was always there to support and aid in their commitment to being a blessing to others. As the first lady of the AEC, she acted in generous endorsement to its mission and accompanied her husband in support of his ministry to the US and around the world. The Fordhams also treasured and dedicated time to being with their family and raising their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

On Monday, July 19, President Weymouth Spence, in remembrance of Dr. Henry and Sharon Fordham's legacy and with the support of the Officers of the University and the WAU Religion Department, announced the naming of the Dr. Henry and Sharon Fordham Department of Religion. On September 18, 2021, at 4 pm, during the annual WAU dedication weekend, WAU will formally conduct a dedication service at the Sligo SDA Church in tribute to the Fordhams' legacy. We hope to honor that legacy and motivate future generations to serve and lead by their example.

Dr. Weymouth Spence, President of WAU, remarked, "Washington Adventist University is proud to celebrate the life of Dr. Henry and Sharon Fordham through the Religion Department. May we hold on to their legacy and be inspired by their faith in God and their service to humanity. The Religion Department, now named Dr. Henry and Sharon Fordham Department of Religion, will hold on to the Christ-centered vision of ministry they shared locally and internationally. The entire Washington Adventist University learning community will continue to pray for God's comfort and peace for the Fordhams' family, coworkers in ministry, and friends. According to Paul in Romans 8:18: 'I consider that our sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.'"

Dr. Dave Weigley, President of the Columbia Union Confer-

ence and chair of the WAU Board of Trustees, commented, "It's fitting that our university would honor the Fordhams in this way. As a couple, Henry and Sharon Fordham spent their entire ministry serving God in the Columbia Union. They gave their hearts and souls to ministry and led with such love, compassion, and grace. Henry was an admirable teacher, pastor, ministerial director, administrator, and true Christian who impacted so many and whose legacy will be felt for generations to come."



Dr. Cheryl H. Kisunzu, WAU Provost, shared her sentiments, "When I think of Doctor Henry and Sharon Fordham, I immediately think of the Gen 12:2 declarative, 'I will bless you and make your name great & you shall be a blessing.' This cherished couple's commitment to be a blessing was never more evident than during our 2021 Baccalaureate Service, when though undergoing surgery that same Sabbath morning, Sharon supported Dr. Fordham as he provided the baccalaureate message to the graduating Class of 2021. Noting also that prior to this message, Dr. Fordham had requested the name of each graduate so that for 40 Days he could pray for them by name and thereby empower them as they too, would leave WAU, as competent moral leaders, blessed to be a blessing to the world ...'for such a time as this,' for which we will be forever enriched and eternally grateful."

The chair of the newly named Dr. Henry and Sharon Fordham Department of Religion, Bogdan Scur, shared, "The news of Elder Fordham and his wife's passing was devastating for all of us who work and study in the Department of Religion at Washington Adventist University. Words cannot describe the magnitude of this loss for all of us. Elder Fordham was not only a faithful shepherd of the people of God and a dedicated trustee of Washington Adventist University but also a great friend and supporter of the Department of Religion. We are very grateful for his enormous legacy and very heartbroken to hear the news of his and his wife's tragic passing. On behalf of the Department of Religion at Washington Adventist University, I wish to express our deepest condolences to the leadership of the Allegheny East Conference and the entire Allegheny East family. We stand with them in solidarity and mourning, and we pray for all our colleagues in ministry and our brothers and sisters in Christ."

LaTasha Hewitt, Director of Communication & Church Ministries Coordinator at AEC, said, "The naming of WAU's Religion Department after the Fordhams, our beloved first family of Allegheny East Conference, is well-fitted. Both were passionate advocates for Adventist Christian education and possessed a remarkable dedication to ministry. They would have been extremely humbled by the honor."

Washington Adventist University is grateful to have witnessed and been a part of the Fordhams' ministry and their support of Christian education. We continue to pray for the Fordham family and the AEC family as we mourn the loss of beloved leaders who worked towards the mission of spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ to the world. We all look forward to the day of His return when we shall see them again.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

JOIN UNION SPRINGS ACADEMY celebrating 100 years of ministry and service. All alumni, former faculty and staff are invited to celebrate God's goodness and leading at our centennial weekend, September 17-19. Visit unionspringsacademy.org for more details and updates.

SUNNYDALE ADVENTIST ACADEMY ALUMNI WEEKEND: Celebrating 75 years: October 1-3. For more information, contact (573) 682-2164.

EMPLOYMENT

UNION COLLEGE, Lincoln, Neb., is seeking candidates for Vice President for Academic Administration to provide strategic direction, leadership and oversight for the college's academic programs and fulfillment of strategic goals. Earned doctoral degree required. Apply at ucollege.edu/ employment.

ADVENTIST HEALTHCARE

Adventist HealthCare is the first and largest provider of health care in Montgomery County, Maryland, serving the Washington, D.C., area since 1907.

Recently ranked as one of Forbes Best-in-State Employers in 2020. Find a career you'll love. Learn more about available opportunities and apply at:

AdventistHealthCare.com/Careers

MISCELLANEOUS

NEW BOOK! Ever wondered what day God wants us to worship on or if He really cares? *The Lost Thread of God's Love*, by Phyllis Gruesbeck, traces Sabbath's history from creation to the new earth. Great for ministry and new members. Available now at 1ref.us/9456891.

THE AUTUMN OF OUR LIVES, the delightful life story of Pastor

Jim Hoffer, with 150 pages and over 100 pictures, adventure, mission stories, family history, humor and poetry. Details and ordering information at LostArkSeminar.com.

CASKETS FOR ADVENTISTS: High quality, 20-gauge steel. Includes picture of the second coming of Jesus in the head panel; picture of the 10 commandments on either side; 1 Thess. 4:13-18 below the head panel and the three angels' messages at the end of the casket. Under \$800. For more information, call our office: (865) 882-0773 or (865) 804-2388; email wilson658375@bellsouth.net; or visit: 1844casketsforadventists.com.

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Sunset Calendar

	Sept 03	Sept 10	Sept 17	Sept 24	Oct 1	Oct 8	Oct 15	Oct 22	Oct 29
Baltimore	7:35	7:24	7:13	7:01	6:50	6:39	6:28	6:19	6:10
Cincinnati	8:07	7:56	7:44	7:33	7:22	7:11	7:00	6:50	6:41
Cleveland	7:58	7:46	7:34	7:22	7:10	6:58	6:47	6:36	6:26
Columbus	8:01	7:50	7:38	7:27	7:15	7:04	6:53	6:43	6:34
Jersey City	7:26	7:15	7:03	6:51	6:39	6:28	6:17	6:07	5:57
Norfolk	7:31	7:21	7:11	7:00	6:49	6:39	6:29	6:20	6:12
Parkersburg	7:55	7:44	7:32	7:21	7:10	6:59	6:48	6:38	6:29
Philadelphia	7:30	7:19	7:07	6:56	6:44	6:33	6:22	6:12	6:03
Pittsburgh	7:50	7:38	7:27	7:15	7:03	6:52	6:41	6:31	6:21
Reading	7:33	7:22	7:10	6:59	6:47	6:36	6:25	6:15	6:05
Richmond	7:37	7:26	7:16	7:05	6:54	6:44	6:34	6:24	6:16
Roanoke	7:47	7:36	7:25	7:15	7:04	6:54	6:44	6:34	6:26
Toledo	8:05	7:53	7:41	7:29	7:17	7:05	6:54	6:43	6:34
Trenton	7:29	7:17	7:06	6:54	6:42	6:31	6:20	6:10	6:01
Wash., D.C.	7:36	7:25	7:14	7:03	6:52	6:41	6:31	6:21	6:12

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