

THE ATLANTIC UNION

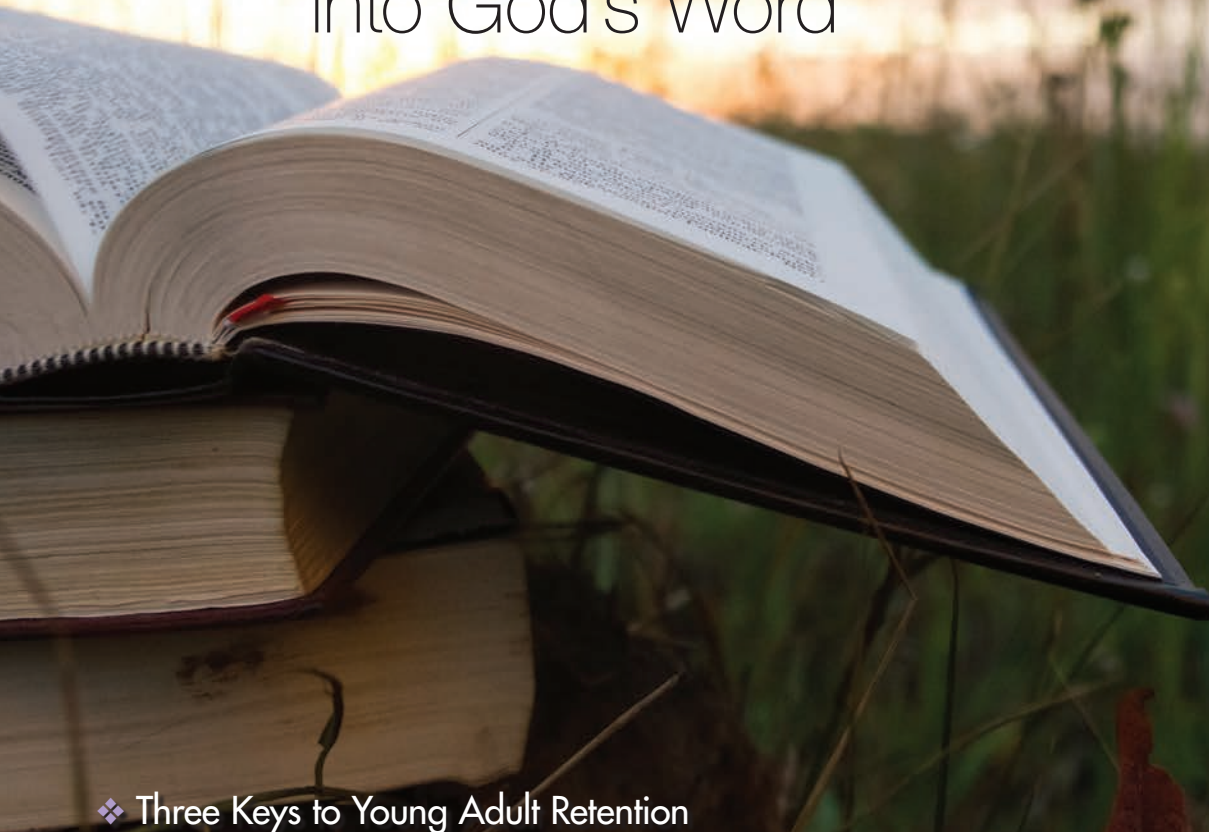
APRIL 2017

# GLEANER



## DIGGING DEEPER

into God's Word



- ❖ Three Keys to Young Adult Retention
- ❖ Willis Avenue Church Sows God's Grace, One Breakfast at a Time

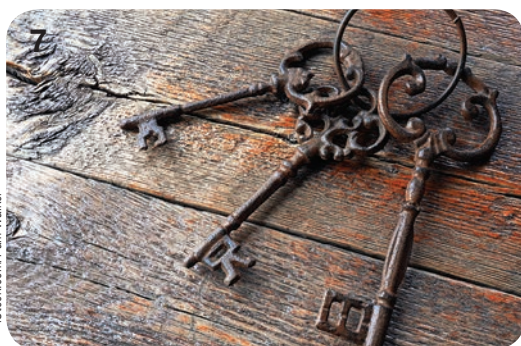


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## 7 Three Keys to Young Adult Retention

I love young adults; they are spiritual, intelligent, and caring people. They love the church wholeheartedly and they are looking to serve the church earnestly.



## 8 Union Boards and Committees Meet in Connecticut

Members of the Atlantic Union Conference's boards and committees met in Windsor Locks, Connecticut, for a weekend retreat.



## 14 Willis Avenue Church Sows God's Grace, One Breakfast at a Time

The Willis Avenue church prayer group and volunteers serve breakfast to people on their way to the methadone clinic, homeless individuals, and community residents.

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## A Debt of Gratitude

**D**ebt in America continues to be a growing phenomenon. Mortgages, cars, student loans, credit cards, and discretionary purchases have surged, similar to the times just before the greatest financial crisis. It seems as if a large percentage of the U.S. population lives in debt, but that is nothing new. The concept of owing and repaying money is as old as we can trace back in history. Can we ever get rid of it? I don't think so. We can reduce or totally eliminate ours, but the financial system is built around getting people to buy now and pay later.

Fortunately, we have ample counsel from scripture that helps us to understand that God's plan is for us to stay away from debt: "Owe no man any thing except to love one another"—Romans 13:8, NKJV. However, while the Bible cautions us about the danger and the risk of living in debt, I find it interesting that the Apostle Paul calls us all debtors. In Romans 8:12, NKJV, he said: "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh."

Debtors? What do we owe and to whom do we owe it? Paul answers that by saying, "I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise"—Romans 1:14, NKJV. We see that Paul is presenting to us the concept that we have a "continuing debt of love" (Romans 13:8, NIV) to one another. Jesus says, "Freely you have received; freely give"—Matthew 10:8, NKJV.

After sin found its way into humanity, we all became sinners and were therefore separated from God. There was need for reconciliation. Our disobedience put a veil between God and His creation. We could no longer enjoy free access to Him, to a point that the only deserving thing

was death, for the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). Are we suggesting that we have to pay for our sins? Maybe. But don't worry, Christ took on Himself the entire weight of all our sins; He paid the cost with His blood and set us debt free.

So, what happens now? Can you imagine someone goes to your bank and pays off your mortgage, writes off your student loan, and even pays your credit cards and monthly bills? That would be just awesome! But let me pose a question. Don't you think that you have the responsibility to show some respect, love, appreciation, or even have a feeling of indebtedness to that someone? Further, having someone clear your debt, makes you feel somewhat obligated to have a positive attitude toward that person. I am so glad that, as the song says, "Jesus paid it all, all to Him I owe." My indebtedness to Him is a debt of gratitude.

The world as a system has nothing to offer to those who live in the Spirit. We have been freed from the most terrible death sentence in the universe. We are faced with the fact that when we had nothing, Christ sustained us. When we were dead in sins, He gave us life eternal. When we were lost, He rescued us. He died our death so that we may live His life.

I could keep going on and on, telling thousands of reasons why I carry in my heart a strong sense of gratitude to Jesus. I am eternally indebted to Him; I am His bond servant. My soul rejoices, my feet cannot be still, my mouth praises His Holy Name saying, "Thank you, Jesus. I am free, the price is paid!" For this I am eternally grateful. ①

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*Elias Zabala, Sr., is the Atlantic Union Conference treasurer and trust services director.*



*“Christ took on Himself the entire weight of all our sins; He paid the cost with His blood and set us debt free.”*



# DIGGING DEEPER

## Into God's Word

By Debra McKinney Banks

*“The Sabbath school is an important branch of the missionary work, not because it gives to young and old a knowledge of God’s word, but because it awakens in them a love for its sacred truths, and a desire to study them for themselves; above all, it teaches them to regulate their lives by its holy teachings”*—TESTIMONIES ON SABBATH-SCHOOL WORK, p. 109, 110.

**M**ore than 10 years before the Seventh-day Adventist Church was officially organized in 1863, the foundations of Sabbath School in the Adventist Church had its beginnings in the Atlantic Union territory. Since that time, for more than 164 years, Sabbath School has continued to be a place for adults, youth, and children to study and glean precious truths from God’s Word.

### History

In 1852, James White wrote the first Sabbath School lessons for THE YOUTH’S INSTRUCTOR from his home in Rochester, New York, and conducted the first Sabbath School there in 1853. The following year, John Byington started a Sabbath School in Bucks Bridge, New York. Early Sabbath Schools had only two divisions, one for adults and one for children. In 1869, pioneer teacher G.H. Bell became the editor for THE YOUTH’S INSTRUCTOR, and introduced a more organized format for the weekly Sabbath School meetings that is similar to what we still use today.

As the church grew, the number of Sabbath Schools greatly increased. Nearly 50 years after the first lessons were printed, there were 2,334 Sabbath Schools operating with 50,804 members. The Seventh-day Adventist Church no longer counts the number of Sabbath Schools, but according to the Office of the

Archives and Statistics for the General Conference, Sabbath School attendance in 2014 was estimated at 6,342,650.

### Mission

Ellen White wrote, “The Sabbath School should be one of the greatest instrumentalities, and the most



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effectual, in bringing souls for Christ”—TESTIMONIES ON SABBATH-SCHOOL WORK, p. 20. Sabbath School is a “relational, small group-driven . . . educational fellowship that builds faith and practice,” says J. Alfred Johnson, II, director of Adult Ministries, who manages the Sabbath School, Personal Ministries, and Prison Ministries departments for the North American Division.

Faith is emphasized by helping members develop a deeper knowledge of the Bible and a personal relationship with Jesus; practice comes in through an active application of the faith that has been developed in the context of living with Jesus and witnessing to others about Jesus. “Where we tend to go off course is when Sabbath School is purely a cerebral experience,” Johnson says. He cites that many Sabbath Schools have left out one of the most important points. “We often forget the practice aspect of Sabbath School—the ‘do’ aspect—that results in knowing Jesus Christ,” he says. Johnson asserts that all four of these key elements: Bible study, community outreach, fellowship/nurture, and world mission emphasis are necessary for a successful Sabbath School. “Like a car needs all four tires to run, a well-rounded Sabbath School emphasizes making well-rounded disciples for Jesus Christ.”

### Resources

The General Conference Sabbath School and Personal Ministries department ([www.sabbathschoolpersonalministries.org](http://www.sabbathschoolpersonalministries.org)) develops a wide variety of curriculum materials and other resources on a quarterly basis to facilitate a successful Sabbath School experience for every segment of our world church, from birth to adulthood.

The department has also developed “Sabbath School 4,” an interactive app available for both iPhone and Android, that provides access to the print content of all the lessons, as well as audio podcasts, animated clips, and weekly audio readings in various languages.

- **ADULT SABBATH SCHOOL BIBLE STUDY GUIDE** (35 years old +) is written in English, French, and Spanish, plus an additional 12 languages, including Afrikaans, Türk, Japanese, and IsXhosa. An easy reading English text is also available. Each quarter is supported by various study helps, including a quarterly companion book, and E.G. WHITE NOTES that can be obtained through the Adventist Book Center ([www.adventistbookcenter.com](http://www.adventistbookcenter.com)).
- **IN STEP WITH JESUS** is a new resource to welcome newly-baptized members to the Adventist Church and the Sabbath School study format. Similar to the ADULT SABBATH SCHOOL BIBLE STUDY GUIDE, this printed booklet is comprised of four Bible-study guides that focus on four subtitles: “The Journey Begins,” “The Power of Love,” “The Power of the Word,” and “The Power of Mission.”
- **GRACELINK** is the curriculum for children from birth to 9 years old. Lessons are based around a 12-year curriculum that has been formulated with the use of current educational theory and methods. Each lesson centers on one of the four dynamics of the series: grace, worship, community, and service. GRACELINK (Beginners, Kindergarten, and Primary) lessons come in seven different languages. Animated versions of the lessons are also available on [YouTube.com/](http://YouTube.com/)

[SabbathSchool](http://SabbathSchool) and [Vimeo.com/SabbathSchool](http://Vimeo.com/SabbathSchool).

- **POWERPOINTS** is the Sabbath School lesson guide for tweens and teens, ages 10-14 (Junior/Earliteen), and is based on a four-year cycle, providing Bible-based teaching of Adventist doctrines.
- **REALTIME FAITH** is for Earliteens, ages 13-14, and is designed to encourage daily Bible study.
- **CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS** is a four-year “through the Bible” study for teens, ages 15-18, that corresponds with the CONFLICT OF THE AGES series written by Ellen G. White.
- **COLLEGIATE QUARTERLY** is a devotional Bible study guide for young adults, ages 18-35, with lessons following the adult Sabbath School quarterly.

Sabbath School resources are also available for those living with disabilities, or unable to attend Sabbath School at a local church.

- Christian Record Services (CRS) provides Sabbath School materials for the visually impaired by providing the quarterly study materials that correspond to the materials produced by the General Conference. The children’s “Primary” lesson is available in braille, and CRS also produces THE STUDENT, an adult quarterly study guide in braille and on audio CD.
- **Hope Channel** offers a weekly broadcast series called Hope Sabbath School which features a panel of 12 young adults discussing the week’s adult lesson. Each segment is also available on [YouTube.com/hopesabbathschool](http://YouTube.com/hopesabbathschool).



**Upcoming Plans and Supports**

The NAD Adult Ministries department is actively pursuing utilizing digital media to reach local churches. Johnson and his team are excited about the start of “Festival of the Laity TV,” a broadcast production arm of the Adult Ministries department that will be used to develop more training resources, conduct and share interviews, in addition to live streaming educational seminars. An in-depth online training course and digital materials for Sabbath School teachers will be available during second quarter 2017 at [www.festivalofthelaity.org](http://www.festivalofthelaity.org).

For the tech-savvy Sabbath School member, you will soon be able to

ask, “Alexa, what is this week’s Sabbath School lesson?” and hear a live recording of the week’s adult Sabbath School lesson. Thanks to a collaboration of departments, including NAD Adult Ministries, Christian Record Services, the Ellen G. White Estate, and GC Sabbath School and Personal Ministries, this digital format is slated to be unveiled in the summer of 2017.

Sabbath School is adapting to meet the needs of the members by incorporating technology, language translations, and more, to engage and enliven their personal walk with God, and ultimately impact the world around them. With personal

effort and dedication, the Sabbath School can be a place where “through a living connection with God, men and women, youth and children, may be so fitted up that they shall be a strength and blessing to the church... [helping] the church upward and onward, as far as it lies in their ability, going from strength to greater strength” —TESTIMONIES ON SABBATH SCHOOL WORK, p. 92. ①

*Debra McKinney Banks is the communication office assistant for the Atlantic Union Conference.*

**Helpful Links at a Glance**

- Adult Bible Study Guide** ([absg.adventist.org](http://absg.adventist.org))
- Adventist Book Center: Sabbath School** ([www.adventistbookcenter.com/sabbath-school.html](http://www.adventistbookcenter.com/sabbath-school.html))
- Collegiate Quarterly** ([www.cqbiblestudy.org](http://www.cqbiblestudy.org))
- Cool Tools for Sabbath School** ([www.sabbathschoolpersonalministries.org/cooltools](http://www.sabbathschoolpersonalministries.org/cooltools))
- CornerStone Connections** ([www.cornerstoneconnections.net](http://www.cornerstoneconnections.net))
- In Step With Jesus** ([www.instepwithjesus.org](http://www.instepwithjesus.org))
- NAD Sabbath School Resources** ([festivalofthelaity.com](http://festivalofthelaity.com))
- General Conference Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Department** ([www.sabbathschoolpersonalministries.org/sabbathschool](http://www.sabbathschoolpersonalministries.org/sabbathschool))
- GraceLink** ([www.gracelink.net](http://www.gracelink.net))
- Junior PowerPoints** ([www.juniorpowerpoints.org](http://www.juniorpowerpoints.org))
- RealTime Faith** ([www.realtimfaith.net](http://www.realtimfaith.net))



For additional Sabbath School resources, visit [www.atlantic-union.org/sabbath-school](http://www.atlantic-union.org/sabbath-school).



## Three Keys to Young Adult Retention

Love young adults; they are spiritual, intelligent, and caring people. They love the church wholeheartedly and they are looking to serve the church earnestly. However, many are leaving the pews while others are disengaged. What can we do to alleviate this problem? I've learned three key components to young adult retention through my interactions with them.

### Key #1

Young adults are looking for a spiritual church. Christ offers the best example of a spiritual church. In the New Testament church Jesus did four critical things: He prayed, lived a genuine godly life, helped the needy, and empowered His disciples.

By Christ's example, He demonstrated that prayer was not an option, but the most needed activity in life. Throughout scripture, we find Jesus praying at every critical juncture. Jesus, at times, prayed all night (see Luke 6:12). Every critical decision and activity was preceded by prayer—His baptism with the Holy Spirit and entrance into public ministry, commencing His evangelistic journey, selecting disciples, during His ministry, and before announcing to the 12 His approaching death.

Jesus was genuine, He walked the talk. His life demonstrated His teachings. People wanted to be with him because of His devoted life (see Luke 15:1). Sinners and religious leaders alike were drawn to Him because of the life He lived. Jesus took time to help the needy, and those suffering (see Matthew 4:24). There was no town that Jesus' presence did not bring peace and healing. While His primary task was to save us from sin, He spent a great amount of time ministering to those in need, showing compassion.

Jesus deliberately empowered His disciples. For three-and-a-half years He demonstrated how to live a life connected to God. Then He prayed for their unity (see John 17), and sent them to preach the gospel (see Luke 9: 1-27). He gave them authority and the Great Commission (see Matthew 28). He sent the Holy Spirit to empower them to preach the Word until the end (see Acts 1:8; Acts 2).

### Key #2

Young adults are looking for a church that really cares about them. In the study "Lost and Found: The Younger Unchurched and the Churches that Reach Them" by Ed Stetzer, Richie Stanley, and Jason Hayes, 58 percent of 20-somethings would be more likely to attend church if people "cared for them as a person." Young adults thrive when the people in church demonstrate they really care

about each other. They should be devoted to each other, accountable to each other, call each other, and do things together. A church that cares demonstrates love in action, they reach out, and also provide a place for fellowship and hospitality. People who are lonely, discouraged, or afraid can come to church and find help in their time of need.

### Key #3

Young adults are looking for a church that lives as a community. They love the idea of joining a small group in order to learn more about the Bible and Jesus. LifeWay research affirms that young adults are longing for community and fellowship with peers, looking for ways to reach people in need, and are circling the church but not always finding a home in it. Young adults are looking for connection. Community with other young adults is extremely important in their lives. LifeWay research says young adults seek authentic answers in the Bible and Christian tradition that are best learned through participation in small groups. Making a difference is essential, and is accomplished by providing opportunities to meet the needs of others on a regular basis. Social action is cited as the major reason uninvolved young adults would consider becoming part of a church.

Jesus was a young adult with young adult disciples. They fulfilled God's mission because Jesus' church was a reflection of His life. Jesus' ministry, as well as contemporary research, confirms and validates the fact that young adults will be drawn to a church that is connected to God, is caring, compassionate, and lives as a community. We can easily retain and attract young adults by using the small group model in our churches, demonstrating genuine love and interest toward those inside and outside the churches, and living a life that mimics that of Jesus. Jesus demonstrated prayer. It is the first and most critical step. Nothing short of a revival will lead to retention of young adults. Ellen White said it best, "A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work"—SELECTED MESSAGES, Book 1, p. 121. ①



*Andrés J. Peralta is director of the Youth and Young Adult Ministries and Pathfinder and Adventurer departments in the Atlantic Union Conference.*

## Union Boards and Committees Meet in Connecticut

Members of the Atlantic Union Conference's boards and committees (the administrators council, association board, board of education, college board of trustees, and executive committee) met February 17-21 in Windsor Locks, Connecticut, for a weekend retreat. The purpose of the retreat was to continue the training of board members; begin the process of developing a strategic plan for the Atlantic Union that "transcends culture, color, or even conference, and focuses on fulfilling the union's God-given mission;" to set goals for the union territory; and to foster leadership development. The theme for the weekend was "Mission Driven! A Path Forward for the Atlantic Union Conference."

Invited guest presenters included Calvin Rock, former vice president of the General Conference, who was the Sabbath speaker and also presented seminars on board governance; Paul Brantley, a North American Division vice president; Minner Labrador, Jr., Southwestern Union Conference vice president

for ministries; and Dan Day, North American Division director of special projects, who facilitated the workshops on strategic planning and development; and Petrice Wideman, president of Wideman Cultural Consulting, who gave a presentation on cultural awareness.

Each morning and evening the group participated in the devotionals, which the six conference presidents (Kenneth Manders, Henry Beras, Miguel Crespo, Daniel Honoré, Bob Cundiff, and

David Dennis), Rosemary Tyrrell from Bermuda Conference, and Avis Hendrickson, Atlantic Union College president, presented. Each devotional focused on "mission."

The meetings consisted of several general sessions covering topics on creating a strategic plan for the union; breakout groups organized by conferences, the union, the board of education, and the college; and ended with the regular February meetings of all the boards and committees.

The retreat was sponsored by the Atlantic Union Conference administrative team. This was the beginning of an ongoing process to focus the direction of the union and its institutions on mission. Information will be shared at various times throughout this process. "We intend to be a mission-driven union conference," said G. Earl Knight, Atlantic Union Conference president. "This retreat is another step forward."

—Ednor A.P. Davison, *GLEANER* editor, Atlantic Union Conference



Atlantic Union Conference administrators and guest presenters are, from left, Pierre Omeler, union executive secretary, Petrice Wideman, presenter; Minner Labrador, Jr., presenter; Calvin Rock, Sabbath speaker and presenter; G. Earl Knight, union president; Yvonne Knight, union Women's Ministries and Prayer Ministries department director; Paul Brantley, presenter; and Elias Zabala, Jr., union treasurer.



Pictured are some of the members of the Atlantic Union Conference boards and committees on the last day of the retreat in Connecticut.

Photos: Ednor A.P. Davison



## Atlantic Union College Students Connect With the Community

Atlantic Union College (AUC) is taking creative steps to become more connected with the local community. Community outreach is a part of the history of AUC, and the campus is looking for new ways of reaching out and forging new bonds with their neighbors.

### Renovation of the Bartlett Gallery

The history of Massachusetts has always been important to the communities surrounding Atlantic Union College. Therefore, the college has taken steps to start renovating the Bartlett Gallery. Their goal is to restore this brick and marble building to house historical Adventist memorabilia and artifacts, as well as enhance AUC's services through hosting special projects and events at the gallery.

These artifacts are important to the beginnings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and are significant to the history of Atlantic Union College.

The gallery provides a hearth to welcome students, church groups, and community members.

### President's Lecture Series

In an effort to alleviate student hardships and the financial impact of emergencies they experience, a series of special fund-raising events has been planned. The President's Lecture Series is the first. The presentations will be in the format of lectures, workshops, and/or discussion groups.

Each presenter will have a story to tell, inspiration to offer, and lessons to share from their experience. Men and women will benefit from the lifestyle management and personal development accomplishments of each presenter. The presenters are Telaine Buisson, a traveling pastor; Lela Lewis, CEO of Your Best Pathway to Health; and Brenda Walsh, general manager of 3ABN Kids Network.



Johnathan Dixon and Kyle Brodhead volunteer at the food pantry at the Village Church in Lancaster, Massachusetts.

Although this event is run by the Village Church, students have volunteered their time to help their community. Last semester, the Student Association was behind the drive to get more students involved in volunteering at the food pantry, and this semester they plan to redouble their efforts and get staff involved, as well.

If there is a ministry or event you want faculty, staff, and students to be a part of, please contact the Atlantic Union College Communication Department at (978) 368-2254.

—Emmanuel Ortiz, communication manager, Atlantic Union College

### Local Food Ministry

The "Bread of Life" Food Ministry is open at the Village Church in Lancaster, Massachusetts, every Thursday from 6:00-7:00 p.m. The purpose of this ministry is to provide for those who are in need of food and other forms of assistance.

## ALUMNI HOMECOMING WEEKEND

April 27-30, 2017

### Thursday, April 27

7:00-9:00 p.m.: Registration, Meet and Greet  
Chan Shun Dining Commons

### Friday, April 28

9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.: Alumni Choir Rehearsal  
College Church  
1:30-4:00 p.m.: Seminars  
7:00-9:00 p.m.: Vespers – College Church

### Saturday, April 29

**College Church**  
9:15 a.m.: Song Service/Sabbath School  
11:00 a.m.: Worship Service

### Chan Shun Dining Commons

1:00 p.m.: Lunch  
3:00 p.m.: Updates

### College Church

5:00 p.m.: Musical

### Sunday, April 30

10:00 a.m.: Sunday Brunch/Alumni Meetings  
Thayer Hall  
3:00 p.m.: VIP Reception/Fundraiser  
Chan Shun Dining Commons



For more information, contact Emmanuel Ortiz at (978) 368-2254 or [emmanuel.ortiz@auc.edu](mailto:emmanuel.ortiz@auc.edu). To view the full weekend schedule, visit: <https://goo.gl/YNdCwW>.



Atlantic Union College has taken steps to start renovating the Bartlett Gallery.

## Bermuda Conference Hosts Seminar on Mastering the Art of Marriage

The Bermuda Conference Family Ministries Department, under the direction of Ulric Hetsberger, family ministries director for the conference, and his co-hosts, Lynette and Derek Albuoy, sponsored a marriage seminar, February 10-12.

The guest presenter, Renee Mobley, South Central Conference Family Ministries Department director, created a colorful backdrop to her presentations. This was not your typical marriage seminar. Mobley's approach was unique. She was transparent, authentic, warm, and funny.

Mobley opened with a vital spiritual component to having a successful marriage, sharing that "we must be born again, that the heart is our holy place, and out of the heart are the issues of life." Mobley focused on underlying past issues and experiences impacting present-day behaviors, and used this perspective as her



These couples spend time and share space together at the marriage seminar sponsored by the Bermuda Conference Family Ministries Department.

springboard into all other areas of married life.

Many couples said they were truly blessed, and considered this a pivotal experience in their marriage. Participants shared the following comments:

"This seminar has opened avenues of communication

previously closed, and has given a new excitement going forward in marriage."

"This seminar has been a deeply spiritual revival in our marriage and helped our intimacy."

"As a couple we have been to many marriage retreats and seminars. Once again

we have been challenged to look at our lives from another perspective."

We truly experienced a "God move" during this weekend and are very grateful for the opportunity to enhance our marriages.

—Julie Richardson, elder, Restoration Ministries church

## Bermuda Conference Sponsors Annual Retreat for Workers

Furman F. Fordham, II, pastor of the Riverside church in Nashville, Tennessee, was the devotional speaker for the Bermuda Conference's annual workers retreat at the Willowbank auditorium, in Somerset, Bermuda, on February 13. Teachers from Bermuda Institute, staff from the Adventist Book Center, the team from ATV (the conference's television station), along with the pastors and Bible workers, office staff, and administrators were among those in attendance.

Fordham set the course for the day with a sermon titled "The Missing Ingredient." He shared that without the Holy Ghost, the missing ingredient, church life goes awry, people don't get along, and things just don't go right. It's only when the missing ingredient is put in place that things will go the way God planned for them to go. When the missing ingredient, the Holy Spirit, fills our lives, all will be well in us and in our churches.

—D. Randolph Wilson, communication director, Bermuda Conference



Furman F. Fordham, II, speaks to the Bermuda Conference workers at the annual retreat.

## GNYC Youth Ministries Department Recognizes its Youth

Hundreds of young adults, youth, Pathfinders, and Adventurers gathered at the Victory church in Bronx, New York, on Sunday, March 5, for the Greater New York Conference (GNYC) Youth Ministries Department's annual Recognition Day.

Guest speaker Andy Lagredelle, pastor of the Sychar and Ephese French churches, implored the attendees to strive not only for earthly accomplishments, but to aim for the heavenly prize, which is the crown of life. Henry Beras, GNYC president, encouraged the participants to keep striving for higher heights, and he echoed the theme of the Youth Ministries department for 2017 by urging them to allow their lives to be led by the Holy Spirit.

Among the AY award recipients were the Central Mount Vernon Spanish church as AY Society of the Year; Damaris Morales as AY Leader of the Year; and Anashelvy Maldonado as Youth of the Year.

AY Leadership awards were presented to Ruth Del Rosario as AY Coordinator of the Year, and Sashoi Grant as Lead AY Coordinator for her outstanding leadership of the Bronx area coordinators.

Pathfinder awards were presented to the Rockville Centre Spanish church as Pathfinder Club of the Year; Abigail Paredes and Brandon Toro as female and male Pathfinder of the Year, respectively. The Pathfinder Director of the Year award went to Rossina Borges from the Rockville Centre Spanish Pathfinder club.

In the Adventurer's category, Poughkeepsie Spanish church was named club of the year, while Elibeth Breton and Brandon Reynolds were awarded female and male Adventurers of the Year, respectively. Cristina De La Nuez was awarded Adventurer Director of the Year.

In the Pathfinder leadership area, Winsome Gooden from the Van Guard of Orion Pathfinder Club (Grand Concourse church) was named Master Guide of the Year. Suzanna Roberts was awarded Master Guide Coordinator of the Year, and Sir Jonas Apau, II, received the inaugural Master Guide Lead Coordinator of the Year award for leadership in upstate New York.

The GNYC Youth School of Evangelism awards went to Ricky Cyrus and Norma Sanchez.

In closing the recognition ceremony, Ariel Manzueta, GNYC Youth Ministries director, encouraged everyone to not just work for awards, pins, or patches, but also to work toward bringing people into the kingdom.

—Teddy Williamson, assistant to the Youth Ministries director for AY and Young Adult Ministries, Greater New York Conference



Standing with Brandon Reynolds, Adventurer of the Year, are, from left, Kenniesha Stewart, Eclipse Adventurer leader; Simone Smith, area coordinator; and Ariel Manzueta, Greater New York Conference Youth Ministries director.



Greater New York Conference young adults, youth, Pathfinders, and Adventurers gather at Victory church in Bronx, New York, for the annual Recognition Day.

## Camp Cherokee – God’s Place of Ministry

There are hundreds of individuals who give of their time to open and close camp, come to help make improvements, and give in order to finance improvements and sponsor campers. So, why is there so much effort and money given for Camp Cherokee’s ministry?

There were 973 visits to Camp Cherokee in 2016: 184 visits were during children’s ministry, 256 visits during family camps, and 533 visits for retreats. These are not just numbers, but they are lives that have been touched for Jesus Christ. In the three weeks of children’s camps, 55 people made the choice to ask Jesus to live in their life, and about 40 asked to study in preparation for baptism. These are lives changed.

Camp ministry is not just for the children being served, but it also impacts the lives of young adults who minister through the summer. One of the staff from last summer shared that they now know Jesus is real and have a stronger relationship with Him because of how they saw Jesus work at camp. They have a stronger relationship because of

being a part of ministry. Additionally, these young adults are being trained in leadership, and they receive an experience from which they will draw to share Jesus for the rest of their lives.

Camp Cherokee is a witnessing center for children’s camp, our young adults, and also a place for families where Jesus is lifted up.

Members help with camp ministries by supporting non-Adventist youth from their community to attend camp, they help their church’s youth to have an opportunity to participate in camp, and they give to the worthy camper programs so that those who can’t afford it will have the opportunity to attend camp. Pray for Camp Cherokee’s ministry as Jesus is lifted up.

### Camp Cherokee Schedule 2017

May 26-29.....	Memorial Day Work Camp
June 9-11.....	North Country Women’s Retreat
July 2-9.....	Teen Camp
July 9-16.....	Junior Tween Camp
July 16-23.....	Adventure Camp
July 23-30.....	Foote and Friends Camp
July 30-August 6.....	Family Camp 1
August 6-13.....	Family Camp 2
August 17-20.....	Hispanic Retreat
August 20-25.....	Homeschool Camp
August 25-28.....	Singles Retreat
September 8-10.....	Men for Christ Weekend
September 11-15.....	Outdoor School
September 15-17.....	Leadership Training Weekend
September 30-October 1.....	Young Adult Retreat
October 5-9.....	Columbus Day Work Camp

—Dan Whittlow, youth director, New York Conference



A view of the full moon over Saranac Lake in New York.

## Go . . . A Culture of Discipleship: A Second Year of Local Lay Training

In the closing words of the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus gives His church the Great Commission: Go and make disciples. During the spring of 2016, the New York Conference, in order to help the members of

the conference realize this mission, changed the model of laity training from a “come to us” format to a “we will come to you” format. Over the course of two months, multiple Lay Training Institute (LTI) meetings were

held in churches across the conference, and more than 6,000 people were trained to make disciples.

The New York Conference is continuing this training method in 2017, with an emphasis on ministering

to youth, young families, and millennials. It is the prayer of the conference leadership that, as a result of the training, members can be turned into disciples, and disciples will win more disciples for Jesus.

### Lay Training Institute Schedule for 2017:

March 11.....	Ithaca church, 1219 Trumansburg Road, Ithaca, NY 14850
April 22.....	Bay Knoll church, 2639 East Ridge Road, Rochester, NY 14622
May 13.....	Buffalo Suburban church, 5580 Genesee St., Lancaster, NY 14086
July 15.....	Hispanic churches, Location TBA
August 26.....	Canton church, 52 Court Street, Canton, NY 13617
September 16.....	Jamestown church, 130 McDaniel Avenue, Jamestown, NY 14701
October 21.....	Fulton church, 45 West Fourth St., Fulton, NY 13069

—Jeremy Garlock, communication director, New York Conference

## Joy of Troy Church Members Rally Around Family in Crisis

On January 9, Marianne and Gomer Baun were in a serious head-on collision. Marianne was flown by helicopter to one hospital while Gomer was transported to another. They both underwent several surgeries. Although the Bauns live in Connecticut with their three children, ages 11 and twins, 6, they attend the Joy of Troy church in Troy, New York, with Gomer's brother, Rey Baun.

Gomer Baun was released after several days in the hospital. Marianne Baun remained in ICU with severe injuries, unable to move or feel anything in her limbs. The doctors indicated that she would be paralyzed from the neck down and would not be able to have the breathing tube removed. Her church family continued to pray for her. An Adventist church in

Connecticut was contacted by Hugh Langley, lay pastor of Joy of Troy church, and they joined in fasting and praying for Marianne.

Shortly after the doctor's diagnosis, Marianne started moving her right hand. Eventually, she had sensation in her other limbs. Her breathing tube was removed and she was moved to a rehabilitation center. Prayers continue to be offered for her full recovery.

Meanwhile, this family's story was told on Facebook. When the children first visited their mother in ICU, they started singing "Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!" Someone recorded the singing and posted it on Facebook. In Arkansas, Joel Sebag, an orthopedic doctor and inspirational gospel pianist, saw the video

of the children singing on Facebook and read the story. He did not know this family, but wanted to do something for them.

Sebag contacted the Joy of Troy church and asked if he could visit and do a benefit

concert. Joy of Troy accepted and the benefit concert was held on the evening of March 4. Other performances that evening included the Joy of Troy choir that

opened for Sebag and the RPI Wind Ensemble that played during intermission. It was heartwarming to experience the outpouring of love and care from strangers who did not know this family. Several of the women in the church baked deserts and sold these after the concert to benefit the family. More than \$2,000.00 was raised that evening. It was a blessing to see the Lord work in the lives of this family. The Joy of Troy church members were blessed to be part of this effort and rally around this family.

More information on the family, including photos and videos of the benefit concert can be found on the "Joy of Troy SDA Church" Facebook page.

—Annette Barnes, Sabbath School superintendent, Joy of Troy church



Joel Sebag, performs at a benefit concert at the Joy of Troy church.

concert. Joy of Troy accepted and the benefit concert was held on the evening of March 4. Other performances that evening included the Joy of Troy choir that



### ANNOUNCING TO ALL Union Springs Academy Alumni

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

#### Honor Classes

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

For more information about alumni weekend, visit [unionspringsacademy.org](http://unionspringsacademy.org) or check out Union Springs Academy Alumni on Facebook.

**JULY 2 - 16**

## ANNOUNCING THE FOURTH ANNUAL RENOVATION WEEKS

*We Will Rise* OPERATION USA 2017

**WHERE:** UNION SPRINGS ACADEMY  
**WHEN:** JULY 2-16, 2017  
**WHO:** VOLUNTEERS, WILLING HEARTS AND HANDS

REGISTER AT [WWW.MARANATHA.ORG](http://WWW.MARANATHA.ORG)

FOR UPDATES ON OPERATION USA 2017  
VISIT [WWW.UNIONSPRINGSACADEMY.ORG](http://WWW.UNIONSPRINGSACADEMY.ORG).  
**#USARENOVATIONWEEKS**

## Willis Avenue Church Sows God's Grace, One Breakfast at a Time

It was a cool, crisp, early Sabbath morning in September 2016 when a small group of members from the Willis Avenue church in Bronx, New York, met with Bible workers in the prayer room at 6:00 a.m. to pray. Avril Buncome, the prayer ministries and personal ministries leader, said, "In that prayer, we prayed for God to forgive us and asked Him to motivate us to do His work." It was then that Buncome noticed a crowd of people gathering across the street from the church in the early hours of the morning. After inquiring why, they realized there was a methadone clinic nearby, where program participants would gather at 5:30 every morning for their prescriptions. Filled with compassion and a desire to do the Lord's work, Buncome and the prayer group saw this as a great opportunity, right outside the church's door, and a direct answer to their prayer.

The next week, at 6:00 a.m., the prayer group gathered once again, but this time they came with breakfast items and prepared hot cereal and beverages to feed the people who passed by the church and gathered at the methadone clinic. That Sabbath 95 people were fed and the Willis Avenue Breakfast Program Initiative was born.

Every Sabbath since then, the prayer group and a growing number of volunteers serve a continental breakfast from 6:00-8:30 a.m. in front of and now in the lobby of the church to individuals on their way to the clinic, homeless individuals, and residents from neighboring buildings and homes of the

Mott Haven community in the South Bronx. More than 200 people are being served by the program each Sabbath.

### Opening Doors to Hearts

"The amazing thing about this initiative is that we don't have to advertise or promote it, because the people are telling others about it and the Holy Spirit is sending the people," Buncome said. "One guy said he was in the subway praying for God to help him and when he came out of the subway, he found this breakfast program."

One man did not want to accept any breakfast item at first, because he said, "Anything free always has a catch." The next week, when he saw that the church was

**"The breakfast program initiative is bringing the presence and existence of the church into the consciousness of the people in the community."**

still offering free breakfast without any strings attached, he left a dollar on the table, but still did not accept any food items. The third week, he finally accepted the breakfast.

Other grateful individuals showed their appreciation by sacrificially giving donations. One woman, an admitted former Adventist, was so moved that she asked for a tithe envelope and submitted her tithe. Another crying lady came and gave a \$20.00 donation. These acts of gratitude were completely unsolicited and a testament to the effect of God's Spirit working on the hearts of the people.

The breakfast program initiative is bringing the presence and existence of the

church into the consciousness of the people in the community. Many people coming to the breakfast program stated over and over again they did not realize that there was a church there before, but now as they are welcomed into the church's lobby for a breakfast, they see the sanctuary and ask for prayer with a member of the prayer group.

Volunteering members have also responded to the Spirit's leading in this ministry by coming out extra early on Sabbath mornings to greet and serve the people. Church elders, deacons, senior members, youth, and newly-baptized members have sacrificially committed their time and resources to the program and have

expressed that serving during those early morning hours are the best part of their Sabbath experience. In fact, the breakfast program has also attracted supporters from neighboring churches. Donald McLachlan, an elder from Ephesus church, volunteers his time, and food contributions are being received from Mount of Blessing church and their breakfast feeding program.

### Stimulating Emerging Ministries

The breakfast program is also stimulating and supporting new ministries to build on what it has started. In addition to a free breakfast, free tracts and literature are also offered each Sabbath morning. People

gladly take the literature with tears in their eyes and often ask for prayer. Some of the tracts distributed were written and designed by Lydia Simon, the personal ministries secretary, as her own personal ministry project. Simon's tracts have been well distributed throughout the Mott Haven community where they are touching lives and encouraging people to know Jesus. Each breakfast recipient leaves with one of her tracts.

Organizers of the program did not want to ignore the fact that many of the breakfast recipients were dealing with addictions that were controlling and disrupting their lives. As Esmenda Peart, weekly volunteer and Sabbath School superintendent, puts it, "I'm just praying for good-enough weather every Sabbath and for the people to be delivered from their addictions." Two recipients feeling the helplessness of their situation one Sabbath morning said, "We are tired of this, and we want a way out! That's why we come to you guys, the church." In response to this, the Willis Avenue church board, under the leadership of Sednak Yankson, pastor, has approved the start of an Adventist Recovery Group for 2017. The Northeastern Conference Adventist Recovery Ministry, headed by Richard Calhoun, pastor, will help start a pilot program at the church in 2017, one of the first of its kind in Northeastern Conference.

Prayers of support are welcomed as the Willis Avenue church continues to minister to the community.

—Kibia Myers, member, Willis Avenue church

## New Pastor Installed at The Waymark Church

The installation of Lazarus Castang was held on Sabbath, January 14, ushering in a new chapter in the life of The Waymark church in Dorchester Massachusetts. Daniel Honoré, Northeastern Conference president, gave Castang and his family a charge to shepherd The Waymark flock. Castang and The Waymark congregation prayerfully dedicated themselves to spread the good news of Jesus' second coming in their neighborhood and throughout Boston.

Castang is a graduate of Caribbean Union College in Trinidad (now University of Southern Caribbean) and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Theology (1990). He was

employed by East Caribbean Conference from 1990 to 1997. He was ordained in 1996 to preach the gospel.

He began his ministry in St. Lucia, the land of his birth, and after one year was transferred to Barbados to serve as district pastor of five churches in six years. During this time, he earned two master's degrees, one in religion and the other in community counseling, from Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan. His studies continued at Andrews where he earned a Ph.D. in Old Testament Studies.

A powerful preacher, Castang conducted several evangelistic meetings in the Caribbean and baptized



Daniel Honoré, Northeastern Conference president, installs Lazarus Castang as the new pastor of The Waymark church as other leaders and family members stand in support.

more than 350 people. He also established a church in Barbados. He is married to Carol Ann and has four children: Daniel, Jesse, Sharon and Tamara. The author of

several books, Castang says he enjoys playing soccer, cricket, basketball, table tennis, and reading.

—Communication department, The Waymark church

## Jefferson Avenue Church's Living Legend Honored

For more than 70 years, 94-year-old Rosa Wims has been a servant leader at the Jefferson Avenue church in Rochester, New York, and in the Rochester community at large. It is no wonder that she is the recipient of the Christian Friendship Baptist Church's 2017 Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Award for her dedicated and unwavering commitment to help others and lift the banner of Christian love and service.

A former nurse, but more importantly, a daughter of the Most High, helping others comes natural to Wims. She is well-known for establishing a community service center for the underprivileged to receive hot meals, health screening, and so much more. And if that weren't already enough, she founded the Rosa Wims Thanksgiving Dinner, held annually for the past 31 years on Veteran's Day, serving a pre-Thanksgiving feast for more than 300 people.

The members of the Jefferson Avenue church are grateful for her witness and legacy of excellence.

—Angela Tucker, communication director, Jefferson Avenue church

## Bethesda Church Serves More than 100

The Bethesda church Adventist Community Services department (ACS) once again made a difference in the Amityville, New York, community. On February 12, members of the church came together to prepare and serve the annual Valentine's Day dinner. They served more than 100 meals, including a meals-on-wheels style delivery to the sick and shut-in individuals in the community.

There are many people to thank, especially the teams that prepared and served the meals, and set up and decorated the tables. Their collaborative efforts helped to make the event a success.

It was rewarding to see so many people enjoying the meal while watching the Christian movie, *War Room*. They indicated that they had a wonderful time as they enjoyed a spiritual and physical meal together.

The ACS department also has a food pantry open every other Wednesday from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., and every Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. They have a variety of clothing, shoes, suits, and coats for women, men, and children, that is given at no cost. Occasionally the church sponsors free vegetarian cooking classes, health screening, and other seminars.

Even though the team didn't celebrate Valentine's Day, they were delighted to use the spirit of the season to share with the community the greatest love that ever existed in the universe, the love of Jesus Christ, Our Lord, Savior, and Redeemer. "We love because He first loved us"—1 John 4:10.

—Yves Faustin, Adventist Community Services director, Bethesda church



# The Bangor Disciple Model — An Experiment in Christian Relationship Evangelism

*Editor's Note: Northern New England Conference (NNEC) is intently focused on church planting and innovative ways of bringing about "kingdom growth." This article fits into both categories and builds on the church planting and evangelism articles by NNEC in recent months.*

If you were to show up at Bangor church's Sabbath-morning gathering, there is a very good chance that you'd be quite underwhelmed by the service. We don't have the best music, the largest attendance, or a finely-tuned program. And it's safe to say we don't have the best preaching—especially when I'm the one doing it. There is something happening, however—but it's happening below the surface, almost undetected.

Over the past 18 months or so, through many ups-and-downs, the church has been slowly transitioning in its understanding and practice of what it means to be "church" and what it means to be on mission and do evangelism. No longer do we place all—or most of—our eggs in the Sabbath-morning basket, thinking that our main task is to put on a good worship service. And we have rejected "traditional" forms of evangelism in which one person does most of the work.

Now, the church understands its purpose to "go and make disciples." We understand we've been called to go out into our neighborhoods and towns, to bless and serve and show the gospel through our lives. We've been called to recognize that "church" is where each member is always living out the gospel.

The reason for this change is two-fold: one, because it's a biblical imperative (see Matthew 28:19-20 and John 17:15-18). And two, because it is a sociological necessity. The reality is, living in a post-Christian society, we simply cannot put on good programs and expect people to come to us. We must go to them—and we must all live out the gospel, lest our message is contradicted by our lives. Further, people—both within and without

the church—are craving authentic community. But the reality is, our Sabbath-morning worship services don't facilitate true community, especially when the majority of our time is spent sitting as passive spectators.

Practically speaking, this understanding has shifted how we've structured our church. In order to "go and make disciples," we've recognized that this requires three core ingredients: community, mission, and discipleship—all founded on the gospel. In order to truly make disciples, we must practice all three of these things.

This has resulted in us placing most of our attention and energy into forming what are called "missional communities," which are small, outward-focused groups of 12-25 persons.

They become an "extended family" in which the members "do life together," living out the gospel toward one another and toward the particular mission field God has called them to reach.

These communities focus on their mission field by blessing, serving, and investing in those within that particular mission field. This may express itself in many different ways, such as committing to a neighbor long-term, and serving them whenever they need help, and then inviting them deeper into their life and missional community, perhaps through an invitation to join the group for a meal. And when people witness a Christ-centered life for an extended period of time, they are inevitably being discipled by the gospel and implicitly



Sean Brace, the author of the article, is pictured in his favorite bagel café in Bangor, Maine. He often "holds court" at the shop, meeting people from the community and developing relationships that will hopefully have eternal value.



making decisions about the Jesus they encounter in His witness.

To put it simply, we have come to believe that the greatest evangelism that can occur is when ordinary people do everyday things with gospel intentionality. All we are called to do then, is what we normally do—work, play, study, eat, live—but with the recognition that our lives implicitly witness to the Christ we follow. As Ellen White says, “The strongest argument in favor of the gospel is a loving and lovable Christian”—THE MINISTRY OF HEALING, p. 470.

Thus far, the Bangor church has one missional community, consisting of eight adults who are living in mission and fellowship with one another. It has been empowering for these members to realize that the

way we do evangelism does not consist of knocking on strangers’ doors, handing out gospel tracts to random people, or working up the courage to invite a co-worker to a series of meetings. It consists

“We have come to believe that the greatest evangelism that can occur is when ordinary people do everyday things with gospel intentionality.”

of intentionally living out the gospel in the spheres of influence in which we already reside, inviting people deeper into our lives, and then being prepared to give an “answer for the hope

that is in [us]” (1 Peter 3:15) when such questions naturally arise.

It is my great hope that soon everyone in the Bangor church will both be discipled by someone else and make

disciples of someone else. Simply put, the approach works: currently our eight-member missional community is discipling 15-20 not-yet-Adventists, by living out the gospel and

servicing and blessing them over an extended period of time. And when some of these people, by God’s grace, choose to become a part of our community and want to be disciples of Christ themselves, they’ll already know what that looks like, because they’ve been observing it in us for a long time.

Yes, there will still be Sabbath-morning gatherings, of course—but it will be less of a program and more of a family of communities that gather together to celebrate what God has been doing throughout the week in and through the smaller communities. Real church is what takes place the rest of the week as we live in community and live on mission.

—Shawn Brace, pastor, Bangor and Dexter churches, Maine

**Behold the Light... To live His Love!**

**Spring Prayer Retreat**  
**May 25-28, 2016**  
 Camp Lawroweld, Maine

“You are all the children of light, and the children of the day...” 1 THESS 5:5

Registration forms available at [www.nnecprayerministries.com](http://www.nnecprayerministries.com).  
 For more information, contact Paula Roeloffs at [paula@inverity.org](mailto:paula@inverity.org).

**Washington New Hampshire Church Annual Meeting**

**August 19, 2017**

**Guest Speaker**  
 Daniel R. Jackson  
*President*  
 North American Division

Sabbath School: 10:00 a.m.  
 Worship Service 11:30 a.m.  
 Potluck lunch and afternoon activities

153 King Street  
 Washington, New Hampshire  
[www.firstadventistchurch.org](http://www.firstadventistchurch.org)

## My Mission Trip to Uganda

On December 18, 2016, my family and I left on a mission trip to Uganda for three weeks. While there, we ran a Vacation Bible School (VBS), helped take care of babies at an orphanage, and helped at a Seventh-day Adventist hospital. All in all, it was an exciting trip and I'm glad that my family was able to share God's love with others.

For the VBS, we used presentations from a program called Truth 4 Youth. We did the VBS for one week and almost 150 kids came to the program. My brother, Dylan, and I played the violin and piano for the song service. My dad did the first half of the program, which was telling the story for that day. Then Dylan would do a mini sermon, expanding on the story that my dad had told.

Since we couldn't speak the language, we had to have an interpreter translate into the local language. After the main programs, I would explain the crafts to the group leaders and hand out the supplies. When the crafts were finished, the children wanted to get their pictures taken. It was amazing to see how much attention a camera could draw. After the pictures, the kids would play games [that included] sack races, dog and bone, and the egg-on-the-spoon race. When the children were all seated again, they were served food before going home.

It was an amazing experience to help these children. After the VBS, certificates were given and the kids received a bag and school supplies. There are so many people who helped from the church and school to get the bags and supplies



Paula Gibbons, second from right, explains the craft to the children during Vacation Bible School.

we gave out, and I want to thank them.

We also helped at an orphanage called Sanyu Babies' Home. It was for kids who have been abandoned by their parents [and left] in horrible conditions. These kids ranged from newborns to three-year-olds.

When my family went there, we helped carry, bathe, and feed the babies. They were all so cute that I couldn't imagine why someone would abandon them. In addition to helping with the babies, my mom and dad gave a Christmas bonus to the workers there. Thanking them for all their hard work and love for the babies. We also took a suitcase of baby clothes to the orphanage.

The reason we helped the Seventh-day Adventist hospital was because my mom had heard that they had no supplies, including the basic things. So my mom gathered things from her hospital and we brought them to Uganda with us. Another sad thing was that they didn't have a



Paula Gibbons, sitting left, and her brother, Dylan, sitting right, visit with the children at the orphanage.

washer and dryer, so we went to an appliance store to buy them a washer and dryer.

When we went to the hospital I realized why people say that we have to be thankful for what we have, because these people have barely anything compared to us. Now I am very thankful that God used us during our

entire mission trip to help people who are less privileged than us. I hope that God can continue to use us to help others.

—Paula Gibbons, seventh-grade student, South Lancaster Academy

This article was reprinted with permission from the South Lancaster Academy newsletter, *BELL TOWER NEWS*, February 10, 2017.

## 40 Couples Attend SNEC Couples Retreat

More than 40 couples attended the yearly couples retreat, February 17-19, at the DoubleTree Hilton in Leominster, Massachusetts. The Southern New England Conference (SNEC) Family Ministries Department organized the event around the theme, "The Spiritual Couple."

Guest presenters Bill and Mary Maxon, pastors of the Paradise church in Paradise, California, shared biblical concepts relating to becoming "one flesh" in Jesus Christ. "Your marriage will reflect the love of God as you allow Him to empower, fill, and control you," Bill Maxon told the couples. Using personal stories and basic biblical teachings pertaining to the gospel and salvation, the Maxons illustrated

the intimate connection between a husband and wife with a personal, intimate relationship with



40 couples participate in the couples retreat sponsored by the Southern New England Conference Family Ministries Department.

Jesus Christ. "Unless you understand the everlasting gospel, you can never have a one-flesh marriage," Maxon said.

Married and soon-to-be-married couples came from Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut, as

"The inclusion of God in our individual lives is crucial," said Brian James, who attended from Northboro, Massachusetts, with his wife, Roxanne. "I was constantly reminded of that this weekend," Roxanne agreed. "We have to put God first because the devil is at our heels. He targets our families. The repercussions are felt in the church and community when our families are not strong," she said.

Weekend events included engaging breakout sessions covering topics such as mastering the art of marriage, couples massage, practical principles for keeping Jesus in the center of a marriage, and how men and women approach God differently. Saturday night was a special "date night" that included a dinner/murder mystery theater, and a fun photo booth to record memories of the weekend. The retreat culminated on Sunday with the couples rededicating themselves to God and to each other.

—Debra McKinney Banks, communication assistant, Atlantic Union Conference

well as places outside of the SNEC territory, including New York and Delaware. Jude and Janeth Alfred traveled from Westtown, New York, for the retreat. "I learned that we need to stop pleading with God [for His blessings]. We are already so blessed. Just live the life that God has commanded us to live; receive it and live it," Janeth said. "I'm a math guy," laughed Jude. "I really liked the '1+1+1=One Flesh' concept. Only God can keep us together," he added.

### OFFICIAL NOTICE

Southern New England Conference of Seventh-day Adventists  
Constituency Session

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** of the 37<sup>th</sup> Constituency Session of the Southern New England Conference of Seventh-day Adventists called to convene at 9:00 a.m., Sunday, May 21, 2017, in the Southern New England Conference Pavilion, on the Southern New England Conference grounds, 34 Sawyer Street, South Lancaster, MA 01561. The purpose of this meeting is:

1. To receive reports.
2. To elect conference officers, departmental directors, an Executive Committee, a Constitution and Bylaws Committee, and an Association Board.
3. To consider amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws of the conference.
4. To consider amendments to Set Fund Guidelines.
5. To accept new churches or disband churches as may be necessary.
6. To transact such other business as may properly come before the delegates.

According to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Southern New England Conference, Article 3, Section 5, A1 "each Church shall be entitled to select one Delegate for the Church and one additional Delegate for each thirty-five (35) members or major fraction thereof, provided that each Church shall be entitled to select not less than two (2) Delegates."

Lunch will be provided.

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that a meeting of the Organizing Committee will convene at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, February 5, 2017, in Bailey Hall, on the Southern New England Conference grounds, 34 Sawyer Street, South Lancaster, MA 01561, for the purpose of appointing members of the Nominating Committee to serve for that meeting. According to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Southern New England Conference, Article 3, Section 8A "each Church shall select, from its Delegates, one (1) representative for the Church, and one (1) additional representative for each five hundred (500) members of that Church or major fraction thereof."

Lunch will be provided.

David Dennis, President  
Jose Alarcon, Secretary

### OFFICIAL NOTICE

Southern New England Conference Association  
Regular Meeting

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that the Regular Constituency Session of the Southern New England Conference Association, a Massachusetts corporation, is called to meet in the Southern New England Conference Pavilion, on the Southern New England Conference grounds, 34 Sawyer Street, South Lancaster, MA 01561 on Sunday, May 21, 2017, at 9:00 a.m., concurrently with the regular session of the conference.

The purpose of the meeting is to elect officers and a board of trustees, to receive reports, and to transact such other business as may properly come before the delegates. Delegates of Southern New England Conference Constituency Session will be the delegates for the Southern New England Conference Association.

Lunch will be provided.

David M. Dennis, President  
Tom Murray, Secretary



# ATLANTIC UNION CONFERENCE Summer **Camp** Schedule **2017**

## CAMP CHEROKEE

**Contact:** For more information, call the New York Conference Youth Department at (315) 469-6921, or visit [nyconf.org/cherokee](http://nyconf.org/cherokee).

Teen Camp .....	July 2-9
Junior Tween Camp .....	July 9-16
Adventure .....	July 16-23
Family Camp 1 .....	July 30-August 6
Family Camp 2 .....	August 6-13
Homeschool Family Camp .....	August 20-25

## CAMP VICTORY LAKE

**Contact:** For more information, call Camp Victory Lake at (845) 229-8851, or visit [www.campvictorylakenc.com](http://www.campvictorylakenc.com).

Session 1 .....	July 9-16
Session 2 .....	July 16-23
Session 3 .....	July 23-30
Session 4 .....	July 30-August 6
Full Session .....	July 9-August 6

## CAMP LAWROWELD

**Contact:** For more information call, the Northern New England Conference Youth Department at (207) 797-3760, ext. 216, or visit [www.lawroweld.org](http://www.lawroweld.org).

Blind Camp .....	June 25-July 2
Junior Camp .....	July 2-9
Teen Camp .....	July 23-30
Family Camp .....	July 30-August 6

## CAMP WINNEKEAG

**Contact:** For more information, call the Southern New England Conference Youth Department at (978) 365-4551, or visit [www.campwinnekeag.com](http://www.campwinnekeag.com).

Adventurer .....	June 25-July 2
Junior Camp .....	July 2-9
Tween Camp .....	July 9-16
Teen Camp .....	July 16-23
Family Camp 1 .....	July 23-30
Family Camp 2 .....	July 30-August 6



Visit the Atlantic Union Conference Adventist Youth Ministries online for information on youth and young adult events, activities, and other ministries at [auyouth.com](http://auyouth.com), [facebook.com/atlanticunionadventistyouthministries](https://facebook.com/atlanticunionadventistyouthministries), and [twitter.com/auyouth](https://twitter.com/auyouth).

Photos courtesy of the camp staff from the camps in the Atlantic Union.

## Sunset Table

May 2017	5	12	19	26
Bangor, ME	7:46	7:54	8:02	8:09
Portland, ME	7:49	7:57	8:04	8:11
Boston, MA	7:49	7:57	8:04	8:10
South Lancaster, MA	7:52	7:59	8:06	8:13
Pittsfield, MA	7:58	8:06	8:13	8:19
Hartford, CT	7:54	8:02	8:08	8:15
Providence, RI	7:49	7:57	8:04	8:10
New York, NY	7:57	8:04	8:11	8:17
Albany, NY	7:59	8:07	8:14	8:20
Utica, NY	8:08	8:15	8:23	8:29
Syracuse, NY	8:11	8:19	8:26	8:33
Rochester, NY	8:17	8:25	8:32	8:39
Buffalo, NY	8:21	8:29	8:36	8:43
Hamilton, Bda	8:02	8:07	8:12	8:16

Daylight Savings Time

## ATLANTIC UNION

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## ¡¡ATENCIÓN, ATENCIÓN, ATENCIÓN!!

Recuerden todos los Ancianos Hispanos y Portugueses, nuestro RETIRO/ ENTRENAMIENTO que tomará lugar del 21-23 de Abril de 2017 en el hotel Hilton Stamford, la dirección es la siguiente: 1 First Stamford Place, Stamford, CT 06902

Si no se ha registrado, REGÍSTRESE que todavía hay tiempo.

**Para más información** comuníquese con el Pastor Dionisio Olivo o llame a nuestra oficina y hable con Lily Fresse (978) 368-8333 ext. 3016.

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**ATLANTIC UNION COLLEGE** seeks vice president for enrollment management and student affairs. Requirements: terminal degree from an accredited institution of higher education, 10 years experience at a senior level in enrollment management and/or student affairs with a commitment to shared governance, as well as a proven track record in leading diverse populations; be a Seventh-day Adventist in regular standing, committed to the values, principles, and expectations

of the Adventist Church and Atlantic Union College. Submit letter, addressing minimum and preferred qualifications, résumé, transcript, and three professional reference letters to: roberto.reyna@auc.edu. For details, visit: www.auc.edu.

**UNION COLLEGE** seeks committed Adventist to direct its NCATE (CAEP) accredited Education program and chair the Division of Human Development, effective June 2017. Doctorate and experience in K-12 church schools essential. Further information, www.ucollege.edu/faculty-openings. Apply and submit C.V. to Dr. Frankie Rose, Academic Dean, at frankie.rose@ucollege.edu.

**MARANATHA MISSION IN THE U.S.** Get involved with a Maranatha mission project in Grand Junction, Colorado and stay to experience outdoor adventures on the western slope of the Rockies. Help is needed to build a new church, an elementary school (K-8) and a child-care center (6 weeks-Pre-K) in Grand Junction. The first of three separate two-week building sessions will begin April 30. Sign-up for this opportunity to do mission work without leaving the U.S. at maranatha.org/volunteer-opportunities.

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