

VISITOR

CONNECTING COLUMBIA UNION SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

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ARE YOU
FLOURISHING
FINANCIALLY?



VISITOR

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The *Visitor* is a publication of the Columbia Union Conference reaching nearly 65,000 Seventh-day Adventist homes in the Mid-Atlantic area and 75,000 online readers. The *Visitor* provides news and information, inspiration for effective ministry and insight on issues with a spiritual focus to help engage members in experiencing the mission.

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Volume 128 ■ Issue 2

ABOUT THE COVER ■ What are the six factors that lead to greater financial health? Read the feature on page 8 to find out! Artwork created by Kelly Butler Coe.

Editorial

EMMANUEL ASIEDU

Bold Blessings



When I arrived to the United States as an international student in 2004, I was faced with a financial challenge. How would I pursue my education with so little money in my pocket? In God's infinite wisdom, He had already provided the answer for me, found in Ephesians 3:20: "Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us" (NIV). Claiming this promise, God provided immeasurably more money than I ever thought was possible, and I graduated debt-free thanks to the generosity and prayers from my friends who helped me along the way.

Many of Jesus' parables dealt with money, its acquisition and usage. Money and material possessions are not inherently good or bad; the differentiation is how they are acquired and used. In *Steps to Christ*, Ellen White states that "the love of money, the desire for wealth, is the golden chain that binds [people] to Satan" (p. 44). God's church thrives when its members are financially sound and free from greed and self-aggrandizement.

In fact, it is appropriate for God's children to ask for financial blessings and wisdom to overcome financial burdens such as uncontrollable debt. But financial blessings are not only to meet one's obligations; they are also to extend God's care to those in need. Indeed, the financial condition of the church is inherently dependent on the financial condition of its members and their attitude toward money and its possession. God blesses His church through the faithful giving of its members, and this money is to be used in appreciation to Him who gives us the "ability to produce wealth" (Deut. 8:18, NIV).



ASK BOLDLY

Oh, what a privilege it is for Christians to go boldly before the throne of grace and ask for God's financial blessings just as Jabez asked God to expand his territory, recorded in 1 Chronicles 4:10. While Seventh-day Adventists don't adhere to the prosperity gospel mindset, God can extend our financial territory because He cares for us and wants to help solve our monetary struggles, enabling us to boldly bless others more abundantly.

Ask God to financially bless you, request that He bestow wisdom to deal with your monetary obligations, trust that He will deliver you from financial burdens, and expect that He will effectively handle what He has entrusted into your hands. Most of all, may He open doors and provide opportunities to be a blessing to others.

Emmanuel Asiedu serves as the treasurer of the Columbia Union Conference.

A 2022 internal Google study found that 40 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds use social media as their primary search engine to find information.

What does your local church's social media account provide to those searching for biblical answers or local events?

PATHFINDER BIBLE EXPERIENCE IS BACK IN PERSON

The Columbia Union Conference level Pathfinder Bible Experience is back in person this year! Pathfinders from across the union will gather at Pennsylvania Conference's Blue Mountain Academy March 11. Follow the Columbia Union Visitor's social media accounts for the results.



KEEP IT NATURAL

A recent study has confirmed what your Health Ministries director has long preached: It's healthier to eat foods closer to their natural state than processed. A recent study found that a high consumption of more ultra-processed foods with more additives, artificial flavors, sweeteners and preservatives is associated with a greater risk of cancer, especially ovarian and brain cancer.



SUPERNATURAL HELP

The demons Drake Johnson faced as a kid weren't psychological but spiritual.

In our video interview*, Johnson, now an active member of Mountain View Conference's Charleston Boulevard church in West Virginia, shares his story of how God saved him.

120+

For more than 120 Sabbaths in a row, there has been a baptism in a New Jersey Conference church.

The manner in which the truth is presented often has much to do in determining whether it will be accepted or rejected.

—Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, p. 404. Watch Pennsylvania Conference's recent "Winsome Witnessing" training series at columbiaunionvisitor.com/winsomewitnessing to help members witness more effectively.

ACADEMY STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN MODEL UN CONFERENCE

Seventeen students from Columbia Union Conference's Highland View Academy, Pine Forge Academy, Spencerville Adventist Academy (SAA) and Takoma Academy recently participated at The Hague International Model United Nations (THIMUN) Conference in the Netherlands.

The event, organized and supported by Washington Adventist University's (WAU) Honors College, was the first in-person THIMUN conference that a Seventh-day Adventist school delegation has attended in person.

"I was so proud of each of the students as they almost immediately began contributing to the debate at the conference. From day one, they were engaging other delegates, asking points of information, making speeches on behalf of their country, and generally pushing for meaningful solutions to the issues at hand. Columbia Union academies were very well represented in a conference that included students from more than 200 schools from around the world," says Jonathan Scriven, Model United Nations director of the Honors College at WAU, based in Takoma Park, Md.

"I have a better understanding of the world because of this experience," says Leighvanni Kennedy, a junior at SAA in Spencerville, Md.—WAU Staff



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

UpFront

BLYDEN APPOINTED KETTERING HEALTH CHAIR

Dave Weigley, president of the Columbia Union Conference and chair of Kettering Health, announced that he has appointed Celeste Ryan Blyden, executive secretary for the Columbia Union, to serve as chair of Kettering Health's Membership Board and Board of Directors.

Weigley, whose wife, Becky, is battling cancer for a second time, says that stepping away from his longtime role with Kettering Health and several other North



American Division and Columbia Union boards and committees will allow him to focus more on caring for and supporting his wife through a very challenging experience and treatment regimen.

Emmanuel Asiedu, treasurer for the union, will replace Weigley as board chair of the Columbia Union Revolving Fund.

MIRACLES ACHIEVED IN MISSION

Churches and members around the union continue to place special emphasis on evangelism in their churches across the Columbia Union Conference. (Read updates from several conferences in their newsletter pages.)

José D. Espósito, assistant to the president for evangelism at the Columbia Union who participated in more than eight of the meetings since last fall, notes the common denominator that drew visitors. "In all the campaigns, it was the [members] personally inviting their friends, family, neighbors or co-workers that attracted them to

GET INVOLVED

Ohio Conference Hispanic members celebrated 409 baptisms last year. That is a **5.7 member-to-new convert ratio**. If Columbia Union's 147,350 members would witness at the same rate and results, **this could equal some 25,382 baptisms in a year**, as opposed to last year's 4,736.

Help make a difference in your community! Use every opportunity to introduce others to Jesus.

Jesus and to the church," he says.

He notes that Chesapeake Conference's Frederick Spanish district did just this. Pastor Kelvis Romero reports that every night members brought dozens of friends. "That resulted in 34 baptisms—including a former Pentecostal pastor—after two weeks of campaigning," says Espósito. "But the story does not end there. Pastor Romero ended 2022 with more than 80 baptisms in his district."

Rubén A. Ramos, vice president for Multilingual Ministries, also notes a striking 2022 statistic from Ohio Conference's Hispanic Ministries Department. He reports Ohio Hispanic members welcomed 409 new converts last year, averaging a 5.7 member-to-new convert ratio, in comparison to the union's overall ratio of 30.6.

Ramos says, "It's a joy to see these brothers and sisters becoming engaged. ... The method of Jesus is to become Jesus to those around them [befriending them, meeting their needs]. ... But if we meet the needs without the intention of them meeting Jesus, it is just social work. Our intention is to lead them to something better—Jesus Christ."

Things You Should Know



■ The Columbia Union Conference recently worked together with Adventist HealthCare, Kettering Health and North American Division's Chaplaincy Ministries Department on a historic first—creating a pathway to affirm chaplains in their ministry through ordination. Read more on pages 42–43.

■ Thinking about sending your child to a Seventh-day Adventist academy next year? Check out our list of Academy Days and other special events such as music festivals at columbiaunionvisitor.com/thingsyoushouldknow.

■ Every church is vulnerable to fire—no matter the size of your congregation or where your church is located. Having a plan to evacuate the church in case of a fire is vital to the safety of your members.

Practicing your plan is just as important as having a plan. That's what Safety Sabbath is all about. Register your church today to take part in Safety Sabbath and practice a fire drill with your congregation on March 25.—*Adventist Risk Management*

ILLUSTRATION COURTESY OF THE ELLEN G. WHITE ESTATE



EXPLORE GOD'S CREATION

In Adventist Review TV's new show for kids, *Planet Wonder*, naturalist John Henri Rorabeck

uses lessons learned in nature to teach about God's love and relationship with us. Find a link to the show at columbiaunionvisitor.com/upfront.

PERSONALITY PUPS TEACH VALUABLE LESSONS

Darius Bridges (right), a member of Sligo church in Takoma Park, Md., has a YouTube channel called Personality Pups, in which 12 puppies with unique personalities teach children about their place in God's world and share lessons such as how to work together despite differences. Get to know Bridges



at columbiaunionvisitor.com/personalitypups.



Kids' Corner

Joseph Bates and the Hurricane

JOSEPH BATES DID NOT START OUT BELIEVING IN GOD AS HE SET OUT FROM HIS HOME IN FAIRHAVEN MASSACHUSETTS FOR EUROPE, BUT THIS TRIP WOULD CHANGE EVERYTHING.

I'M SECOND IN COMMAND OF THIS SHIP. I'M GETTING SOMEWHERE. THIS IS GOING TO BE A GREAT VOYAGE.

SAFE TRAVELS, MY HUSBAND! MAY GOD BE WITH YOU!

GOOD BYE, MY LOVE.

A WHILE LATER, IN THE MIDDLE OF THE OCEAN...

MR. BATES, THIS IS TAKING MUCH LONGER THAN I CALCULATED. THE WINDS HAVE BEEN AGAINST US AND WE ARE HEAVILY LOADED.

I'M WORRIED ABOUT SUPPLIES LASTING. WE ARE RUNNING OUT OF FOOD AND IT LOOKS LIKE BAD WEATHER IS COMING.

THIS IS THE WORST STORM I'VE EVER BEEN IN!

I THINK WE ARE GOING TO DIE!

WE'VE BEEN IN THIS FOR DAYS! I'M LOSING HOPE!

MEANWHILE, BACK IN FAIRHAVEN...

COOK, YOU BELIEVE IN GOD. PRAY FOR US!

I WONDER IF GOD WILL EVEN LISTEN!

I FEEL JOSEPH IS IN GREAT DANGER! PLEASE GOD SAVE HIM!

COOK'S PRAYER REALLY WORKED! THERE IS A GOD AND HE CARES ABOUT EVEN A SINNER LIKE ME...

I CAN'T BELIEVE WE SURVIVED THAT!

THAT SHIP CAME AT JUST THE RIGHT MOMENT TO GIVE US SUPPLIES...

THIS IS NO STORM! IT'S A HURRICANE!

WE ARE LEAKING BADLY!

MAN THE PUMPS!

FOR JOSEPH BATES THIS WAS JUST THE BEGINNING. THIS ADVENTIST PIONEER WOULD GO ON TO EXPERIENCE MANY MORE ADVENTURES WITH GOD.

THE END

Noticias

V. MICHELLE BERNARD

MILAGROS LOGRADOS EN LA MISIÓN

A través de toda la Columbia Union Conference, las iglesias y los miembros continúan poniendo un énfasis especial en la evangelización.

José D. Espósito, asistente del presidente para evangelismo en la Columbia Union que participó en más de ocho de las reuniones

desde el otoño pasado, señala el denominador común que atrajo a los visitantes. “En todas las campañas, fueron los [miembros] invitando personalmente a sus amigos, familiares, vecinos o compañeros de trabajo lo que los atrajo a Jesús y a la iglesia”, dice.

Señala que el distrito hispano de Frederick de Chesapeake Conference hizo esto. El pastor



120+

El número de sábados consecutivos (y aún contando) en los que al menos una iglesia de New Jersey Conference ha celebrado un bautismo cada fin de semana en los últimos años.

Kelvis Romero informa que cada noche los miembros traían a decenas de amigos. “Después de dos semanas de campaña, eso resultó en 34 bautismos, incluido un expastor pentecostal”, dice Espósito. “Pero la historia no termina allí. El pastor Romero finalizó el 2022 con más de 80 bautismos en su distrito”.

Rubén A. Ramos, vicepresidente de los Ministerios Multilingües, también destaca una estadística sorprendente del Departamento de Ministerios Hispánicos de Ohio Conference en el 2022. Informa que el año pasado, los miembros hispanos de Ohio dieron la bienvenida a 409 nuevos conversos, con un promedio de 5.7 miembros por nueva conversión, en comparación a la proporción general de la unión de 30.6.

Ramos señala que, si la misma proporción de miembros estuviera involucrada con los mismos resultados, eso significaría que la Columbia Union, en lugar de 4,736 bautismos que hubo en el 2022, debería tener 25,382 bautismos con el mismo nivel de participación.

Ramos dice: “Es una alegría ver a estos hermanos y hermanas comprometerse. ... El método de Jesús es convertirse en Jesús para quienes los rodean [haciéndose amigos de ellos, satisfaciendo sus necesidades].”

Cosas Que Deberías Saber



■ ¿Está pensando en inscribir a su hijo en una academia Adventista del Séptimo Día el próximo año? Consulte la lista de los Días de Academia y otros eventos especiales en columbiaunionvisitor.com/thingsyoushouldknow.

■ Toda iglesia es vulnerable al fuego, sin importar el tamaño o la ubicación de la congregación. Tener y practicar un plan para evacuar la iglesia en caso de incendio es vital para la seguridad de sus miembros. Registre a su iglesia hoy para participar en el sábado de seguridad y practique un simulacro de incendio con su congregación el 25 de marzo.—*Personal de Adventist Risk Management*

■ Dave Weigley, presidente de Columbia Union Conference y presidente de Kettering Health, anunció que ha designado a Celeste Ryan Blyden, secretaria ejecutiva de Columbia Union, para que se desempeñe como presidenta de la Junta de Miembros y la Junta Directiva de Kettering Health.

Weigley, cuya esposa, Becky, está luchando contra el cáncer por segunda vez, dice que dejar su puesto de mucho tiempo en Kettering Health y en varias otras juntas y comités de la North American Division y la Columbia Union le permitirá concentrarse más en cuidar y apoyar a su esposa a través de una experiencia y un régimen de tratamiento muy desafiantes.

Emmanuel Asiedu, tesorero de la unión, reemplazará a Weigley como presidente de la Junta de Columbia Union Revolving Fund.

Para más historias en español, visite columbiaunionvisitor.com/noticias.



WHO WE ARE

A Seventh-day Adventist Christian four-year liberal arts college

LOCATION

Takoma Park, MD

YEAR ESTABLISHED

1904

CAMPUS

Our 19-acre-campus is located in Takoma Park, Maryland (a welcoming, vibrant community near Washington, D.C.). This location affords outstanding opportunities for learning, work, recreation, service, and worship.

STUDENT PROFILE

- Total enrollment 671
- Student to faculty ratio 7:1

ACADEMICS

Students can choose from 16 Departments and more than 40 degrees including MA, MBA, MS, BA, BM, BS, AA, AAS, and AS. These are offered through our three-school structure – School of Arts and Social Sciences; School of Health Professions, Science and Wellness; School of Graduate and Professional Studies.

DISTINCTIONS

- Exceptional internship opportunities
- USCAA 2008 National Champions in Baseball
- International Touring Music Groups
- Best Value College for 2018-2019

DID YOU KNOW?

- U.S. News & World Report rated WAU as one of the most diverse colleges in America with students from nearly every state and approximately 50 countries.
- The Seventh-day Adventist Student Missionary program was first established at Columbia Union College in 1958.
- U.S. News & World Report recognized WAU among one of the best colleges in the north region in their 2012, 2013, 2015 & 2016 editions.

STUDENT CLUBS

- Alpha Chi, Lambda Pi Eta, Phi Eta Sigma, Psi Chi, Sigma Tau Delta
- Black Student Union
- Caribbean Student Association
- Chemistry Club
- Education Club
- Filipino-American Student Association
- International Students' Association
- Latino Student Association
- National Honor Societies
- Nursing Student Association
- Pre-Law Club
- Pre-Medical Society
- Student Ministerial Association
- ENACTUS

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

- 8th Semester Free
- ENACTUS
- Honors College
- Rising Scholars Program
- Study Abroad
- Cooperative Education/Internship Program
- Mock Trial Team

MUSIC GROUPS

- Columbia Concert Winds
- Columbia Collegiate Chorale
- The New England Youth Ensemble -- in Residence at WAU
- Pro Musica

ATHLETICS

National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics
USCAA Division I United States Collegiate Athletic Association

APPLYING TO WAU

Choosing a college is a time for asking questions. Our Admissions staff is here to assist you. Please phone us with your questions at 800-835-4212, email us at enroll@wau.edu or scan the QR code to apply.



ACCREDITATIONS AND APPROVALS

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- Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 3642 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, 215-662-5606 . The Commission on Higher Education is an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Commission on Recognition of Post Secondary Accreditation.
- Accrediting Association of Seventh-day Adventist Schools, Colleges, and Universities 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600, 301-680-6000



To Save or not to Save



What your current
self can do to help
your future self

By Dave Gemmell

The Perry family was crushed by a debt that was quickly growing to almost a quarter million dollars. Jay had taken a leave of absence from his job as a Seventh-day Adventist pastor to be the full-time caregiver for his terminally ill mom. The family planned on living off of his wife's salary, but she sustained a disabling injury and was unable to work. How in the world could the family stay afloat with the absence of two salaries and health challenges all while raising their son.

In her early 30s, Tory Salo*, a lifelong Adventist, had a wake-up call. "What have I done?" she asked herself. She had just graduated from a university, leaving her with \$50,000 in debt, and the income from her professional job was not enough to keep her head above water. She had run up a \$15,000 credit card debt, and much of her income went to pay off exorbitant interest charges. Her living expenses and little luxuries like going out to eat were adding up. She felt trapped!

The Perrys and Salo are not alone in financial despair. Many Adventists struggle with debt, wondering if they will have enough money to retire, or for an emergency or to make contributions to their church. But not all Adventists struggle with finances.

As a young immigrant to this country, Ed Billingsy began turning his small wages into a growing real estate portfolio. As his knowledge increased, he generously shared his savviness with others. Through the decades, Billingsy has mentored hundreds and conducted dozens of financial seminars at Adventist churches in the Washington metropolitan area. "It's the most exciting feeling in the world equipping people to turn around their finances," he says.

This begs the question, what separates those who struggle financially from those who flourish? Is higher income the only factor, or are there factors outside of income that affect net worth?

Last spring, the North American Division (NAD) conducted a survey for Adventists with comparable incomes.** The results show a great diversity, ranging from an anticipated net worth at retirement below \$200,000 to more than \$5 million. Because of the wide distribution, the study gives great insight as to what factors correlate with net worth and provides clues for those who wish to turn around their finances. The study gleaned the following six practices that contribute to financial health, listed in ascending order of correlation strength.



6 Financial Mentorship

Although the Bible has much to say about money (see sidebar), many are reluctant to talk about it. Perhaps, it is too personal. If they are floundering, they are ashamed; if they are prospering, they don't want to come across as arrogant. Unfortunately, silence can breed financial ineptitude. Financial mentorship requires matching humble learners with compassionate financial teachers.

In her wake-up call, Salo sought out people whose lives reflected wise financial decisions. She thought the conversations might be awkward, but instead her mentors were delighted to share their financial wisdom and overjoyed when she began to successfully incorporate their advice. She was off and running on the journey toward financial health.

In those dark times of debt, Perry saw an ad from a local church for a financial seminar. He deeply engaged in it, and using the skills he learned, crawled out from the crush of debt into the freedom of financial health. His passion for personal finance led to professional financial education and a career as a certified financial advisor.

"Most people don't put it together on their own," he says. "We need somebody who can give good money advice. Mentors should share our Christian values and not ridicule us for giving 15–20 percent of our income to charity. Church-based financial seminars are a great place to find a financial mentor."

5 Deferred Gratification

Perry believes most people would much rather get a reward sooner than later. To reverse that bias, goal setting allows us to think about the well-being of our future self. "When we shave and save, we reap the reward! When we reach our goal, celebrate!" he says.

He finds budgeting to be a powerful tool: "Start by keeping track of expenses for a few months. Then put your goals into the budget. It may take a little trial and error to get it right. Once the categories are workable, find someone who can hold you accountable to sticking to that budget."

Salo, who drives a 10-year-old car so she can save up for a new one someday, thought it would be fun to drive a newer, fun model, she says. Instead, she recently bumped up her retirement contributions when she realized that a modest increase in her contributions now raised her potential retirement net worth by hundreds of thousands of dollars.

The Bible: a Wealth of Knowledge

The Bible has more than 2,300 verses on finances. Here are just a few:

STEWARDSHIP > While we wait for Christ's return, we must manage the gifts He has given us with great wisdom.

Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, and He will repay him for his deed (Prov. 19:17, ESV).

GENEROSITY > In a regenerative cycle, God gives blessings so we can bless others, and when we bless others, God gives blessings.

Bring the full tithe into the storehouse. ... Put Me to the test, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing (Mal. 3:10, ESV).

PRIORITIES > Financial health places serving God as a higher priority than pursuing money or possessions.

You cannot serve God and money (Matt. 6:24, ESV).

DEBT > Consumer debt can be an obstacle to financial health.

The borrower is the slave of the lender (Prov. 22:7, ESV).

BUDGETING > Financial health requires deferred gratification and ongoing discipline.

The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance, but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty (Prov. 21:5, ESV).





4 Avoiding Consumer Debt

Perry says, “It’s easy to accidentally go into debt. It’s extremely difficult to accidentally get out of debt.” Quoting Charles Dickens, he says, “Income \$20.00, expense \$19.99, result happiness. Income \$20.00, expense \$20.06, result misery.” Compounded interest may be wonderful for the investor but devastating to the debtor. Perry remembers, “Once our family got out of debt, we felt we had lots of money for [us] and for the church.”

In her turnaround story, Salo prioritized paying down her high-interest debt as quickly as possible, allowing her to turn her cashflow from negative to positive and save for long-term goals.

3 Contributions to Charity

Salo effuses, “When I started getting serious about finances, I bumped my giving up, and I was able to save more. I’ve noticed the more I give, the more it flows back. I feel like I have more wiggle room. I never miss that money. It always comes back.”

Billings shares how he led a nine-week financial health series at his church. “We taught adults, teenagers and even kids how to manage money in a more responsible way. The next quarter, the church giving went up 10 percent. Because people handled money better, they had more to give.”

Perry believes “generosity changes the way our brains think about money. We go from a victim mindset to a victor mindset. In order to give generously, you have to budget better. You think more clearly

and more often about your funds and how to use them, not just the

15–20 percent contributions, but how you’re honoring God with the rest of your budget.”



2 Financial Literacy

Always looking for good financial resources, last year Perry read 30 books on finances. He says, “There’s lots of self-help books that are off-base or prioritize one high-risk tool. That’s where a trusted professional or mentor can help lead you to a favorite podcast, book or other resource.”

Salo uses her investigative skills to do solid research on investing and the real estate market by using multiple sources, avoiding things that “sound too good to be true,” and relying only on mainstream trusted resources.

Billings cautions that financial literacy is not enough: “What’s really needed? Discipline. You would be amazed at some of the excuses people come up with on why they can’t do this or can’t do that. But when they eventually find that discipline, things begin to happen.”

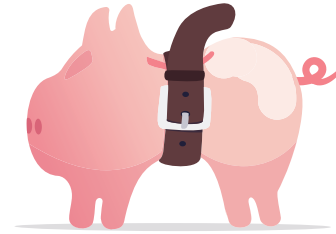
1 Owning Your Own Home

Perry says, “Owning your own home is difficult: raising the down payment, having a good credit score, having the right debt-to-income ratio. Yet, if folks stick to a budget, it can happen. And when it does, there’s a huge inflation hedge, forced savings plan, asset, tax deduction, and eventually money when you liquidate it.”

Billings, now a retired real estate broker, teaches clients to make a modest first home purchase with the intent of eventually turning it into an investment property. In time, individuals can purchase a second property as a primary residence with a lower interest rate and smaller down payment than an investment property. This approach can be repeated to build a modest real estate portfolio.

Salo stayed disciplined and paid off her credit card debt and car loan. Immediately, she felt empowered and soon saved up enough to purchase her first home. Now, after years of discipline, she’s upgraded to a home with a rental unit that helps pay her mortgage. “I feel so free,” she says. “If I want to give more money to my church, I can. If I want to go on a vacation, I can. If I want to put more into my





retirement, I can. Because I saved money years ago, I can live a little bit more now.”

It took four years of hard work and a short sale on their house for the Perry family to crawl out from their crushing debt. But through faith in God and wise financial practices, things have turned around dramatically. Perry's wife recovered from her injury and is a full-time librarian in Hagerstown, Md. Their son is now a senior at Chesapeake Conference's Highland View Academy, also located in Hagerstown. And Perry finds fulfillment in helping others discover the principles of faith and finances as a financial advisor with Turning Point Financial in Frederick, Md.

* Tory Salo is a pseudonym.

** Download the preliminary findings of “Factors That Affect Adventist Financial Health” at columbiaunionvisitor.com/financialhealthtips, which was presented at the 2022 CALLED Pastors' Family Convention in Lexington, Ky.

Dave Gemmell recently retired as an associate director at North American Division's Ministerial Department. While writing this feature, he stretched his dollars by taking breaks to snowboard on a \$197 Senior Season pass.

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Small purchases today can make a big impact on your finances tomorrow.

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(That'll buy a lot of "early bird specials"!)

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This article is for information purposes only and is not to be considered as financial advice. Consider your spending habits and seek out a financial planner to make informed money decisions.

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MARCH 11, 2023



WE CAN'T SHOW YOU HER FACE...

... but **this is a photo of a former New People's Army general and assassin preaching an evangelistic series.** With tears in her eyes, she is sharing the love of Jesus in a village where she used to recruit rebel soldiers.

This story began with hardened rebels—in the midst of a 50-year war—who started listening to Adventist World Radio (AWR) as they lay in wait to attack government forces. Now, just a few years later, the war has ended and an entire island has been transformed by the Gospel. And this is just the beginning...

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On Sabbath, March 11, be sure to share the AWR Offering video with your church. From Ukraine to the Philippines to Africa to your own back yard, you won't want to miss this thrilling update!



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ALLEGHENY EAST *Exposé*

First Church Serves Local Women's Shelter

The Women's Ministries Department at the First church in Washington, D.C., recently participated in the Shoebox Gift Project, an initiative to help women experiencing homelessness in their local area, specifically survivors of domestic abuse. Church members and volunteers donated personal items such as lip gloss, nail products, feet and face masks, body wash, fuzzy socks, essential oils and scented candles, as well as Christian tracts.

Women's Ministries executive board members gathered in the church's fellowship hall on a Sunday afternoon to sort the collected items, then fill and decorate the gift boxes. They packed 30 plastic shoeboxes with the goods collected. When they delivered the boxes to My Sister's Place shelter in Washington, D.C., the staff were so happy. They expressed thanks for thinking of their clients. All extra gift boxes were given to female church members 80 years and older.

Monique Riddick, Women's Ministries leader, states, "My goal for Women's Ministries is to empower women survivors of domestic violence. This is a population of people who are overlooked."



Vivian D. Walker and Deborah Y. Davids, team members from the Women's Ministries Department at First church, wrap shoeboxes filled with donated personal items.

The Women's Ministries Department aims to provide inspiring programs for the women of First church and to end violence in their community. They look forward to continuing the project.

Academy Nominated for NAACP Image Award

The Pine Forge Academy (PFA) choir's motion picture *This is My Black* was recently nominated for a National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Image Award in the Outstanding Breakthrough Creative category.

The musical, featuring the PFA choir, depicts the struggle and triumph of black teenagers in today's time. It has been featured at several film festivals throughout the United States.

According to Jarrett Roseborough, PFA's choir director and the film's producer, the response from viewers has been overwhelming and positive. "Most who have seen it have expressed that it was a breathtaking experience and definitely necessary for today's culture," he shares.

The NAACP Image Awards is an annual awards ceremony presented by the U.S.-based NAACP to honor outstanding performances in film, television, theatre, music and literature. Similar to the Oscars or Grammys, NAACP organization members vote on more than 40 categories.

The NAACP is a civil rights organization in the U.S., formed in 1909 as an interracial endeavor to advance justice for African Americans.



12 Baptized in New Jersey Churches

The Bethel French church in Trenton, N.J., and the New Eden church in Neptune, N.J., recently welcomed 12 new members.

Among those baptized were brothers Kermily and Roody Joseph from the New Eden church. From a young age, they both showed a great interest in studying the Bible, reading Genesis through Revelation in a year. Recently, at ages 12 and 13, they indicated their desire to be baptized. When Wilfrid Louis-Jean, pastor of New Eden and Bethel French, led a 28 Fundamental Beliefs group and held a baptismal class, the brothers were quick to join.

Bethel member Taesha Candio also joined the baptismal class. Candio studied the Bible with her family for several years but was apprehensive about being baptized, stating she was waiting for the Holy Spirit to lead her. When this opportunity arrived, she communicated her desire to be baptized.

Bethel member Daniel Dommage was also among the recently baptized. Although he was baptized at the age of 13, at that time he did not have a clear understanding of what baptism really meant. At the age of 18, he drifted away from the church and religion entirely, spending his adult life searching for the truth. After returning to church, he reached out to Louis-Jean for Bible studies and decided to be rebaptized.



Two members from the Bethel French church and 10 members from the New Eden church prepare to be baptized after undergoing baptismal classes with Pastor Wilfrid Louis-Jean (right).

Louis-Jean reflects, “I am humbled to see how God can use me to bring people to His kingdom of grace. It was a unique experience to witness young people and adults genuinely giving their hearts to God.”

500 Young People Attend Haitian Youth Federation

After a hiatus due to the pandemic, the Haitian Youth Federation of Allegheny East Conference (HYFAEC) recently gathered for its first opening ceremony service in three years. The service is designed for youth to worship and fellowship together. “It’s important for us to set the tone for the



year, ... setting the vision for the federation,” says Ruth Ilera Antoine, president of HYFAEC.

More than 500 young people, representing all 20 Haitian churches within the conference, attended the service, held at the Arts Academy at Benjamin Rush High School (Pa.).

The service began with a play that centered around God’s protection, then a praise and worship time, a children’s story (pictured) and a message from Patrick Graham, AEC’s youth director. “I was honored to be a part of such a well-planned service designed to jumpstart children and youth,” says Graham.

The event also included a panel discussion in the afternoon where young people had the opportunity to voice their concerns with ministry leaders. “We like to hear their thoughts, have them express their needs and go back, plan and pull together to meet those needs,” Antoine explains. “They are gearing up for their next joint event, a youth retreat in the spring.”

Look Who's 100!

Rena Mae Walker was born October 16, 1922, in Nashville, Tenn., when a gallon of gas was 25 cents, and a postal stamp was two cents. Walker studied at the Carter-Lawrence Elementary School and Pearl High School in Nashville. A member of the Hillcrest church in Nashville, she walked to church every Sabbath with her “Pop pa,” who felt that was the best mode of travel “on God’s Sabbath!” At church, she listened to Charles M. Kinny, the first African American ordained minister in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, preach the Word. She listened to Anna Knight, the first African American missionary, tell stories of her service in India.

Later, Walker met and married Jesse Lawrence, a union that lasted 53 years. In 1943, they moved to Akron, Ohio. Lawrence was a tire builder, and Walker was a domestic worker in private homes. Her strong Christian upbringing inspired her to serve as a licensed Bible instructor, introducing people to Christ in Akron and the surrounding cities.

For many years, Walker was the minister of music at the Bethel church (Akron). Choir rehearsals were often held in her home. Each week, she traveled many miles to pick up church members for choir and church, never asking for one penny.

Walker became a very special member of one of the families for whom she worked. They share that because of her deep devotion, beautiful personality,



Members from the Bethel church (Akron) personalized a cake in honor of Rena Mae Walker’s 100th birthday.

unwavering love and strong hugs, she worked for the family for more than 57 years. She still keeps in touch with them, even after her retirement at age 92.

Walker’s church honored her with a 100th birthday celebration late last year. More than 125 guests attended the gala affair. Organizers played music from her era and many individuals testified about how she has touched their lives.

At the event, a speaker read a proclamation from Daniel Horrigan, mayor of Akron, and a letter from Mike DeWine, governor of Ohio. One other important letter read was from an individual who had been incarcerated. Walker had written many uplifting letters to the person during their sentence, resulting in their decision to follow Christ.

Walker says she was so overwhelmed to see and feel the love of all those in attendance. “I will always remember these precious moments forever and ever!” she says.—*Jeannette Johnson, Daughter*



Rena Mae Walker, a Bethel member, celebrates her 100th birthday with Grace Brown, a family friend.



Westside Operation Casts Nets in Cleveland

At the Westside church, members realize their commission is to go to the highways and byways, spreading the gospel to those in need. Located on the west side of Cleveland, the church is in the heart of an impoverished community where finding resources can be a challenge. With a small membership, this huge responsibility can sometimes be daunting, but Westside has made it a priority to help those in need by partnering with other nonprofit organizations.

They accomplish this goal through their evangelistic strategy, Operation Casting Nets. This initiative connects Westside members with outside resources and people of different faiths, giving opportunities to build community, rapport and relationships.

Westside recently put this plan into action. At the gathering, members distributed more than 200 coats, articles of clothing, socks and toys for children. In the frigid temperatures, they served hot chocolate and honey buns in front of a fire pit. Later, on the front steps of the church, they listened to powerful words of encouragement from church elders and Maurice Belle Sr., pastor of Westside.

“We are excited about the direction the church is going and the excitement of the community. This proves you do not have to be a big church to make



Maurice Belle Sr. (wearing gray jacket), pastor of the Westside church, sings songs of praise with several church and community members.

an impact—big things come in small packages too,” says Belle. “You need to be willing to allow God to use you. What the church is missing is purpose, and right now, in this moment, we are writing our biographies in the books of heaven that will be read throughout eternity. What will yours say about you?”

Southeast Celebrates Their Global Diversity

The Southeast church in Cleveland recently celebrated the diversity of their congregation by installing flags of the nations represented by its members.



In a moving service led by the church’s Panthers Pathfinder Club, the Pathfinders carried flags from nine nations into the sanctuary and placed them behind the pulpit, in addition to the United States and Pathfinder flags.

“I promised you ... flags representing all the nations that make up Southeast,” said Stan Hood, Southeast pastor. “We love you, and we value you as a part of our family, so your colors should be represented as well. This is what we do at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, so we are no different here at Southeast.”

The nine flags represented the countries of Jamaica, Haiti, Mexico, the United Kingdom, Barbados, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Liberia and Montserrat.—*Cecily Bryant, Communication Leader*

PHOTO BY STAN HOOD

Total Commitment for Total Involvement

It is remarkable to see how God can use the least likely people to do amazing things. For example, take the apostles Peter and John. The New Testament reveals enough about their personal lives from *before* they knew Jesus to all but guarantee they'd be overlooked as candidates for discipleship, let alone commissioned for key leadership in His church. While these Galilean fishermen were indeed colorful individuals with as coarse and unrefined characters as they come, Jesus saw in them what others did not: Potential. And what potential there was!

After living in His presence for some 3 ½ years and undergoing conversion and a slow but steady radical transformation, Acts 4 describes Peter and John under the influence of the Holy Spirit. They were boldly proclaiming the gospel, but the pious, hypocritical, short-sighted religious leaders were out to silence them permanently, just as they thought they had silenced Jesus. One of the most telling and instructive statements the apostles made during the dialogue with their accusers is in verse 20: "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (KJV). They were referring, of course, to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, which had changed their lives forever. These men were totally committed to Jesus. He was their Lord, their Savior and their friend. And moreover, they would not be prevented from sharing the Good News.

Later in life, both apostles would give similar testimonies of their unrelenting devotion to Jesus. In 2 Peter 1:16, we read, "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty" (KJV). Similarly, John describes his personal experience with Jesus in 1 John 1: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; ... And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full" (verses 1, 4).

Total commitment. Total involvement in spreading the Good News. If He can use them, He can surely use any of us, if we are willing.



Jerry Lutz
President

Churches Band Together for Evangelism

More than 50 churches took part in recent evangelistic meetings held throughout the Chesapeake Conference. The coordinated meetings resulted from efforts organized by the conference's Evangelism and Hispanic Ministries departments.

The Evangelism Department organizes a conference-wide evangelism initiative every other year called REACH Chesapeake that invites churches to hold public proclamation meetings in their

communities while providing a package of discounted advertising materials and sermon resources. REACH Chesapeake 2022 featured the debut of a new set of sermons produced by the department that will be made available to the rest of the North American Division in 2023.

"Pastors love the idea of doing it as a team around the same time because we know that we're doing this together," says David Klinedinst, evangelism director.

The Hispanic Ministries Department assisted 34 Hispanic churches in conducting weeklong reaping meetings that resulted in dozens of baptisms. The baptisms followed months of seed-sowing programs, including a significant focus on small groups evangelism. Orlando Rosales, Hispanic Ministries director, says small groups are vital to the success of these meetings because members invite their friends and family to study the Bible in a more casual environment.



Pastor Samuel Nunez speaks during an evangelistic meeting at the Triadelphia church in Clarksville, Md.



Scan the QR code to watch the video.

West Wilmington Marks 130 Years

The West Wilmington (Del.) church recently celebrated its 130th anniversary during a special worship service featuring stories, music, preaching and two fellowship meals. Members from the Life in Christ and Hope Community churches in Bear, Del., which constitute the rest of the church district, also attended and participated in the day's festivities.

Guest speaker Jerry Lutz, Chesapeake Conference president, challenged members to imitate the faithfulness of the pioneers who had the vision to plant the church 130 years ago.



"It was really a high Sabbath," says Elvis Mogoi, West Wilmington senior pastor.

West Wilmington was officially organized as the Wilmington Seventh-Day Adventist Church July 30, 1892. The church's school, Wilmington Junior Academy, has operated continuously since 1926. The church name was changed to its current name in 1965 when the congregation moved to its present location on Millcreek Road to allow for the construction of a separate school building.

Mogoi says studying the church's history has been a valuable reminder of how God has provided for the congregation in the past. "I was excited reading through the minutes to discover some similar challenges to what we are facing today," Mogoi says. "When you see that God brought them through it, you realize, 'Wait a minute, we're not the first ones to deal with this. God can actually do it.'"

Chesapeake Conference President Jerry Lutz (center) congratulates West Wilmington pastors Elvis Mogoi (left) and Ricardo Cala (right) on the church's 130-year anniversary.

Chesapeake Partners With It Is Written for ReCharge

Chesapeake Conference pastors and lay leaders recently gathered at the General Conference headquarters in Silver Spring, Md., for a weekend of specialized evangelism training.

"ReCharge Chesapeake" resulted from a partnership between Chesapeake Conference and It Is Written. The idea to host a ReCharge event in the conference originated after a group of pastors attended a ReCharge event last year and expressed a desire to bring it to their members.

"We co-sponsored the event with It Is Written and invited as many of our pastors as could come to bring their lay leaders and church boards so they could be inspired and learn how to put the whole package of evangelism together," says David Klinedinst, Chesapeake Conference evangelism director.

Presenters for the weekend included John Bradshaw, It Is Written president (pictured); Wes Peppers, It Is Written evangelism director; Ron Clouzet, former director of the North American Division Evangelism Institute; and Calvin Watkins, a vice president at the North American Division.

In addition to approximately 120 Chesapeake Conference pastors and members, more than 60 people attended the event from other conferences.

"I hope members take with them the understanding that they are called to be a soul winner," Klinedinst says. "One thing Calvin Watkins said is that some people out there will only respond to the gospel ... because of your personality or your relationship with them. God has called you to be the soul winner for them."



MOUNTAIN VIEWPOINT

The Best Is Yet to Come



The word “Appalachia” means a lot of different things to different people. Unfortunately, the Appalachian community often experiences cultural discrimination and/or bias. This has contributed to a lack of progression and self-worth for many people

in our region. But I am here to tell you that the people of the Mountain View Conference (MVC) are strong, intelligent, loving people who are dedicated to the gospel and telling others about Jesus and His soon return.

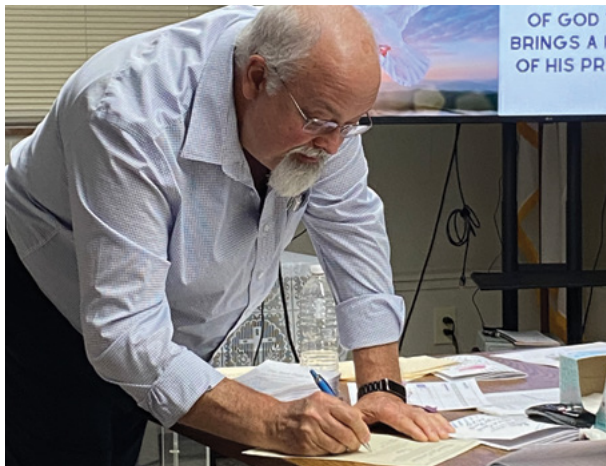
The year 2022 was a good year in our conference, resulting in the highest growth in numbers in the last 20 years. Our team continues to work toward a strong viable coalition of churches within our territory. After reviewing our conference’s history of progression, we recognized that, if we continued in the same path, institutional death was inevitable.

By God’s grace, we are taking discipleship and gospel presentation very seriously. Our members can rest assured knowing that gifts and donations are being used to promote effective ministry for the advancement of His kingdom.

Recently, the pastoral team and conference administration met to pray and discuss the future



Mountain View Conference Treasurer Victor Zill and President Tim Bailey hold a document signed by staff and pastors pledging to be used by God to double the conference’s membership.



of our conference, ending with a dedication and communion service. Today, we have a signed document hanging on the wall of our conference building between the president and treasury offices, which states, “We acknowledge that God has given a great responsibility to the leaders of His church. In analyzing the task assigned to us, we are therefore pledging, with the power of Jesus, that we will do our utmost to double the membership of the Mountain View Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in the next five years. Those who signed are therefore pledging of themselves to be used by God to help accomplish this goal.” All of our conference staff and pastors signed this pledge.

God is already blessing our conference with new levels of growth and stability. By faith, 2023 will be the best year on record. To that end, we solicit your prayers. Truly, the best is yet to come.
—Tim Bailey, President

‘A Little Child Shall Lead Them’

Fourteen-year-old Rachel Velez became friends with her public school teacher Lauri Nichols during their private tutoring sessions. As they met each week, Velez could not hide her love for Jesus, often talking to her teacher about God. One day, Velez invited Nichols and her husband, Joe, to church (pictured) to hear her sing special music.

Amazingly, before that Sabbath arrived, Lauri had asked her husband, “If you could meet God and just ask Him one question, what would it be?” In jest, he replied, “What came first, the chicken or the egg?” Little did they know that Jim Buchanan, Cumberland’s pastor, had planned to preach a sermon with that same title. When the Nichols arrived at church, they were convinced this was no coincidence.

Lauri told the Cumberland (Md.) church congregation how they came to be there that day—because of Velez’s personal witness. After some time, the couple requested Bible studies and were baptized into the Cumberland family. Lauri is now taking care of her mother in a different state, where



she takes her new friends to church. She is deeply in love with Jesus, all because a child shared Him with her.

To watch the couple’s interview, visit columbiaunionvisitor.com/chickenoregg.

‘And Forbid Them Not’

Daniel Venegas, district pastor of the Buckhannon, Braxton, and Glenville churches, planned to baptize four people at the Buckhannon church late last year.

One by one, the candidates entered the water, ranging from young to old—the oldest being 91-year-old Benny. As Venegas finished the baptisms, he



Daniel Venegas (far right), pastor of the Buckhannon church, introduces the newest members to the congregation, (left to right) Hanna Welch, Sheri-Lyn Sapp, Alan Wingfield, Benny Shifflett and Vann Parker, following their baptisms.

asked if there was anyone else who wanted to commit their lives to Jesus. A little hand shot up. It was Vann Parker, a first grader who had been raised in the church. Venegas smiled and acknowledged him, stating, “That’s great, we will talk.”

But Parker’s hand stayed up, his smile still beaming. Looking at the child’s face, Venegas prayed, *Should I baptize him now or wait?* Parker hadn’t had formal Bible studies, but he had attended Sabbath School and church since birth.

“I felt the Holy Spirit weighing heavily on my heart that I needed to baptize him then and there,” Venegas says. “I was surprised to hear my voice calling Parker to come forward and saw him eagerly walking up the aisle. [As he was getting ready], I told the congregation a story of a child who once wanted to get baptized but was withheld and never made the decision again. I told them I did not want to be that person, as I recalled the words of Jesus: ‘[And] forbid them not.’”

As Parker walked into the water, Venegas asked him, “Do you love Jesus?” Without hesitation, Parker exclaimed, “Yes!” and he was baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit!

NEWS NEW JERSEY

The Pierced Hands, Feet and Ears

“I Will Go: Making Disciples” is the overarching theme that we pray will motivate every member in the New Jersey Conference. One may ask, “How am I to accomplish or even attempt such a feat?” or “What’s in it for me?”

In order to find the answers, we need to explore what Jesus meant when He gave us this command. How did He accomplish it? He not only taught through His words, but through His life of servitude. What was in it for Him? That is more difficult to answer, if not impossible to understand with our finite estimation. He allowed the ungrateful human race to ultimately reject Him by piercing His hands and feet and nailing them to the cross.

In Exodus 21, we find a law concerning servants: “If you buy a Hebrew servant, he shall serve six years; and in the seventh he shall go out free and pay nothing” (verse 2, NKJV). If he was married after becoming a slave, he could go out as a free man on the seventh year, but he was unable to take his wife or children with him.

There was one way for him to stay with his family, however: “If the servant plainly says, ‘I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free, then his master shall bring him to the door, and his master shall pierce his ear; and he shall serve him forever” (verses 5–6).

This is precisely what Jesus did. While He could have remained in heaven without the ungrateful, undeserving human race, His actions inferred He’d rather be in hell with His children than to be in heaven without them. That is what led Jesus to come down to this earth to rescue us so that we may live in heaven together.

Are we prepared to serve our family, church and community so that we might enjoy heaven together? May the love of Christ permeate every fabric of our being, that we would become willing servants who love our Master, spouse and children.



Stephen Lee
Executive Secretary

Conference Showcases New Mascot

At the recent Ministerial Spouses meeting, attendees welcomed New Jersey Conference’s new mascot—Buzz (center). The honeybee, which is New Jersey’s state insect, will be visiting churches

and schools within the territory throughout the year, capturing church service activities from every entity. Be on the lookout for future buzzworthy news from Buzz.



Ascalon Retires After Serving 38 Years in Conference

Andre Ascalon, who retired at the end of 2022, served in the New Jersey Conference (NJC) for 38 years—20 years as a lay pastor and 18 as a full-time pastor, alongside his wife, Hillary. “My wife has been the most integral part of my ministry. This is a match made in heaven,” says Ascalon. “I think she is everything to my ministry.”

Ascalon holds a bachelor’s degree in Theology and a Master of Divinity from Luther Rice College & Seminary (Ga.). He recently retired from the U.S. Army with 41 years of military experience—24 years in active duty and 17 years in the National Guard. He shares that his 17 years of military chaplaincy experience has helped him better serve his church family.

Ascalon, who pastored in the Newark district, served the First Newark English church, the first Seventh-day Adventist church in the largest city of New Jersey. Last year, he baptized a new member every month, finishing his last Sabbath prior to retiring with yet another baptism.

“I am thankful to the conference who has allowed me to live my dream and passion to serve the church. I have no regrets and no remorse,” says Ascalon. “If I were younger, I would do it all over again the same way. To marry future parents, to watch children be born into the church, to bless them, baptize them ... no money can ever bring the satisfaction of seeing a soul give their lives to God’s kingdom.”



Andre Ascalon (alongside his wife, Hillary), recently retired after serving in the New Jersey Conference for 38 years.

Ascalon shares these words of advice with new pastors entering ministry: “Be authentic, never make an excuse for doing your job, be where you are supposed to be when you are supposed to be. Be creative, love your members, don’t forget your family, and always keep the Lord before you and stay prayed up.”

The NJC leaders thank the Ascalon family for their many years of service, asking God to continue blessing them in their next chapter of life.

—Cynthia Portanova

Training ‘Awakens’ Youth and Young Adult Leaders



Speaker Carmelys Vincent, director of Children’s Ministries, Adventurer, and AY at the All Nations Community church, presents “The Compassion of Jesus” at the Awaken Convention.

More than 400 youth and young adult leaders recently attended the Awaken Convention at Tranquility Camp in Andover. Organizers offered various tracks to equip and train leaders to effectively serve their local churches: Adventurer, Pathfinder, Master Guide, Guía Mayor (Major Guide), Teen Leadership Training, Young Adults, Coordinator, and Audio/Media.

Carl Rodriguez, the conference’s youth director, states, “Our emphasis was to create an atmosphere with three objectives. First, for each person to have the opportunity to cultivate their relationship with Christ. Second, for each participant to grow as leaders while becoming more effective and efficient within their local churches. And third, fellowship.”

2023 Initiative Almost Complete

As we end the first quarter of 2023 here in the Ohio Conference, we are so grateful for each member across this great state! Looking back on how God brought us through 2022, we can only marvel and praise Him for all He has done—the state of the Seventh-day Adventist churches across the territory is continuing to grow.

Last year was a fantastic year! Our churches were pressing together. People were involved in the mission, message and movement of Adventism in a way that was unprecedented in our recent history. Our tithe was up. And this has continued into 2023.

We, the administrators of the Ohio Conference, just want to thank you—the priesthood of believers, our partners in ministry—for serving, for loving, for sharing the gospel, for your faithfulness, and for your stewardship.

The 2023 Initiative is a vision that God laid on our hearts at the beginning of 2021 to see 2,023 new souls added to God’s kingdom across our conference by the end of 2023. The truth is, there is nothing about the history of growth in our conference that suggests that we could bring in that many

new people in such a short period of time.

But family, this was God’s vision!

Time and time again, we see the impossible become possible in places where God has a vision and gives it to His people. When we grab on to God’s vision, we access the resources of heaven. It is hard to fail when the King of the universe is leading the way forward.

At the close of 2022, we welcomed 1,691 new believers join God’s kingdom across the Ohio Conference. That puts us some 300 people away from reaching our 2023 Initiative goal! We have no doubt that we’re going to reach this goal by the end of 2023 and perhaps even in time for our constituency session, June 4.

How exciting it will be for us to realize at the end of the day that perhaps our faith was a little bit too small. God wants to do a new thing in this territory. Thank you for answering the call.



Bob Cundiff
President

Lima Hosts Community Recognition Award Service

The Lima church recently held its second annual Community Recognition Award Service. The program recognized 13 officers, volunteers and community leaders, as well as eight organizations that serve the Lima community, including the Lima Fire Department, the Lima Police Department, Our Daily Bread, Lima Rescue Mission, Habitat for Humanity, Bradfield Community Center, Family



Promise, and Bittersweet at Betty’s Farm.

Carl Brooks, Lima’s senior pastor, shares, “More than 60 people attended ... most of whom were visitors. Many longtime members agree that this was the largest number of visitors they have seen in the last 20 years.”

Church leaders recognized members and friends of the church who have shown dedicated service to leadership in ministry over the years, including Lima members Laura Simons, Keith Shaw and Phillip Thorman. Referring to all award recipients, Brooks said, “Thank you for the outstanding work you all do in our community. We at the Lima church encourage you to press on, even though it sometimes feels our work may go unnoticed.”

Carl Brooks, Lima church’s pastor, honors local fireman and awardee Kendall Harrod (alongside his wife, Kacey, and their baby) for his service to the community.

The Miracle of Faith



Francisco Pérez knew about the Adventist message years ago in his home country of Mexico. However, he slowly found himself turning away from God and following a path of addictions and bad decisions.

A year ago, Pérez moved to Akron, Ohio. One day, members from the Akron Hispanic church were distributing literature in his community. Gilberto Meza, a member of the church's literature evangelism team, providentially

met Pérez, and the two struck up a conversation. As they spoke, Pérez recognized that Meza's materials were Adventist-based. With a face aglow, Pérez asked if the local pastor could visit him.

A couple days later, Julio Alava, pastor of Akron Hispanic, met with Pérez and asked him if he'd like to return to the faith of his youth and be baptized. Without hesitation, Pérez answered, "Yes!"

Today, Pérez is a baptized member and faithfully attends Akron Hispanic. "God changed hearts in an instant in the early church," praises Peter Simpson, Hispanic Ministries coordinator, "and He is still doing those miracles of faith today."

Conference Office Team Changes

The Ohio Conference office team bids farewell to Edward and Mariya Marton and Kasper Haughton Jr., and welcomes Joseph Ottinger.



Edward served 14 years in Ohio as a senior pastor and another seven years as the conference's youth director. His next assignment will be with the Kentucky-Tennessee Conference as youth director and as summer camp director for Indian Creek Camp (Tenn.).

Mariya will also serve the Kentucky-Tennessee Conference as the associate youth director. Over the decades, she ministered in Ohio as a chaplain for Kettering Health, a senior pastor, and as associate youth director for the conference.

Haughton served three-and-a-half years in Ohio as associate pastor, and most recently as the conference's Digital Media and Communication director. He leaves to serve at Chesapeake Conference's New Hope church in Fulton, Md., as pastor for online community and administration.

"Pastor Ed and Pastor Mariya's ministry in the Ohio Conference has spanned the decades," praises Bob Cundiff, conference president. "During this



time, they have pastored numerous local churches, built up the ministry of Camp Mohaven, initiated the Growing Young program, baptized, preached, evangelized and touched countless lives for Christ."

Cundiff continues, "Pastor Haughton has been an integral part of the Ohio Conference team during his tenure with us. During his time as the departmental director for Communication, he expanded the role to include media, streaming, broadcasting, and digital outreach. His loss will be keenly felt by the territory."

Ottinger joins the conference as the new youth director. He has been in youth ministry for more than 20 years, most recently as the chaplain of Mount Pisgah Academy (N.C.). Ottinger's wife, Paula, has been ministering in elementary schools as a teacher for a decade.

"Pastor Jo comes to us with a rich and broad background in pastoral and youth ministry," praises Cundiff. "Through his career, he has filled ministry roles of senior pastor, young adult pastor and academy chaplain."

Administration continues its search for candidates to fill the vacant positions: assistant to the youth director; and director of Digital Media and Communication. Contact Executive Secretary Oswaldo Magaña at omagana@ohioadventist.org for more information.



Pennsylvania Pen

Come With Us!

“Then Jesus said to them, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men’” (Mark 1:17, NKJV).

Jesus invited Peter and Andrew to follow Him. For the next three years, He taught them about God, to pray and to share the gospel. After Jesus’ death and resurrection, these apostles shared the good news of Christ and “turned the world upside down” (Acts 17:6, NKJV). Those watching noted that their lives were transformed because they had been with Jesus (Acts 4:13).

Our Seventh-day Adventist schools invite students and families to come with us on their educational journey. This year’s education theme, “Come With Us,” builds on Adventist education’s foundational focus of inviting young people to grow in their relationship with Christ and preparing them to turn their own worlds upside down as they serve Him and share the gospel through their lives, talents and careers.

We invite our students, families and staff to “come with us” through an intentional and always-growing spiritual focus throughout our schools. This includes staff prayer time, Week of Prayer in the fall and spring, classroom Bible studies, church visitations, connecting students and families with local church ministries such as Adventurers and Pathfinders, and providing transportation and supervision for conference youth rallies and other conference-sponsored events.

As a result of this intentional focus, several students were baptized last fall, with more baptisms planned this spring. Pastors and educators are leading Bible studies as they prepare and invite students to follow Jesus.

We invite you to “come with us” as we work “together for our kids” in the year ahead. How can you partner with us? Volunteer at your local school. Financially support the worthy student offering, and team up with parents in providing Adventist education for their children. Attend our school events to support and encourage our young people. And most importantly, pray for our schools, staff, students and families.



Leona Bange
*Education
Superintendent*

Schools Receive Gifts of Safety

Volunteers recently came equipped with shovels and a commitment to the students at York Adventist Christian School and Harrisburg Adventist School, transforming their playgrounds with new rubber mulch floors.

Each of Pennsylvania Conference’s 10 schools recently received safety upgrades and new technology as part of the conference’s strategic initiative, “Together for our Kids”—helping schools provide students every opportunity for their spiritual, emotional, physical and intellectual growth, equipping them, not only for their future in this world, but also for eternity.

The schools received red emergency backpacks for each classroom to use on field trips and outings, along with an emergency/crisis rolling kit, complete with emergency water, blankets, weather radio, vegetarian and allergen-free food rations, first aid, tarps, etc. The schools also received items based on their needs—new playground equipment, security cameras, interactive touch boards, new computers,

new safety exit doors and more. This is all part of the Pennsylvania Conference’s commitment to providing safe places for students to learn, grow and deepen their walk with Christ.



Leona Bange (right), the conference’s education superintendent, and students from the York Adventist Christian School help to spread new rubber mulch on the school’s playground.

From Bully to Leader

When Miguel Couto first came to Blue Mountain Academy (BMA), he was stuck in a cycle of bad habits and making trouble, to the point he was almost asked to leave the school.

“I was in public school for most of my life and never really had an edifying group of Christian friends. I was bullied for many years—until I became the bully,” Couto shares. “I never succeeded academically and always wished to be a better version of myself, but my environment made that virtually impossible. When I first came to BMA, I didn’t know what I was looking for. I was a terrible troublemaker, had bad grades and was untamable as a freshman. But God worked persistently in my life and all of that has changed. Because of BMA, I was able to find God, and He opened my eyes to my purpose in this school.”

Today, Couto is a part of the boys’ dorm leadership team as a resident assistant and is a leader in Bel Canto, the school’s touring choir. “I am also a spiritual leader in our school church,” he continues. “I claim no merit for all these accomplishments because it was nothing that I did but what God did through me. He knew what school He wanted me in, and because of this school and all its amazing staff and friends, I am a better version of myself. BMA is not just a piece of land in the middle of Pennsylvania; it is a safe haven for mental, physical and spiritual exponential growth. I don’t want anyone to miss this amazing opportunity of transformation! This is a place where people become a better version of themselves, bringing honor to God and light to others in need.”

Learn more about the BMA Experience at bma.us.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 25–26: Biblical Discipleship training at the Pennsylvania Conference Mission and Evangelism Center

March 26: Princess Tea for girls 10 years old and under at the Pittsburgh Seventh-day Adventist Church. Learn more and register at paconference.org/womensministries.

March 31–April 2: Adventurer Family Retreat at Laurel Lake Camp

April 15: Women’s One-Day Conference at the Hershey Lodge (Pa.). Featuring Gianna Snell, field services director for Breath of Life Ministries, plus social media influencer Beth Hill speaking to the young adults, and educator Julissa Boyce leading the teen track. Learn more and register at paconference.org/womensministries.

April 17–18: BMA Experience for students in grades 7–10. Two-day academy immersion with a focus on STEM.

April 22–23: Biblical Discipleship training at the Pennsylvania Conference Mission and Evangelism Center

April 23: Princess Tea for girls 10 years old and under at the Shamokin Seventh-day Adventist Church. Learn more and register at paconference.org/womensministries.

April 30: Design and Photo Tips for Communicating Effectively with Kelly Coe, Communication director at the Columbia Union. Learn more and register at paconference.org/communication.

April 30–May 3: Outdoor Education at Laurel Lake Camp for grades 5–8

June 9–17: Camp Meeting 2023, featuring Pavel Goia, editor of *Ministry Magazine* and associate ministerial secretary for the General Conference, and Doug Batchelor, senior pastor of the Granite Bay (Calif.) Hilltop church and president of Amazing Facts.



Scan the QR code for Pennsylvania Conference’s events page.



PotomacPeople

*growing healthy,
disciple-making churches*

Graham to Revitalize Conference Churches

Church revitalization is the process of leading a dying church back to a healthy state. Many churches are not only dealing with empty seats but also experiencing congregants losing interest in church life and growth. Recognizing this need for an infusion of new energy and vision, the Potomac Conference recently transitioned Paul Graham to serve as assistant to the vice president for Pastoral Ministries for Revitalization.



Graham, who most recently served the conference as the associate Ministerial director of the North, will be assisting churches that are suffering from a lack of vision and growth

to identify and rectify their deficits. It's a process that sometimes may take months, and, in some situations, years, Graham says.

"My vision is to create a lab for new and creative ideas for church growth and revitalization, which may look different in various congregations," says Graham. "I will help churches understand why they exist, where they are going, and help them create a plan that will help them reach the desired goal that God has placed in their hearts."

Graham's first assignment is lead pastor at the Community of Hope church, currently worshipping in Takoma Park, Md.

Previously serving as the senior pastor of the Restoration Praise Center (RPC) in Bowie, Md., Graham is uniquely qualified for this new assignment. From an intimate group of 13 to a weekly attendance of more than 500, he helped make RPC one of the fastest-growing churches in the North American Division.

Weathering the Storm at Camp Blue Ridge

In late December 2022, while most people were preparing recipes for Christmas, staff at Camp Blue Ridge in Montebello, Va., were busy putting out a fire and thawing frozen pipes. The cold that embraced most of the country also affected the camp.

Wind gusts above 50 mph and frigid temperatures caused a power outage throughout the camp that lasted 36 hours. While the base has functioning generators, two machines ran out of fuel after 20 hours. The outage left Town Hall, cabins in the East and West villages, the Bunk House, and the Shop without heat, causing pipes throughout the camp to freeze and water heaters to malfunction.

Town Hall sustained most of the damage due to an electrical fire caused by an exploding frozen water heater, resulting in significant smoke damage to the entire building.

Despite the storm's devastation, there were some apparent blessings: the staff remained safe, and early detection of the fire prevented a total loss of Town Hall.

Ray Queen, camp director, says, "God is filling the staff with energy to ensure camp will be open



Camp directors Ray Queen and Julie Minnick examine fire damages at Camp Blue Ridge's Town Hall.

and fully operational by spring. Camp Blue Ridge remains a place where everyone feels God's presence when they enter."

Julie Minnick, associate camp director, encourages campers to visit campblueridge.org and make early reservations, as space is filling up fast.

The M-Team

Ask any member of the Potomac Conference Pastoral Ministries Department if they enjoy what they do *with* and *for* their pastors, and you will see their faces light up.

Several years ago, the Potomac Conference administration had the vision to hire more than one ministerial director. The conference recognized that pastors are the leaders of congregations and the frontline workers for church health, growing God's kingdom and fulfilling the mission. Therefore, a team of support for ministers was established. The group's responsibilities include coaching, encouraging, troubleshooting and visiting pastors. In one form or another, this team connects with each pastor in the conference approximately eight to 10 times per year.

The current Pastoral Ministries Department, affectionally known as "The M-Team," consists of Rick Labate, vice president for Pastoral Ministries; Heather Crews, associate director of the South; John Nixon II, associate director of the North; Rafael Soto, director of Hispanic Ministries; Gerson Bonilla, assistant director of Hispanic Ministries; and Steve Leddy, director of Church Planting and Evangelism. The team includes Candy Siebert and Vicky Fuentes, who serve as administrative assistants. In addition, Paul Graham serves as assistant to the vice president of Pastoral Ministries for Revitalization, a pastoral position to help revitalize churches.

"I love this team," says Labate. "The caliber of who they are and what they bring is so excellent that there should be theme music playing whenever they walk into a room."



John Nixon II, Heather Crews, Rafael Soto, Rick Labate, Steve Leddy and Gerson Bonilla (not pictured), comprise the Pastoral Ministries Department.



Rick Labate, vice president for Pastoral Ministries, instructs conference interns and new pastors on how to handle difficult situations.

In a recent team meeting, the members were asked what they see is the department's best work. Varying answers included "recognizing the challenges of our pastors and helping them feel comfortable bringing those challenges to us" and "seeing pastors thrive in ministry and not just survive."

The team was also asked what would make them feel most satisfied. Leddy responded, "Creating a movement with our pastors where they are growing Christ's kingdom to the extent that other conferences begin sending their people here for training." Crews said, "To be useful. I want to know that what I do makes a difference." Soto remarked, "For our churches to become discipleship-focused rather than just evangelism-focused. And for our Hispanic churches having second and third generations become the leaders of their churches."

In addition to visiting pastors, the Pastoral Ministries Department team members speak in various churches every Sabbath throughout the conference. Additionally, they provide training seminars for churches, plan pastors' meetings, conduct intern training events, recruit and vet pastors when church openings occur, and meet as a team weekly to discuss objectives for the week ahead.

"Potomac Conference's mission statement is 'Growing healthy disciple-making churches,' states Labate. "For this to become a reality, pastors must be spiritually healthy and have a ministerial support system to come alongside them. In the Potomac Conference, that's not just wishful thinking; it is a reality for pastors."



THE BMA EXPERIENCE

BLUE MOUNTAIN ACADEMY

Prayer and Support Impacts Student's Life

The prayers of many led Arionna Haakenson to attend and thrive at Blue Mountain Academy (BMA).

"When I came to BMA, I was looking for a fresh start. I knew I needed a change," she shares. "Before even knowing about the existence of BMA, I was praying every day, hoping God would tell me what I should do with my future. A couple of months later, my parents announced that we were moving to Pennsylvania, and although I was nervous, I decided that this was God's guidance. This was the answer to my prayers."

At first, life wasn't easy at BMA. Jennifer Culpepper, the girls' dean, and her team began praying for this new student—and then watched God transform her life.

"Arionna came really struggling with a lot," says Culpepper. "We began praying for her every night. It was amazing to see how she grew. Today, she is a leader in the dorm and stands for the rules she once



Arionna Haakenson (left) hangs out with new friends (back row) Elizabeth Rosette, Elismary Perez, (in brown shirt) Trisha Smith and English teacher Barbara Mathias.



Arionna Haakenson gets inducted into the National Honor Society.

was very upset about. God really has worked in her life in a powerful way. The power of prayer, not just from us here in the dorm, but her family also."

Her parents, Scott and Beth, were also praying—and watching God change Haakenson. They share, "We are so incredibly thankful to God for what He has done in her life and the great influence BMA has had on her."

Two of the biggest impacts for Haakenson were her new friends and the focus on God. "After a couple of months of adjusting, I grew to love it. I made friends who truly care about me and are happy to be open about their relationships with God," she reflects. "I am incredibly blessed to be around these people who are genuinely God-fearing. Because of these influences in my life, I've grown in my relationship with God. I went from doing my devotions every once in a while to twice a day, every day."

She continues, "One of the things that really impressed me about BMA is that, even in our classes, we always put God first. My experience here has helped me grow as a person and as a leader in ways that I could have never imagined. I am so thankful to Blue Mountain Academy."

Learn more about the BMA Experience at bma.us.

The Ultimate Homecoming!



Have you noticed that the older we get, the more we talk about the olden days and even relish the idea of meeting up with our “long-lost friends” again? Were things that much better back then, or is it that our memory and nostalgia makes it seem that way? Oftentimes, the things we remember most from our childhood can seem larger than life, and returning to them can seem less glamorous as we had once imagined.

Every spring on the campus of Highland View Academy (HVA), teachers, faculty, former students and even current students celebrate Alumni Weekend. This event provides an opportunity for friends and family to reminisce. So many of us have grown accustomed to traveling and spending time with friends from both near and far that we have taken this ease for granted. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic altered and delayed many of our reunions and homecomings.

Jesus, however, gives us a wonderful promise found in John 14:1-3: “Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in Me. My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with Me that

you also may be where I am” (NIV). These verses describe a homecoming, so to speak. Although we have never been to heaven, 1 Peter 2:11 tells us that we are strangers here on earth. So it only seems natural to call heaven our home.

Let’s anticipate and prepare for that great day when we can go “home.” In the meantime, let us safely reconnect with classmates and friends at reunions and homecomings. The students and staff at HVA are looking forward to welcoming all of our alumni this April!



Rob Gettys
Principal

April 14-16: Highland View Academy Alumni Weekend: Honor Classes 1973, 1998, 2013. Special recognition to every fifth year class, beginning with 2018.

April 14: Alumni Golf Tournament

April 16: Alumni 5K Run

Visit highlandviewacademy.com for the most up-to-date Alumni Weekend programming information.



the LEGACY

OUR JOURNEY

A PUBLICATION OF LAKE NELSON ADVENTIST ACADEMY

Eighth-Grader 'Partners for Eternity' With Neighbor

For the last couple of years, I've been participating in Partnership for Eternity. Since 2006, this program has been helping cultivate relationships between mentors and students at Seventh-day Adventist academies and elementary schools. The goal of the program is for students and mentors to create relationships and experience the blessing of service together. It has also been created to help retired individuals connect more with youth by building relationships and learning from each other.

My neighbor Kelly Jaggard recently moved into the area. When she arrived, my family and I went over to introduce ourselves. We didn't expect anything in return. But sure enough, Jaggard came over to our house one day and gave us a flower box made of paper. Inside there was chocolate and a card, thanking us for making her feel welcome to the neighborhood. It was such a sweet gesture. My family and I later visited her again to express our gratitude.

When I first spent time with Jaggard through the Partnership for Eternity program, I instantly learned she was a very pleasant and friendly person. We quickly connected by regularly spending time together. She is wonderful and affable, always wanting to help. She also loves decorating and crafting. In fact, she decorates her home according to the holiday of the year. She has, what she calls,



Kelly Jaggard and Jaslyn Valverde make gift boxes to give to staff members at Lake Nelson Adventist Academy.



Eighth-grader Jaslyn Valverde and neighbor Kelly Jaggard read together during a Partnership for Eternity visitation.

a "holiday tree." It is really endearing!

Jaggard and her husband, Rob, always make me laugh and give me good advice. We get to talk about our families, books, holidays, school and much more. Over the past six months, we have had the opportunity to do many things together, including exchanging gifts, cooking and baking cookies, cake, cupcakes and even pizza. The two of us have also made birthday presents for individuals by designing T-shirts and cards. We even made donation bags to help those experiencing homelessness and the underprivileged. I enjoy the activities we do!

I have quite a busy schedule as it is, so going to the Jaggard's home once a week has made me take a break from everything and simply relax. I can unwind, focus and be truly present. I am thankful that I took the opportunity to be a part of this program. It has enhanced both of our lives.

I encourage my peers to join this program. It is wise to take time with those who are older and more experienced than us. They are there to listen and share wisdom after a long day. And we are there to offer purpose, companionship and kindness to them.—*Jaslyn Valverde*

PFA POST



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

Alumni Honored as 100 Outstanding Alumni of La Sierra

Recently, three alumni of Pine Forge Academy (PFA): Donna Franklin ('66), Beverly Vaughn ('67) and Rocky Twyman ('66), were honored as part of La Sierra University's (LSU) 100 outstanding graduates during its Gala Centennial Celebration.

Franklin, who served as the yearbook editor while attending PFA, now holds a doctorate in Social Work from the University of Southern California. Franklin is responsible for helping La Sierra University School of Social Work achieve its accreditation and is the first black female to achieve tenured professor status at the University of Chicago School of Social Work. Franklin is considered an authority on the black family and has published an award-winning book, *Ensuring*



Inequality: The Structural Transformation of the African American Family.

Vaughn, a music professor at Stockton State University (N.J.), was one of the first members of LSU's select Chamber Singers group. Vaughn, who possesses a rich mezzo-soprano voice, has performed in many operatic roles in Europe and the United States. She has lectured on the history of black music all around the world and spearheaded a major drive that resulted in collecting thousands of musical instruments for schools in the impoverished country of Malawi. She has continued to give back to PFA by lending her musical talent during multiple alumni programs and speaking to the ladies of Kimbrough Hall.



Twyman graduated with highest honors from LSU and was the first black vice president of the student body. He instituted the Glorious Revolution project at LSU that consisted of community



outreach evangelism projects such as Operations Breadbasket and Prison. He founded the Oprah for Nobel Peace Prize movement that resulted in one of its supporters donating \$50,000 to LSU to start a scholarship fund for minority business students. His extensive bone marrow recruitment projects have saved the lives of many suffering with sickle cell anemia, lupus and leukemia. He was awarded the Martin Luther King Jr., Humanitarian and Washingtonian of the Year awards and founded the John Lewis for Nobel Peace Prize movement.

Never forgetting his high school roots, Twyman continues to share his wisdom, experience and networking connections with students, encouraging the intellectual growth of younger PFA generations. Through his connections, Lynda Bird Johnson-Robb, daughter of U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson, spoke at PFA's 50th class reunion.

While these PFA alumni continually make a positive impact in the world and in their surroundings, they continue to support students that now trod the path they once took by giving back their time and means at PFA.

Calendar of Events

March 17-19: Parents Weekend

March 19-20: Academy Days

April 23: Student Aviators Flight Day

May 26-28: Graduation Weekend

TWYMAN PHOTO BY PIETER DAMSTEEGT

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Spotlight on Spencerville

Highlights from Spencerville Adventist Academy

LOVE TO LEARN
LIVE TO SERVE
ALL FOR CHRIST

Students 'Called to Serve' at Annual Career Day

Spencerville Adventist Academy (SAA) recently held its second annual Career Day for the entire student body, grades pre-K to 12.

"The theme 'Called to Serve,' helped students understand that God is calling them to serve Him no matter what course of study or profession they decide to pursue," says Carmen Esposito, SAA's guidance counselor.

Elementary students expressed their individuality and creativity by dressing in attire that represented their desired future careers (pictured with kindergarten teacher Lynette Sigh). Students in pre-K to third grade enjoyed interacting with a professional chef, a firefighter, a police officer, a nature center keeper, and a children's book author. "I was delighted to have a sing-along, story time and sharing time about my books with students," shares educator, speaker and author Edwina Neely (pictured below, in blue). "Some students expressed their interest in writing and considered that writing could be their gift and purpose."

Students in grades 4–8 enjoyed a presentation from keynote speaker Lakeisha W. McMillan, a physician and Amazon bestselling author. They also heard presentations from a pastor, a lawyer, and a dentist.

Crystal E. Ward, keynote speaker for the high school students, shared her experiences and testimony regarding her 20-year career in banking and



finance in which she worked for JPMorgan and Citibank. After sensing God's calling on her life, Ward decided to pursue God's call to full-time ministry, becoming the executive pastor at the Spencerville church in Silver Spring, Md.

The high school students also learned from a panel of distinguished professionals about a variety of careers and fields, including computer science, United States strategic intelligence, public relations and marketing, computational chemistry, Food and Drug Administration, software development, law, and human rights. Presenters provided valuable information for developing the skills necessary for the job search process.

All students had the opportunity to visit booth displays with representatives from the General Conference Children's Ministries Department, the Chesapeake Conference Education Department, WGTS 91.9 radio station, the United States Marine Corps, Mount Aetna Camp and Retreat Center, and more. Other careers represented were a family physician, assisted living manager, real estate professional, speech pathologist, author, firefighter, and paramedic. At the event, these 28 professionals interacted with students and answered questions about their specific careers.

"Career day helped me navigate which path I would like to go down," says senior class member Adia Burley. "I felt like the guests gave useful information as to why to choose each path."



SPRING VALLEY ACADEMY^{ORG} CONNECTIONS

INSPIRING STUDENTS TO KNOW FOLLOW SHARE JESUS

Entrepreneurship Class Members Enter 'Shark Tank'

The high school entrepreneurship class at Spring Valley Academy explores and covers a world of topics, including intro to business, marketing, selling and creating a business plan, along with activities to reinforce concepts such as creating products from creation to distribution.

The class recently used real-life activities to help gain an understanding of the business world. For example, students made a bar of soap from scratch, designed a brand and packaging, and created a marketing plan including a commercial. To assist in these projects, local businesspeople and entrepreneurs served as judges, "investors" and speakers. This gave students the opportunity to meet and discuss various topics with people who are in the field.

Another activity, "Elevator Pitch," involved students giving business pitches and business plans to an "investor" during a brief time in an elevator (pictured).

The class culminated with the capstone project: the "Shark Tank" type contest. Each student presented their own business plan to a group of



local business leaders requesting an "investment" in their company.

Staff members share that the "sharks" did an amazing job asking tough questions while supporting the students. The sharks included John and Diana Clary, Tri-State Media business owners; Aaron Koles, Sales director, UKG, Inc.; Caleb Burns, a real estate investor; and Mark Merrell, a business owner.

With Ohio Conference's contribution and a local donor, several students received cash prizes. Winners included: Vivian Reeves, 1st place, \$1,000 scholarship from the North American Division, plus \$500; Mason Burns, 2nd place, \$250; and Cameron Da Cunha and Samuel Mwiseneza, 3rd place, each winning \$100.

"Entrepreneurship is a great class, especially if you are looking into starting your own venture," shares Reeves. "For me, it was a great opportunity to network, meet new people, and get my idea out there and find people to support me as well. I believe that all students should do their best to take this class. Even if you do not want to be a businessperson, there is always something you can learn to apply to other career fields and help you maneuver in the real world. The flexibility of the class allows you to work on something you are enthusiastic about, and it is not just another requirement for high school."

Alexis Dulan exclaims, "Entrepreneurship class taught me the importance of a good community and having grit and resilience!"—Kathy Burns, Instructor/Registrar



Left to right: Abby Clary, Chloe Smith, Aaron Koles (shark), Samantha Schneider, Hayden Jobson, Vivian Reeves, Mark Merrell (shark), Samuel Mwiseneza, Caleb Burns (shark, wearing hat), John Clary (shark), Jaedon Vanderiet, Mason Burns and Cameron Da Cunha take part in the school's second "Shark Tank" contest.

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IMPACT Shenandoah

Serve God – Value Knowledge – Accept a Life of Service

RingFest: A SVA Music Tradition



Experiencing long-held Shenandoah Valley Academy (SVA) traditions with students is an uplifting experience. One tradition students look forward to—for more than 20 years now—is the handbell RingFest held in Toledo, Ohio.

This year, the RingFest Tour began at Worthington Adventist Academy in Columbus, Ohio. The SVA Handbell Choir performed a concert including harp, flute, percussion and piano. Upon arriving at RingFest, students were challenged by two days of intense practice (pictured), directed by renowned handbell clinicians Martha Matthews and Kevin McChesney. Making music with 15 school handbell choirs from across the Columbia Union was a unique and beautiful learning experience. The combined activity and challenge of RingFest for the students and directors was exciting. Senior Leo Lam described it this way: “I loved the hype and the energy of RingFest.”

Also this year, alumna Emily White ('21), now a music theory and literature student at Southern Adventist University (Tenn.), was asked to lead the Festival Choir. White shares, “SVA helped me use my love of music. If I’d gone to a school where the music program wasn’t so great, I wouldn’t be on the [music] career path I am today.”

After the festival, they had time to perform at the Ephesus church in Columbus and the Eastwood church in Westerville, Ohio. One of the families prepared special food for the group, with SVA

students exclaiming, “This is the best food we have eaten on tour!”

On tour, they practiced a lot, worked hard, enjoyed meaningful talks on the bus, hiked a national park (pictured), played games and performed, all which honored the special RingFest Tour tradition. The Handbell Choir members gave the tour a 100 percent approval, highly recommending it to others. First-year ringer senior Dianny Ortiz shares, “I’ve learned we have to do everything with our hearts and for the Lord.”

This is what SVA is all about—granting students the opportunities to enjoy SVA traditions that provide important learning experiences and prepare them to live the SVA vision to Serve God, Value Knowledge, and Accept a Life of Service.
—Daniel Biaggi, Music Director



**Shenandoah
Valley**
Academy

Alumni Weekend 2023 is April 14-16

www.ta.edu **TATODAY**

News you can use from Takoma Academy

Academy to Host Alumni Weekend

This spring, Takoma Academy (TA) will welcome its alumni back to campus to celebrate and reconnect. The weekend, themed “Still Standing!” will feature Sabbath speaker Charles A. Tapp, president of the Potomac Conference and longtime teacher and friend of TA. The weekend will honor the accomplishments of current students and faculty and highlight the ongoing contributions that TA alumni make near and far. With a rich alumni heritage, TA is proud to celebrate the honor classes of 1943, 1948, 1953, 1958, 1963, 1968, 1973, 1978, 1983, 1988, 1993, 1998, 2003, 2008, 2013 and 2018.



Tiger, Takoma Academy’s mascot, is flanked by Vice Principal Keith Beckett and alumnus Melvyn Hayden III ('89).

TA Alumni Organizing Committee Members

Coach Bob Paulson ('75)
 Jason Banks ('88)
 Naeem Newman ('91)
 Wally Carson ('92)
 Rashawna Young ('92)
 Ron Brathwaite ('93)
 Celeste Philip ('93)
 Kayla Hall ('13)
 Valarie Westney ('13)

The tentative schedule of events is listed below:

THURSDAY, APRIL 20

7–9 p.m. Co-ed TA varsity vs. alumni basketball game, *TA gymnasium*

FRIDAY, APRIL 21

6–7 p.m. Class break-out/meet and greet sessions, *TA chapel*

7–9 p.m. “Still Standing” worship experience, featuring alumni worship leaders, singers and musicians, including light refreshments, *TA chapel*

SABBATH, APRIL 22

10–11 a.m. Sabbath School and alumni panel discussion, *TA chapel*

11 a.m.–1 p.m. “Still Standing” Sabbath worship service, featuring speaker Charles A. Tapp, *TA gymnasium*

1–3 p.m. TA Alumni of the Year awards and catered luncheon, *TA cafeteria*. All alumni, family and friends are welcome. Tickets are \$30/per person. Space is limited.

SUNDAY, APRIL 23

9 a.m. “Let’s Move, TA!” bicycle ride to Sligo Creek Parkway departing from *TA parking lot*. All ages and skill levels welcome.

10 a.m. 5K Walk-a-Thon, *TA track and field*.

11 a.m.–12 p.m. Co-ed alumni 3 vs. 3 basketball tournament, *TA gymnasium*

During TA’s 2023 Alumni Weekend, the goal is to raise \$100,000 toward the construction of two new state-of-the-art STEM classrooms. For more information, visit ta.edu/alumni.



TA Today is published in the *Visitor* by Takoma Academy ■ 8120 Carroll Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912
 Phone: (301) 434-4700 ■ ta.edu ■ Principal, Yasmine Julien ■ Editor, Shaun Robinson

wgts 91.9 news

Manager's Memo: Hope Is Real

Have you wondered how to turn hope from something elusive into something tangible? I recently read a short piece that was negative on the concept of hope, sharing that hope is nothing but useless happy talk. I would love to talk with the author and share how hope in Christ is anything but elusive.

Hope in Christ is welcomed into the lives of half a million people every week, and it is anchored in their life through this media ministry.

A listener in Burke, Va., shared, "Listening to WGTS guides me toward putting God in every part of my life." When asked as to why she gives to the ministry, a listener in New Carrollton, Md., said, "I give because I want others to experience the perfect love of Jesus as I do. Every song I hear reminds me of how much He loves me." And Catherine told us, "I have listened to WGTS for over 20 years and have been encouraged every single time I listened, especially in my lowest moments. Listening to stories of how God has moved in others' situations has been immensely uplifting!"

If hope feels void of meaning in your life, anchor it by taking one intentional action today, then another, and yet another. One action at a time will restore hope. Our mission statement, *To encourage everyone we encounter to take one step closer to Christ*, reminds us that we are all on a journey, a journey in which hope grows daily and becomes more tangible—anchored—as time passes.

Join us in inviting others into this journey, bringing them from a hope that perhaps feels void, into a hope that is filled with meaning, with life, with anticipation.



Highlights of 2022

365 Verse of the Day

to encourage and inspire listeners

You can find the Verse of the Day on our website, the app, Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter.



40,000 diapers and wipes

20,000 emergency kits for Ukrainian refugees

10,000 toys

100 pairs of pajamas



Health Tips

at 7:40 a.m. on Wednesday with an Adventist HealthCare professional

8,760 hours of life-changing programming



Prayers prayed by listeners for other listeners on *When We Pray* since we began the ministry in 2011.



Afternoon Host Johnny Stone



New Minor in Spiritual Care Offered at Kettering College

By Rebecca Ingle

Kettering College challenges its students with rigorous academic courses and clinicals. And it strives to help students grow to be the spiritually mature people they want to be. The college's required religion classes encourage students to first know themselves before they serve others.

Students can now earn a minor in spiritual care by taking three religion or humanities credits in addition to the 12 required religion credits. Humanities chair and professor, Cory Wetterlin, Ph.D., is excited about the newly added minor in spiritual care. He says adding this minor to resumes will give students an advantage and a talking point that show a hiring manager the student has worked on critical skills needed to serve others with compassion and care.

Spiritual care requires students to discover their own spiritual narrative, which is an ongoing journey, and one that nudges them to look at themselves with curiosity and honesty. Doing this grows students' empathy, listening skills, and ability to be more present with patients. They show up in ways patients need, according to each patient's spiritual narrative, even when it might vastly differ from their own.

Profound discussions in Kettering College's religion courses engage students to create a space where spirituality is a topic that is no longer taboo or off limits. Professor Wetterlin points

out healthcare professionals must ask and do very personal things that are uncomfortable at first. So, once students get comfortable asking patients about their spirituality, they begin to normalize it as an essential component to holistic health, knowing how best to serve the individual. He reminds students that 80% of patients want their healthcare provider to know about their spiritual needs, but only about 10% of providers ask.

Wetterlin says he is continually receiving positive feedback from students who have taken the religion courses. They often admit they didn't know what to think of them, but after the courses, they noticed a difference in how they engage with patients in more meaningful ways and hold themselves accountable to strive for more connection.

Professor Wetterlin says, "It's a great program that sets us apart from other colleges. Students say they feel the material is so important they can't imagine not getting it in their curriculum since it prepares them so strongly to know themselves, so they can serve others with more humanity, balance, and vulnerability."

RECONNECTION TOUR: WAU PRESIDENT TO VISIT ALL COLUMBIA UNION ACADEMIES



At a recent meeting held by the Columbia Union Board of Education (CUBOE), a superintendent of education asked me about the possibilities for additional visits to the campuses of the academies within the Columbia Union Conference. It was mentioned that the Washington Adventist University (WAU) recruiters had regular visits but wanted to see additional visits from WAU faculty and staff. This was a brilliant request, and I have added to my schedule this opportunity to visit every academy during this academic year. My first visit was to Spencerville Adventist Academy (SAA) on January 13, 2023. The timing was excellent because it occurred three days after 55 seniors from SAA visited WAU's campus. During this visit, recruiters, faculty and staff were able to showcase the many exciting educational opportunities at WAU, including STEM, business, music, computer science, athletics, nursing, and Honors College.

It was a joy to share with these engaged seniors the benefits of a WAU experience. Graduates from SAA who currently attend WAU, along with other students, were able to demonstrate and share how they are experiencing the uniqueness of a WAU experience and the advantages of higher education near the headquarters of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist and the nation's capital. We were able to offer the visiting academy seniors more than \$400,000 in academic scholarships. Our strategic initiative is to partner with all students to graduate on time with little or no debt, ready for the workplace and eternity. This is the primary reason we have launched the \$12K initiative, offering all members of the Columbia Union an annual fixed tuition rate of \$12,000 to attend WAU.

On my visit to SAA, I had the opportunity to share with the entire student body the pathway for career success by making first things first on their life's journey, making sure to prioritize what is important based on the recommendation from Jesus: "But more than anything else, put God's work first and do what He wants. Then the other things will be yours as well" (Matt. 6:33, CEV). My next visit will be to Spring Valley Academy, then to all the other Columbia Union academies, sharing the good news of a rewarding Christian education.

Deep appreciation to the principal and teachers of SAA for hosting my first visit, in a series of visits, to all Columbia Union academies.

This is Washington Adventist University.

Weymouth Spence, President



WASHINGTON ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY: THE RIGHT CHOICE AND THE RIGHT SIZE FOR MANY

As the national debate surrounding the value of higher education continues, many of the students who attend Washington Adventist University (WAU) not only value the opportunity they have to attend an institution of higher learning, but they see WAU as the right choice for them and their needs, as well as helping them achieve their career goals. After graduating from high school in 2020, Henrique Da Silva went back to his home in Brazil because the COVID-19 pandemic had just begun. "I started praying to God for Him to show me the place where He wanted me to be successful academically. WAU was the only university that cared for me from the beginning of the process until everything was finalized," says Da Silva. "I had visited WAU before ..., and I was already interested in coming to this beautiful campus. Everything impressed me. And after what happened during the application [process] while I was in Brazil, it wasn't my choice anymore but God's. He chose WAU for me." Senior Infinity Chacon says, "I had chosen WAU because I wanted a better education system in a new environment that felt comforting for me to adapt to, but also I wanted to explore my religious options and learn more about the Seventh-day Adventist faith."



HENRIQUE DA SILVA
Class of 2024



INFINITY CHACON
Class of 2023

When asked about the obstacles they overcame, Valarie Bentivegna, also a senior, says that "WAU helped me overcome my fear of performing on stage. I am still not 100 percent confident when I'm up on stage playing alone, but it is definitely better than it used to be." Da Silva and Chacon both mentioned how difficult it was being far away from family. "Being on such a small campus like WAU, everyone becomes part of your family. You're never alone and you always have someone to pick you up or give a helping hand when needed," says Chacon.

As they reflected on their greatest accomplishment since starting school, Chacon remembered how she lobbied to promote the WAU softball team on campus and how the first photo that promoted softball at WAU was of her.

Bentivegna mentioned how she is proud to be able to balance being involved with all the performances as a music major, being able to manage all pre-med requirements, as well as being a tutor. "Since the very beginning, I was introduced to different leadership opportunities that with no doubt I accepted, making me a better person, not only as a leader but as a citizen, as a student, as a worker, and most importantly, as a Christian," says Da Silva. "I am very thankful that I have chosen Washington Adventist University as the place to start my academic journey, and I can't wait to see where God is leading me next!"



VALARIE BENTIVEGNA
Class of 2023



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Rejoice and Be Glad

Every morning, as part of my “start the day” routine, I spend a few minutes in contemplation and prayer. One of the scriptures that I often think about during this time is found in Psalm 118:34: “This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.” The verse contains three concepts that I have found to be so valuable.

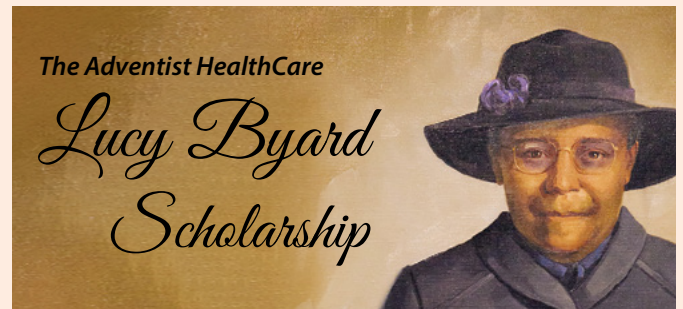
The first concept is the recognition that each new day is a gift from God: “This is the day that the Lord has made.” There is something so powerful in recognizing each morning that God has provided the new day. I think of this as an anchor for life – knowing that each day arrives right on time and is already filled with God’s presence, grace and blessing.

The next concept is “let us rejoice.” There are so many things that vie for our attention – our “To Do List” is long and our calendars are full. But we are called to look at the many interactions, tasks and obligations of our lives with hope. A spirit of rejoicing – of looking toward the future with optimism – impacts how we approach everything in life. However, in particular, our challenges, difficulties, heartaches and disappointments are best confronted and transformed through a rejoicing spirit.

The final concept contained in the Psalm is to “be glad in it.” To be glad is both a state of the heart and a state of the mind. Gladness expresses itself in delight, cheerfulness, gratitude and joy. Each day we can be glad for the opportunity that we have at Adventist HealthCare to extend God’s care through the ministry of physical, mental and spiritual healing. We are so blessed to have this sacred work of serving our community!

How do you start your day? I hope that as part of your morning routine that you also begin each day feeling comfort in the thought that life itself is a gift from our Creator and that we can respond to the events of life with a spirit of rejoicing. And I hope that being a part of our Adventist HealthCare family enables you also to feel grateful and glad for the myriad ways that God works through us – and in us – each day.

Terry Forde
President & CEO
Adventist HealthCare



Applications Open for the AHC Lucy Byard Scholarship

The Lucy Byard Scholarship was created to honor the legacy of Lucy Byard and to reaffirm Adventist HealthCare’s commitment to treat all people with respect and dignity. The scholarship will provide needed funding to gifted nursing students of limited financial means. In this way, Adventist HealthCare will contribute to the greater effort to close the health-disparities and economic-inequity gaps among people of color. Learn more at [AdventistHealthCare.com/LucyByardScholarship](https://www.adventisthealthcare.com/LucyByardScholarship).



Leaders in infection prevention met to help keep patients safe.

Sharing Best Practices to Help Prevent Life-threatening Infections

Adventist HealthCare White Oak Medical Center’s Director of Infection Prevention, Ada Baklouti, was invited to speak to the leadership board of the Association for Professional Infection Prevention and Control (APIC) this past winter. During the forum, Baklouti described the successful processes Adventist HealthCare has initiated to help keep the community healthy and prevent the spread of disease in a post-COVID environment. In particular, Baklouti shared best practice strategies in regard to the reduction and elimination of central line-associated blood stream infections (CLABSI) and catheter-associated urinary tract infections (CAUTI) in intensive care units to prevent long-term harm and life-threatening conditions.

Living Our Mission to Extend God's Care

Celebrating First Hospital Chaplaincy Ordinations

COMING TO FRUITION

Last winter, Adventist HealthCare celebrated the inaugural ordinations of its hospital chaplaincy program, an initiative begun by Ann Roda, Adventist HealthCare's Vice President of Mission Integration and Spiritual Care, and developed in partnership over the past six years with the Columbia Union Conference and with the North American Division Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries, the ecclesiastical endorsing agency for chaplains in the North American Division.

For this hospital chaplaincy program, the multi-year ordination preparation process includes the validation of church leaders and peers. These ministry colleagues assess the individual's sense of calling to ministry as well as their competencies, skills and abilities in keeping with all pastoral ministry programs. The preparation process also involves additional training, mentoring and development initiatives specifically designed to prepare candidates for hospital ministry, similar to specialization for schools, prisons or the military.

The first ordination was held on Nov. 16 at Adventist HealthCare White Oak Medical Center for Denny Rengifo, and the second ordination was held on Dec. 17 at Renewed Seventh-day Adventist Church for Lynval Williams. Both chaplains currently minister to the patients, team members and community that Adventist HealthCare serves.

The ordinations included testimonials by Dave Weigley, President of the Columbia Union Conference, and Celeste Ryan Blyden, Executive Secretary of the Columbia Union Conference, as well as words of prayer and support from other Adventist leaders, clergy and family members. Two additional hospital chaplaincy candidates are currently enrolled in this Adventist HealthCare program, the first of its kind in North America.

To learn more about Adventist HealthCare's Clinical Pastoral Education and Training, email CPE@AdventistHealthCare.com.



Chaplain Denny Rengifo receives her ordination certificate after an outpouring of support and testimonials to her faith-filled service.

Chaplain Denny Rengifo has been in ministry for 15 years, including the past six years serving in palliative care ministry at Adventist HealthCare White Oak Medical Center. John Whit Dunkle, MD, stated that when he shares the limitations of physical healing, "I know that she will restore hope through spiritual healing and support" and followed up by saying that "she is an anchor and a resource" for patients, family and staff. Phil White, Senior Pastor at Simi Valley Adventist Church and family friend, reflected on Chaplain Rengifo's passion stating, "Helping people in crisis is your calling. We are here to affirm that calling – the calling that God put in your heart." Chaplain Rengifo received her bachelor's in Theology from Southern Adventist University in 2006 and her master's in Theology from Andrews University in 2009.



Leaders, friends and family share heartfelt affirmations and blessings at Chaplain Lynval Williams' ordination service.

Chaplain Lynval Williams began his Chaplaincy career at Adventist Healthcare as a Clinical Pastoral Education student and has worked as a staff Chaplain in Behavioral Health since 2015. Marissa Leslie, MD, shared that, "Chaplain Lynval has handled the lives of our patients and staff with great compassion and care in his ministry." Chaplain Williams attended Washington Adventist University for Pastoral Studies, receiving his bachelor's in 2014 and his master's in 2016. He also received a master's in Divinity from Wesley Theological Seminary in 2022.

Coming Together to Ordain Our Chaplains

By Christina Keresoma

Being a faith-based institution allows our executives, physicians, and employees the opportunity to offer spiritual support. Among those who extend this vital component of care, chaplains carry a big responsibility to meet the needs of not only patients but also staff, nurses, physicians, and leaders.

Who is a chaplain?

A chaplain is a certified clergy member who provides spiritual and emotional care. Many of Kettering Health's chaplains have graduated from seminary or are going through seminary training. They work hard to provide an atmosphere of spiritual support to those around them. For many Adventist chaplains, they don't stop fulfilling their spiritual calling when they leave the hospital. They continue to work with local churches and serve on their off time. This has led some to ask, "Why don't we ordain these hardworking servants of God?"

The start of something new

The North American Division confirmed that no entity or organizations in the United States or the world church ordained hospital chaplains. So, Kettering Health and Adventist HealthCare, with the Columbia Union Conference and other local conferences, came together to create a committee to set out and make a policy for chaplain ordination within the two health systems.

Chaplains must work with their healthcare organization's Director of Spiritual Care to begin the three to four year process of becoming ordained.



Chaplains on the ordination track (left to right): Emeka Buffong, Austin Roberts, Berenice Nunes, Roberta Vieira de Oliveira

They must also fulfill the following to sit down with the ordination committee for review:

- an adequate awareness of their purpose and place in ministry
- a gift and calling to ministry through their work
- completion of, at least, four years of field experience
- faithful participation in the pre-ordination process

Adventist HealthCare has two chaplains who will be ordained this year upon approval from the committee. Kettering Health has two candidates who will start the four-year process and another two will start next year. This is an exciting way to honor and acknowledge what the Apostle Paul reminds us of about those extending the ministry of Christ through their words and actions: *"How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"* (Romans 10:15).



Honoring Martin Luther King Jr.

Kettering Health and Kettering College joined citizens from the Dayton community to honor Martin Luther King Jr. and his legacy at the annual MLK Memorial March on January 16.

A Partial Knee Replacement First

Kettering Health Miamisburg performed the first robotic-assisted partial knee replacement in southwest Ohio with the Zimmer Biomet ROSA.

Matthew Romer, MD, performed the surgery, which uses precise incisions and GPS-like technology to help avoid soft tissue, leading to a quicker recovery for the patient.



Keeping Our 'Years Ahead' Patients Mobile

Community members came together to mingle and get moving at an all-inclusive, full-body exercise class. Fit 'N' Motion explored strength, stretch, cardio, core, and balance in a comfortable environment offering modifications as needed.

The class was hosted at the Kettering Health Years Ahead in Dayton. In addition to primary care, the practice offers events and classes dedicated to addressing the diverse needs of seniors in the communities we serve.

Columbia Union Revolving Fund

MAKING MINISTRY POSSIBLE



Washington Ghanaian Seventh-day Adventist Church

The joy, excitement, praises and hymns echoed the chambers of the new facility at 6080 Foreland Garth in Columbia, Md. It was a sight to see on that beautiful Sabbath morning of December 31, 2017, when the church entered its new facility. "At last the seven years of renting and wandering around without a place to call our own has come to an end today," said the first elder of the church, Ebenezer Asiem. Special gratitude goes to the leadership at the Chesapeake Conference for their support and direction throughout the process. Our dream wouldn't have come into reality without God and the loan from the Columbia Union Revolving Fund (CURF).



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

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.

CURF



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

This advertisement does not constitute an offer to sell nor a solicitation of an offer to buy securities. Any offer to sell securities issued by CURF is made only through its Offering Circular. No one should consider any investment in CURF Notes other than by careful reference to the Offering Circular. Neither FDIC, SIPC nor any other government agency guarantees or insures repayment of CURF Notes.

Bulletin Board

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EMPLOYMENT

UNION COLLEGE, Lincoln, Neb., is searching for applicants for a history professor to teach various courses in global non-western history, cultural history, political science, and/or ancient classical history in the Politics, History, and International Relations Program. This is a full-time, exempt position to start June 1. Please see the full job description and instructions for application at ucollege.edu/employment, and direct any inquiries to Bruce Forbes at bruce.forbes@ucollege.edu.

UNION COLLEGE, Lincoln, Neb., has the following job opportunities in our graduate programs: Occupational Therapy Program; Academic Fieldwork Coordinator Occupational Therapy Program; Academic Fieldwork Coordinator Public Health Graduate Program; Program Director and two half-time faculty positions; Leadership Graduate Program; Program Director and one faculty full-time faculty position. View the full job description and instructions for application at ucollege.edu/employment, or contact Debbie Eno at debbie.eno@ucollege.edu for more information.

UNION COLLEGE, Lincoln, Neb., is searching for candidates for athletic director. This individual will provide overall leadership to the Warriors Athletic program to provide a positive learning experience for the students and to share the character of Christ within all areas of athletics. Bachelor's degree is required, master's preferred. Please see the full job description and instructions for application at ucollege.edu/employment. Direct any inquiries to Kim Canine at kim.canine@ucollege.edu.

UNION COLLEGE, Lincoln, Neb., is searching for candidates for two positions in the campus library: library director and reference and instruction librarian. Please see full job descriptions and instructions for application at ucollege.edu/employment, or contact Ed Allen at ed.allen@ucollege.edu for more information.

MISCELLANEOUS

"SONGS OF FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE"

Saturday, March 11, at 4 p.m.
Frederick Seventh-day
Adventist Church

Charles Reid,
The Seminary Chorus,
David A. Williams and
Andrews University
Department of Music
Students

Charles Reid, tenor, international performer of operatic and concert repertoire, has performed on many famous stages, including nine seasons with New York's Metropolitan Opera. Reid serves as Associate Professor of Voice at Andrews University.

The Seminary Chorus, a mixed chorus of global seminarian pastors, is directed by David A. Williams, performing organist and Assistant Professor of Worship and Sacred Music, at the Seventh-day Adventist Seminary.

frederickadventistchurch.org

Freewill Offering

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FOR SALE IN WOOD COUNTY, W.Va.: 1,800 sq.-ft. home on 22-plus acres. 3 bedrooms, 2 baths; goat, horse, sheep barn, 4-stall, 3-sided open garage; back-up solar water heater (email for photos). Beautiful area. Call for more details. \$415,000, assumable partial mortgage at 2.75%. Call (304) 588-6902, or email Blaize111527@protonmail.com.

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ELTERNHAUS ASSISTED

LIVING, Adventist family-owned and -operated, provides specialized care for seniors in a family homestyle setting. Delicious vegetarian food, activities, Friday night vespers and a shuttle to church Sabbath morning, just to name a few of the many options. Check out our newly updated website, elternhausalf.com. Elternhaus also offers a great work environment for Adventist caregivers, LPNs and RNs. Call Tim Mayer, (240) 286-3635.

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MARYLAND ADVENTIST DENTIST, DAVID LEE, DDS, FAGD, AFAAID, FICOI, FAACP, has practices located in Silver Spring and Columbia, Md. He is extensively trained in implant, cosmetic, TMD/TMJ, sleep apnea treatment, sedation and laser dentistry. Dr. Lee is an Associate Fellow of the American Academy of Implant Dentistry, as well as having many other certifications. For appointments, call (301) 649-5001 or (410) 461-6655. Mention this ad and receive a 10% discount on all services, excluding third-party payers. We welcome new patients!

LEGAL NOTICES

QUADRENNIAL MEETING OF THE OHIO CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

The 43rd regular constituency meeting of the Ohio Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will convene at 10 a.m. (registration beginning at 8:45 a.m.) on Sunday, June 4, 2023, at Worthington Seventh-day Adventist Church, 385 E. Dublin-Granville Road, Worthington, OH 43085.

The purpose of this meeting is to elect officers and committees, consider recommendations for revisions of the articles and regulations, and to transact such other business as comes before the conference.

Bob Cundiff, President
Oswaldo Magaña, Exec. Sec.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE BURLESON SEVENTH-DAY CHURCH, Burleson, Texas, will celebrate its 50th Anniversary, April 21-23, 2023. Activities include Friday evening supper and church history presentation; Sabbath breakfast; lesson

study by Pastor Keith Gray; sermon by Pastor Mike Tucker; lunch at Burlison Adventist School; afternoon fellowship; supper at the church with musical concert by Steve Darmody; Sunday morning golf. Call (817) 295-7141 for more information.

OBITUARIES

MARTIN, M.D., NORMAN J., born March 10, 1948, in Jamaica, Queens, N.Y., to Helen N. Martin and the late Joseph W. Martin; died at his home in Adelphi, Md., July 31, 2020. He was a retired hematologist/oncologist who practiced with the United States Army (Colonel) and Department of Defense, as well as in private practice. After retirement from the military, he spent the remainder of his career with a group practice in Virginia, Civil Service staff doctor in Maryland and Virginia and Locum Tenens in Maryland and Virginia. New York was the center of his education: Peter Stuyvesant High School, City College of New York and Mount Sinai School of Medicine. He completed his internship and medical residency programs in Boston and Washington, D.C. He loved reading, travelling and music. In his youth, he had violin, piano and organ lessons. At each military assignment he was the church organist or pianist. He loved Bible study and was a part of or lead a group. He was a member of the Sligo church in Takoma Park, Md., and its choir for more than 30 years, as well as a Sabbath School pianist. He had been an elder and a member of Takoma

Academy's Board and Health Ministries team. Norman is survived by his wife, Joyce, of 45 years; two sons, Kyle (Tonina) and Neal (Asashia) and grandchildren: Chase, Landon and Laila; his mother, Helen Martin; a sister, Jo-Ann; as well as aunts, an uncle, nephew, niece and friends.

REESE, ROGER WALLACE, born March 5, 1928, in Paradise Valley Hospital, National City, Calif., to the late Orrin Richard and Evelyn Frances Klein Reese; died January 25, 2020, at home in Keysville, Md. He was a faithful member of the Westminster (Md.) church. Roger was a graduate of San Diego Union Academy, Calif., and completed several years of study at La Sierra University, Calif. Roger was baptized in 1942 at the Gresham (Ore.) Adventist church. He served as Corporal in the Medical Cadet Corps of Seventh-day Adventists in the Pacific Union Division in San Diego, Calif., 1945-46. He honorably served state-side on active duty in the United States Marine Corps as Corporal, 1951-53. In 1951 Roger married Lenore Barbara Duncan. For 29 years, he was employed by Holladay Park Hospital in Portland, Ore., as chief engineer to the assistant administrator of buildings and grounds. After retirement, his hobby was long-haul trucking. Later, Roger had two pickups to haul travel trailers, 5th wheels, and RVs from where they were manufactured in Indiana to where they would be sold. For five years, Lenore drove one pick up and Roger drove the other. And, on their trips, they



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July 29	Hazel Marroquin
August 5	Michael Campbell
August 12	Greg Carlson
August 19	TBD
August 26	Celeste Ryan Blyden
September 2	TBD
September 9	Bonita Shields
September 16	Tom Hughes

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left literature everywhere they traveled. Roger was also an animal lover, loved reading, camping, birding, gardening and working on small engines. In 2019, he donated 1,004 pounds of fresh garden tomatoes from his 66 tomato plants to a food pantry in Westminster, Md. Survivors: his daughters, Christine Marie (Harold)

Greene of Keysville, Md., and Pamela Ann (Joel) Allen of Snohomish, Wash.; his son, Michael Roger (Dorothy Kites) Reese; six grandchildren; and 11 great-grandchildren. Roger was the middle child of one brother and one sister. Both have preceded him in death. His wife, Lenore, passed away July 19, 2022.

Sunset Calendar

Sunset times listed below are for the cities in which our conference headquarters reside. For a full listing of sunset times in the Columbia Union territory, please visit columbiaunionvisitor.com/sunset.

	Mar 3	Mar 10	Mar 17	Mar 24	Mar 31	Apr 7	Apr 14	Apr 21	Apr 28
Boyertown, Pa.	5:55	6:03	7:10	7:18	7:25	7:32	7:39	7:46	7:54
Columbus, Ohio	6:25	6:32	7:40	7:47	7:54	8:01	8:08	8:15	8:22
Columbia, Md.	6:01	6:08	7:15	7:22	7:29	7:36	7:43	7:50	7:57
Lawrence Twp., N.J.	6:20	6:27	7:34	7:41	7:48	7:55	8:02	8:08	8:15
Dayton, Ohio	5:52	6:00	7:08	7:15	7:22	7:29	7:36	7:43	7:51
Hamburg, Pa.	6:30	6:37	7:45	7:52	7:59	8:06	8:13	8:20	8:27
Staunton, Va.	5:56	6:04	7:12	7:19	7:26	7:34	7:41	7:48	7:55
Parkersburg, W.Va.	6:10	6:17	7:24	7:31	7:37	7:44	7:50	7:57	8:04

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