

ATLANTIC UNION

# GLEANER

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2023



Sheltered,  
Sustained,  
**SECURED**

ADVENTIST EDUCATION:  
A POWERFUL TOOL

ATLANTIC UNION EXCOM  
VOTES PERSONNEL TITLE  
CHANGES AND NEW  
ASSIGNMENTS

LEADERSHIP CHANGES  
IN SOUTHERN NEW  
ENGLAND CONFERENCE  
ADMINISTRATION

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## Time Is Up for Me!

The text in Ecclesiastes 3:1 says: “To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven” (NKJV). I am humbled and honored as I write this editorial because the time for this season is closing for me, and this will be my last official editorial in my capacity as editor of The Atlantic Union GLEANER.

It is hard to believe that just about 27 years ago, I was invited to serve as the editorial assistant for the GLEANER, the official publication for the Atlantic Union Conference since 1902. My responsibilities then included handling the inner workings of putting the magazine together, cover to cover. I was fortunate to experience a lot of firsts that helped to bring things to where they are today. It was also a time of title changes and additional responsibilities as we moved into the world of computers and Internet-based technology. I had no idea, then, that the transition to that season would lead to my serving in this capacity for so many years.

As I took on the assignment, it was my goal and greatest desire to make God look good in the work He had assigned me to do. I moved quickly from a place of fear and apprehension to confidence and trust in my God. After all, who was I to be given such a tremendous responsibility? It was apparent then that it was God’s choice, even with my limited experience in the field at the time.

Over time, I learned to keep my focus on Him regardless of the challenges, and there were many. I believe the most significant hurdle I faced was working without a secretary or assistant for about 18 years. Thankfully, God was by my side through the process, motivating and guiding me. What kept me going was knowing that to Him, all that I did mattered, and He appreciated what I was doing for Him. He gave me the strength to move forward, challenge by challenge.

As I look back, there are so many people to extend thanks and appreci-

ation to, including every conference communication director, development director, administrator, support staff, and all those I had the opportunity to work with over the years. I have met some wonderful people whose work was reflected in the magazine at some point. Then there are those I met because of contracts, magazine design, copy editing, proofreading, research, collecting information, and more. To all the individuals who, in one way or another, helped to contribute to the magazine, I say “thank you.”

It is a bitter-sweet moment making this transition, but I believe God has something else for me to do. It is time to pass the “reins” on to the person who will carry the magazine to a new level. I am honored to be one of the stepping stones in what has made The Atlantic Union GLEANER an excellent magazine for the constituents of the Atlantic Union Conference and beyond.

I say “thank you” to the faithful readers, to those who just skimmed through the pages, and to all the other constituents. We are blessed with tools to help us communicate the love of Christ to others and learn about what is going on in this field. Let’s take advantage of them while they are available to us.

For now, my time in this area is up. I have completed this assignment and am moving on to the next “season.” Effective January 1, 2024, I will serve the Atlantic Union Conference as the undersecretary, working in the Secretariat department. And, if you know me, I will let God lift me to the occasion for the “new season” and focus on my new assignment. In the meantime, I encourage you all to hold fast as the seasons approach. Remember, the “best season” is yet to come, where we will live with Jesus, our Savior, forever. Let’s plan to meet there! ☺

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



*“I am honored to be one of the stepping stones in what has made The Atlantic Union GLEANER an excellent magazine for the constituents of the Atlantic Union Conference and beyond.”*



# Sheltered, Sustained, **SECURED**

By Donnett Blake

**T**he holiday season is supposed to be a time of joy and celebration for family, friends, and loved ones. But it can also be a very difficult time, a time of mixed emotions. On the one hand, there is the joy and happiness of the season; on the other hand, there is loss, pain, uncertainty, and insecurity. You are anxious, agitated, and apprehensive! Despite knowing that God cares and is concerned about you, that knowledge often does not ease the anxiety, agitation, and apprehension that

protection through life's various challenging seasons. The verse reads, "The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. He will drive out your enemies before you, saying, 'Destroy them!'" Herein lies a message of assurance! God is your shelter. He is your security. He is your sustainer.

Many of you may have heard the phrase "God is our refuge." Maybe you heard it in songs, sermons, or speeches. You may even have read it on some social media posts. But how many of you take time to contemplate what that means?

"A refuge" is where one finds protection from threats to one's life or safety. It could be a bunker for a soldier, friendly territory for a displaced citizen, or the reassuring arms of a parent for a child. A refuge is where a person finds shelter and protection from danger.

At some point or another, all of us have experienced turbulent winds of trouble that threaten our security. You may feel as though the storms of life are relentlessly beating down on you. For some of you, these storms are threatening your peace, exposing you to a measure of pain. You feel unprotected, unsecured, and unsafe. In times like these, you need refuge, shelter, a place of protection. The eternal God, Jesus Christ, is that shelter to whom you can run and find safety.

There is always a tendency to seek shelter from the pressures of life by

“God is more than just a shelter in stressful seasons. He is the everlasting arms beneath you and keeps you from falling.”

grip the heart. In such challenging moments, there is a longing in the heart for someone reliable in whom to turn, someone who comprehensively and intimately understands the deep-seated need for certainty, security, and protection.

Deuteronomy 33:27 (NIV) introduces us to Someone who not only understands these profound fears but also possesses the power to offer

turning to family, friends, work, or other temporal things. These things may only console you for a moment. They do not give lasting security from danger, pressure, or hardship. But if you, in your season of trouble, put your trust in Jesus, you will find not only safety but lasting stability. God is more than just a shelter in stressful seasons. He is the everlasting arms beneath you and keeps you from falling.

I love the word “underneath.” When an architect designs a structure, special attention must be given to what is “underneath” the building. The architect must ensure that what’s “underneath” is firm and functional. Underneath communicates a message of calm assurance in my heart. Sometimes, I feel the ground beneath me slipping, leaving me unstable and uncertain about the future. Have you ever felt this way? Are you feeling like you are standing on a beach and the sand beneath your toes is being washed away? If you do, rest assured that when every earthly foundation is shifted or gone from beneath you, the everlasting arms are underneath you to give you stability. Human arms can only extend so far and embrace for so long, but the arms of the eternal God are ever-extending and they never lose their embrace. His everlasting arms extend far underneath to comfort, protect, and guide you through life’s challenging circumstances.

Sometimes, life knocks you off your feet, and you feel like you are being pulled into an abyss of despair; rest assured that the everlasting arms are underneath to bear you up. No matter how low life takes you, the everlasting arms of love will go lower. No matter how deep your pain goes, the everlasting arms of the eternal God will reach beneath your pain. What an assurance to know that life’s unfortunate circumstances cannot take you so low that God’s everlasting arms cannot reach underneath you. Wherever you may be, or whatever state you may be in, the everlasting

arms are not only ever underneath you, they can drive out your enemies.

As the holiday season approaches, you may find yourself puzzled, unable to comprehend God’s providential actions in your life. While God does not always reveal His reasons for allowing you to be in trying positions, He has proven Himself through the ages that He can be trusted. You might not understand what He is doing, but you can be assured that:

- He does not cease to care for you, even when things appear to be at their very worst.
- Wherever God’s arms are, He is present and at work, accomplishing His ordained purpose.
- God’s ability to get you through this holiday season isn’t dependent on your situation but instead on who He is.
- The heart of Jesus is of unwavering pity and compassion.
- Like the Good Shepherd, He will carry every hurting sheep in the strong arms of His everlasting love, enfolding them in His divine embrace.

So regardless of where you are or how you are, be assured that you can be sheltered, you can be sustained, you can be secured through whatever storms are blowing. Remember that the ever-present God is by your side, very close to you, guaranteeing the eternal safety of all those who trust in Him. “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths”—Proverbs 3:5, 6.🙏



*Donnett Blake is a pastor and the Women’s Ministries director for the Northeastern Conference.*

“Human arms can only extend so far and embrace for so long, but the arms of the eternal God are ever-extending and they never lose their embrace.”

By Jeremy Garlock

## Adventist Education: A Powerful Tool

**J**ust a few weeks ago, I sat around a bonfire with tears in my eyes. Thirteen of our secondary students stood around the pastor, committing their lives to Jesus and asking for baptism. One week later, more than 20 of our elementary students stood for a similar commitment.

This is not unusual if you work in an Adventist school. Seventh-day Adventist education is evangelism. Throughout the school day, students are exposed to Bible classes, daily

churches with wholesome youth activities and attend a good Adventist school have a greater probability of staying in the church.

A colleague in another union once told me she had spoken on this topic for one of the schools in her territory. She presented the statistics on this topic in a powerful way. She had all the students in the school stand with her on a stage in front of their parents, but all to one side of the stage. They were in the “lost” area of the stage.

repeated the question but included Adventist education in the mix. In agreement with the statistics, only a small number of students stayed in the “lost” section of the stage.

At this point, one of the children in the “lost” section began to cry. “I don’t want to be lost!” My colleague bent down, getting on the child’s level, and said to her, “Don’t worry. Our Jesus promised to leave all the rest to come look for the one lost lamb.”

My dear reader, Seventh-day Adventist education is a powerful tool in the hands of our Savior. The statistics are clear. Because of the constant exposure to Jesus, there is a greater probability of students in our schools accepting Him and staying in the church when compared to their counterparts. But even then, we need our Savior to be our Shepherd and look for those who are lost. He will work on the hearts that have turned away, often using what they learned in our schools to call them back to Him. What a magnificent Savior we have! And what a powerful tool He has given us in our education system. ①

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**“Throughout the school day, students are exposed to Bible classes, daily worship, a faith-filled curriculum, and teachers passionate about their salvation.”**

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worship, a faith-filled curriculum, and teachers passionate about their salvation. And these Christ-centered experiences are not just momentary processes. Students in a Seventh-day Adventist day school have approximately 40 hours of exposure a week to the things of God, and students in a boarding school have close to 100 hours a week of direct exposure. It should be no surprise that young people from faithful Adventist families who participate in Adventist

She had the parents imagine they only provided Christian education in the home and told them how many students would statistically stay in the church in that scenario. She then had that many students move from the “lost” area of the stage to the “saved” area of the stage. What would the statistics say for students who received a Christian education at home, church, and in youth groups? She had the commensurate number of students move to the “saved” area. She then



*Jeremy Garlock is the principal of Union Springs Academy and superintendent of schools for the New York Conference.*



## Atlantic Union EXCOM Votes Personnel Title Changes and New Assignments

The Atlantic Union Conference Executive Committee (EXCOM) met in Lancaster, Massachusetts, for its third-quarter meeting on September 20. Among the many reports and presentations, the EXCOM voted on several personnel title changes and new assignments for current Atlantic Union Conference staff.

The changes are as follows, with the effective start date of October 1, 2023: Marlene Alvarez was

named vice president for education; David McKenzie, current Adventist Youth Ministries director, will have the additional assignment of serving as assistant to the president for mission and evangelism at home; Ednor A.P. Davison was named undersecretary (effective January 1, 2024); Cynthia Huskins, current Planned Giving and Trust Services/Development and Stewardship director, will have the added assignment

of director of development for the Atlantic Union College Corporation; Debra Banks Cuadro was named communication director and GLEANER editor (effective January 1, 2024), as well as union press secretary; Henry Beras, current vice president for Hispanic and Portuguese ministries, will also serve as Sabbath School director; and Myra Omeler, was named director for the Ministerial Spouses Association and will

continue to serve as Prayer Ministries assistant director. The committee also voted for Miguel Crespo, New York Conference president, to serve as volunteer director for chaplaincy.

Please pray for these dedicated and talented team members as they do the Lord's work in the Atlantic Union Conference territory.

—Communication, Atlantic Union Conference



Marlene Alvarez



David McKenzie



Ednor A.P. Davison



Cynthia Huskins



Debra Banks Cuadro



Henry Beras



Myra Omeler



Miguel Crespo

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## Friday Nightlights: A Gathering of Faith and Fellowship

On the evening of September 8, the setting sun illuminated picturesque Jobson Cove and the warm hearts and spirits of the approximately 40 enthusiastic youth and 15 dedicated adults gathered there. It was a Friday Nightlights event to remember, sponsored by the Bermuda Conference Youth Ministries Department and hosted by the Pembroke church, and it was nothing short of inspiring.

The rain began to fall as the sun dipped below the horizon, but it was no match for the eager attendees. They arrived in droves and were greeted with the sweet surprise of Popsicles, setting the tone for an unforgettable evening. Fortunately, the rain clouds parted just minutes before 7:00 p.m., allowing the event to commence without a hitch.

David Steede II, Bermuda Conference Youth Ministries director and Hamilton church pastor, stood at the entrance, extending a warm welcome to the youth and guiding them to the inviting glow of the bonfire. The crackling flames became the centerpiece for an evening filled with faith, fellowship, and fun. Around the roaring fire, voices united in song led by the talented Michael Spencer, Hamilton church Youth Ministries department's assistant director for music. Worship



Bermuda Conference youth and adults meet at Jobson Cove for Friday Nightlights, a spiritually enriching experience and time for fellowship.

songs filled the air, creating an atmosphere of spiritual connection and unity among the youth and adults.

However, the highlight of the evening was the storytelling session led by Dawn Eversley, Pembroke church's youth leader, and LaGregg Smith, Devonshire church's Youth Ministries associate director for Pathfinders. Eversley challenged the young hearts present to reflect on their life journey, urging them to consider one thing they've done to draw closer to God and one aspiration that would deepen their spiritual bond. The story drew inspiration from the biblical narrative of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, emphasizing the importance of unwavering faith and doing what is right, even in

the face of adversity. Smith shared a life experience, instilling in the youth the belief that they can achieve anything they set their minds to, encouraging them to defy naysayers and pursue their dreams.

The event was not only spiritually enriching but also a whole lot of fun. The youth actively participated and reveled in the service, their laughter and camaraderie filling the air. Pizza, snacks, and refreshments were served, followed by the quintessential campfire activity of roasting marshmallows. It was a feast for the senses, as the flavors of the food were accompanied by the comforting crackling of the fire and the laughter of friends old and new.

The evening reached its spiritual zenith when Michelle Hill, pastor of the Pembroke and Midland Heights churches, offered a heartfelt prayer for the youth, invoking blessings and guidance. To cap off the night, each attendee received a goodie bag, a tangible reminder of the love and fellowship shared at Friday Nightlights. As the bonfire's embers glowed and the stars twinkled overhead, the memories forged on this September night would remain etched in the hearts and minds of all who attended. In all its rain-soaked glory, Friday Nightlights was a testament to the power of faith, community, and the enduring spirit of fellowship.

—Rose Nyachiro, member, Warwick church, and Carmen Patterson, communication director, Bermuda Conference



## Warwick Group Ministers One Stitch at a Time

In the heart of Warwick, a remarkable sewing group known as “Sew Precious to God” has been quietly weaving a tapestry of community, creativity, and compassion. This group of ladies and girls, more than just a sewing circle, has become a close-knit family bound by a shared love for crafting and a desire to make a difference.

Founded earlier this year at Warwick church, Sew Precious to God isn't your typical sewing class. It's a gathering of like-minded individuals who meet about once a month for two hours, although those hours often stretch because of the undeniable camaraderie that fills the room. They bring their sewing machines and a wide range of projects, spanning from simple beginnings to advanced creations. The magic lies in their unity, as beginners and experts come together to offer support and guidance.

Approximately 12 ladies and girls are regular attendees, but Sew Precious to God extends a warm



The ladies of the Sew Precious to God group pause for a group photo.

welcome to anyone, whether they're from the church or the wider community. Inclusivity is at the core of their mission, and they cherish every new face that joins their sewing circle.

One remarkable initiative that defines this group's ethos is its ongoing community project. Sew Precious to God took on the heartwarming task of crafting bibs and aprons for the residents of a local nursing home. This summer, they proudly presented the nursing home manager with approximately

20 meticulously crafted bibs and aprons, bringing smiles and comfort to the elderly. This endeavor is far from a one-time affair; it's a commitment to making a lasting impact on their community.

Beyond the threads and fabrics, Sew Precious to God occasionally dedicates time to special focus sessions. At one memorable meeting, a seasoned member patiently conducted a beginner's class, teaching the fundamentals of sewing to those eager to learn. Another session saw members crafting stylish tote

bags, with many leaving the meeting clutching their completed creations. Recently, the group had the privilege of hosting a local seamstress and fabric store owner. She shared invaluable insights, answered questions, and offered one-on-one guidance to those seeking assistance with their projects. It's these moments of shared knowledge that elevate Sew Precious to God beyond a mere sewing group.

As the year unfolds, Sew Precious to God continues to stitch bonds and spread warmth throughout the Warwick community. Their needles and threads are instruments of love, weaving together friendships, teaching new skills, and, most importantly, making their corner of the world a little brighter, one stitch at a time. This is the story of a group that embodies the true essence of community and the power of crafting with a purpose.

—Sherma Webbe Clarke, departmental secretary, and Carmen Patterson, communication director, Bermuda Conference



Miranda Lister, Warwick church member, exhibits her skill at the sewing machine.



LaQuita Simmons, guest presenter, lends her expertise in laying out a pattern, to Deborah Kirkpatrick, Warwick church member.

## Two Greater New York Conference Members Celebrate 100 Years: A Brief Look Into Their Stories

### HECTOR PUNCH

Among the 593,000 centenarians in the world is Hector Punch, a member of the North Bronx church. Punch was born in Liverpool Village, Guyana, on September 18, 1923. He can well remember the days when he assisted in packing and sending supplies for troops during World War II.

On becoming a man, he married the love of his life, the late Sheila Punch, who predeceased him in 2015. Together, they produced 12 children—six boys and six girls, whom he kept very close to his heart. He boasted of having a tightly knit family. His love for his children was unmistakable when, after retirement, he came to the United States at 62 years of age, something he said he did for his family, and worked seven days a week starting at only \$3 an hour.

From his measly salary, he saved enough money to purchase airline tickets for his children to join him in the United States. He was also able to assist in putting them through college. He rejoiced to see his grandchildren pursue varied careers, including a Seventh-day Adventist pastor, an architect, a show producer on Broadway, medical doctors, therapists, and teachers. His passion for education led him to encourage numerous physicians studying for board exams while working as a security guard at Kaplan Test Prep in New York City. His only



A group photo of centenarian Hector Punch with his family.

disappointment in life is that he did not come to the United States in the 1940s.

As a highly-skilled carpenter, Punch was appointed director and foreman for bridge construction at two major sugar estates in Guyana. He even built his own house. Punch took pleasure in keeping himself busy. When not engaged in carpentry, he was busy farming and cultivating sweet potatoes and rice, sold to the Guyana Marketing Corporation and by his wife in the community market. He went into farming full-time upon retirement before migrating to the United States. Punch also enjoyed playing the mandolin guitar, biking, and attending tennis tournaments.

Over the years, Punch has enjoyed good health and currently experiences only breathing difficulty. He credits his long life to family genes, family love, love for the Lord, eating right—a low



Hector Punch, North Bronx church member, celebrated his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on September 18.

fat/low carb diet and fish; cycling 21 miles daily to and from work; working on the farm every day after work; and working with his hands at carpentry doing what he believed the Lord blessed him with the skills to do.

Punch has been affiliated with multiple churches. He was a member of the Church of Scotland, Liverpool Congregational, and Auchlyne Scott's Church, where he got married on April 4, 1953, and, finally,



Hector Punch and his late wife, Sheila.

the North Bronx Seventh-day Adventist Church, where his dear wife, Sheila, had been a member.

On the crisp Sunday afternoon of September 17, 2023, family, friends, and members of the North Bronx church gathered to celebrate the 100th birthday of Punch. As his family wheeled him into the beautifully-decorated backyard, his first question was, "Where is Sis. Dixon?" As Sis. Dixon, his long-time friend from North



Bronx, approached, they shared a warm and sweet embrace. Then they took off reminiscing and talking about old times.

Punch received Communion, served by the church elders. Fred Nichols, North Bronx church lead pastor, offered a prayer of thanksgiving and praise for the life he has lived. Although Punch did not speak much, he joined in the singing of familiar songs that were being played and was able to cut his cake with his granddaughter.

Punch believes in the Lord and endeavors to stay close to Him. His favorite song is "Abide With Me," and his favorite Bible passages are Jeremiah 29, Psalm 23, and Psalm 51. His favorite line for his children is: "If you have one grain of rice, share it with your brothers and sisters." How happy and blessed Punch felt that his church family came and broke bread with him and his family to celebrate his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday!

—Juliet McFarlane, member, North Bronx church

## ELSIE MOLCHAN

**E**lsie Molchan was born on September 4, 1923, to Czechoslovakian parents in New York City. She was a student at Greater New York Academy and graduated in 1941. After graduation, she began her life of service, helping in World War II by making airplanes in Stratford, Connecticut.

In 1945, she met and married the love of her life, Steve Molchan, upon his return from military service. Together, they worked through the chaos of

post-war America and were blessed with three beautiful daughters, Lorraine, Deborah, and Kathleen.

Molchan continued her life of service as she later became an active member at the Bronx Italian church, where she was subsequently baptized in 1951. In 1968, after the Bronx Italian church merged with the Ridgeway church, the Morsemere Avenue church in Yonkers was formed, which later saw the development of a church school. Molchan was among the founding members and served on the school board.

Elsie and Steve were so committed to Christian education and the success of the church school that, from their work in the fruit program (from Florida), they helped to support the church school from 1967 to 1972. When the congregation moved to a larger building in 1971, now known as the Yonkers church, Molchan continued her life of service in areas such as Sabbath School secretary and assistant treasurer, to name a few.

Molchan continued to attend the Hartsdale church until 2020, after the COVID-19 pandemic. She continues her faithful service to the Lord at home, calling church members and sending the quarterlies to others who cannot attend. Her favorite hymn is "Wonderful Peace" with the beautiful refrain: "Peace, peace, wonderful peace, coming down from the father above; sweep over my spirit forever, I pray, in fathomless billows of love."

Her favorite Bible passage is John 14:1-3: "Let not



Elsie Molchan, second from left, is with family and members of her church.

your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also" (NKJV).

Christian Genao, Hartsdale church pastor, along with members of her church community and family, arranged for a special birthday celebration, and together, they shared in a Communion ceremony. This Communion was truly like no other. They continue to praise the Lord for His faithfulness to Molchan and for allowing her to continue to be a faithful witness to her church, family, and community.

—Martha Covi, treasurer, Hartsdale church

Alanzo Smith, Greater New York Conference president, in his acknowledgment, wrote, "On behalf of my fellow administrators, Pastor Ariel Manzueta, executive secretary; and Pastor Ysaías Javier, trea-



Elsie Molchan, seated, is seen here with Martha Covi, Hartsdale church treasurer, and Christian Genao, Hartsdale church pastor.

surer, we celebrate with you the abundance of grace that our God has extended to you. We will forever be grateful to you, Sis. Elsie Molchan and Bro. Hector Punch, for your humble service, for being a role model to so many in our church and community, and for providing us and generations to come a testimony of faith. We encourage you to be faithful even until the end, and He will give you a crown of life."



## Joy of Troy Church Impacts Community

Linda Dobbert, a senior-living resident who leads a weekly Bible study, received a box of 10 NIV large print Bibles from a bus driver who initiated a conversation with her regarding spiritual matters. Dobbert gave away the Bibles to her class and even to a staff member. The bus driver offered to provide more Bibles, and Dobbert ended up with six and a half boxes of Bibles that the bus driver bought for her ministry. Dobbert has given away more than half of the Bibles so far to residents, staff, and family members of the staff. The Bibles have been sought after among those at the home, and folks have asked Linda specifically for these Bibles. The bus driver simply wanted to be a part of where God is working.

Lansingburgh, a community in Troy, provides school supplies for their students, but not backpacks. On September 2, Joy of Troy gave away more than 50 backpacks to their community. A member flagged cars while holding a backpack, and one car stopped. The driver explained that his son, who is autistic, was nervous about going to school for the first time, and they had not yet purchased him a backpack. His son loves the video game Minecraft, and the member was holding the only Minecraft backpack in the stack of donated backpacks. Volunteers also gave away many religious books, including *STEPS TO CHRIST*, *THE DESIRE OF AGES*, *THE GREAT CONTROVERSY*,



Baptismal candidates in the front from left are Isaiah Oglesby, Jarean Maratas, and Johann Mamitag. Standing behind them from left are William Moody and Annette Barnes, elders; Anthony Whitlow, Joy of Troy church pastor; Ray Baun, Jared Maratas, and Jennifer Mamitag, elders.

*CHRIST'S OBJECT LESSONS*, and many others. It's heartwarming to see how God knows the needs of the Joy of Troy community and prepares in advance to use anyone willing to be used.

The community around Joy of Troy (the Quadrant) is split into six sections, each with a prayer group leading evangelistic efforts and praying for the residents. During the backpack giveaway, hosted by one of the prayer groups, three other prayer groups walked their sections of the Quadrant and passed out 100 *STEPS TO CHRIST*. Another prayer group walked their section of the Quadrant on the following Monday to hang 600 door hangers and distribute numerous "Sound the Alarm" flyers for the Red Cross. This program provides free smoke detector installation in residences to help prevent fire-related emergencies,



Joy of Troy church members prepare to give away backpacks to people in their community.

which are common in the community. Joy of Troy is partnering with the Red Cross to install these free smoke detectors in the community. This is another way to provide a needed service to the Quadrant. The Red Cross prefers to partner with people and organizations who already have a relationship with their neighbors.

Joy of Troy also focused on their youth in 2023. The

youth planned activities, preached, and participated in the church service. On September 23, Anthony Whitlow, Joy of Troy pastor, baptized three young people: Johann Mamitag, Jarean Maratas, and Isaiah Oglesby. Annette Barnes, elder, studied with these young people prior to baptism.

—Elder's team, Joy of Troy church

## Oneonta Church Celebrates Its First Harvest Ingathering

On Sabbath, August 26, the Oneonta church, located in the Northwest corner of Oneonta, New York, celebrated its first Harvest Ingathering. This Harvest Ingathering program was not the typical ingathering such as those one might have experienced when growing up as a child in the church. This Harvest Ingathering involved real vegetables, such as lettuce, tomatoes, onions, and more. This initiative was a great opportunity for other members and community inhabitants alike to participate in the event while learning how to make good use of vegetables and fruits in their diets.

The church's Health Ministries leader, Jennifer Adjodha-Evans, birthed the idea last year and encouraged church members to start gardening. The idea was developed to encourage members to help one another, which is why a garden tour was started. Members signed up in early spring. They joined together, visited each other's homes, and helped prepare their gardens. The Lord blessed those who participated in



On display are some of the vegetables planted by the Oneonta church members.

the initiative by providing healthy food for them and by allowing members to come together as brothers and sisters in Christ.

When the garden tour started this year, everyone was challenged to donate a portion of their harvest to the Lord. This culminated in Oneonta's first Harvest

Ingathering program. The use of ingathering proclaimed the glory of God. Vegetables and other donated items were put up for purchase after sunset, where members had the opportunity to buy them. One of the best things that happened is that new friendships were created.

All proceeds from the sale were donated to the church. Members are looking forward to the Lord's blessing next year. Please continue to pray that God will lead and prosper this church.

—Shervin Evans, elder and communication director, Oneonta church

## Young Adult Retreat Points to Jesus in the Heavenly Sanctuary

Thanks to the engaging presentations by Josue Feliciano, youth pastor at the Hagerstown church in Hagerstown, Maryland, and the vibrant Camp Cherokee worship team, young adults who participated in the annual New York Conference

Young Adult Retreat were presented with lessons on the relevance of the heavenly sanctuary in young people's lives. Using the theme "Secrets of the Sanctuary," Feliciano brought hope to those who participated.

From September 29 to

October 1, Camp Cherokee, the New York Conference campground, served as the location for the retreat. Over three days and four study sessions, Feliciano used the Word of God to show everyone how much they mean to Jesus Christ

in the context of the plan of salvation and the purpose of the church in the scope of the sanctuary service in heaven.

—Reynolds Rodriguez, communication director, New York Conference



## Beulah Church Honors Members and Community Officials

The Beulah church in Mount Vernon, New York, celebrated Adventist Community Services Day on August 12. Wilma Dolcy, Beulah church’s Adventist Community Services leader, and her team organized the day.

The service was well-attended by the members, community visitors who frequent the church’s food pantry, visitors from sister churches, and civic leaders. Vernon Jordan, Beulah church pastor, warmly welcomed all in attendance, expressing heartfelt thanks for their presence.

Mario Augustave, Northeastern Conference Adventist Community Services director, delivered an inspiring sermon titled “Words May Not Be



Pictured from left are Wilma Dolcy, Beulah church Adventist Community Services leader; Mario Augustave, Northeastern Conference Adventist Community Services director; Jennifer Lackard, deputy police commissioner of Mount Vernon; Lieutenant Krista Mann, from the Mount Vernon Police Department’s Wellness Division; Shawyn Patterson-Howard, mayor of Mount Vernon; Mirlande Jordan, Beulah church member; and Vernon Jordan, Beulah church pastor.

Necessary.” He reminded the worshipers of the importance of volunteers serving the community out of a sense of service to God.

It was an honor to welcome Shawyn Patterson-

Howard, mayor of Mount Vernon; Jennifer Lackard, deputy police commissioner of Mount Vernon; Lieutenant Krista Mann from the Mount Vernon Police Department’s Wellness Division; Sergeant

Patrick Jean-Jerome, and representatives from the Greater New York Food Bank.

Guests who were honored included Patterson-Howard, Maria Del Luna, a community worker who helps with Beulah’s Food Pantry distribution, Reginald Major, Beulah’s first elder, Leyland Taylor, a Beulah church elder, and Peter Pizzo, a Food Bank representative.

The worship service was followed by lunch, and a musical concert ended the day’s activities. Many were blessed as the church reached out to the community and acknowledged key community leaders.

— Mirlande Jordan, member and pastor’s spouse, Beulah church

## Family of Three Baptized at Corona Church

On September 16, Joshua Deonarine, Northeastern Conference Health Ministries director, baptized a Hindu family of three at Corona church in Corona, New York, with Herman Charles, Corona church pastor. Haimlall Muneshar, his wife, Maharani, and their son, Devin, were baptized while family members attended in person and via YouTube.

Two months before their baptism, during Deonarine’s Health Emphasis Day sermon at Corona church, Haimlall, a devout Hindu for over five decades, responded to the altar call, expressing his desire to follow Jesus. Deonarine initially planned to conduct Bible studies in preparation for Haimlall’s baptism. However, Haimlall’s eagerness for baptism became undeniable after just one home meeting. “Jesus visited me twice in my

dreams,” Haimlall said. Inspired by his unwavering faith, his wife and son also decided to embark on this profound spiritual journey.

Filled with excitement in his new faith, Haimlall is eager to serve at Corona church. Deonarine visits their home every Wednesday to lead Bible studies, utilizing the 14 Amazing Facts study guides. This will continue for the next four months. Already, another family has joined in, reigniting their faith.

Deonarine thanks Abraham Jules, Northeastern Conference president, for the opportunity to promote Adventist health and education across the conference with his wife, Jemimah, principal of the Northeastern Adventist Academy, Long Island Campus.

—Cheryll Wilson, communication assistant, Northeastern Conference



Joshua Deonarine, Northeastern Conference Health Ministries director, prepares to baptize Haimlall Muneshar, his wife, Maharani, and their son, Devin.



# Many Baptized in Northeastern Conference Regional Evangelistic Meetings

Summer has officially ended, and we reflect on the effort made throughout the Northeastern Conference around evangelism. Campaigns from Buffalo to Boston were held, with many giving their lives to Christ.

The regional teams put together amazing spiritual meetings that gave those in attendance hope and encouragement. Local officials also attended, including Joseph Ganim, mayor of Bridgeport, Connecticut, who paid a visit to the opening of the New England South Southern District campaign titled “Operation Rescue.” Mayor Ganim presented a citation from the city and brought words of greetings to the congregants. Local pastors worked the field alongside Bible workers to prepare candidates for baptism. Despite the hurdles with all campaigns,

Northeastern came together to win souls for the kingdom of God.

Northeastern Conference churches held these summer campaigns in a variety of languages throughout the conference territory from April to August. The conference administration provided the speakers for most regional meetings. Speakers for the English meetings were: Raymond Alcock (Rockland), Clive Dottin (Brooklyn South), Deron Hill (Staten Island), Claudius Morgan (Brooklyn North), Ainsworth Morris (Brooklyn North), Trevor Stewart (Nassau), Andy Manzano (Suffolk), Ron Smith (Buffalo), Lawrence Brown (Rochester), Walton Rose (New England South Northern District), Kevan Barnaby (New England South Southern District), Rupert Bushner (Westchester), Conklin Gentry (Bronx), Timothy



Church members, friends, and people from the community in Buffalo, New York, join together under a tent for the “System for Survival” evangelistic series with evangelist Ron Smith, Southern Union Conference president.

Nixon (Manhattan), Kevin Jenkins (New England North), Nigel Lewis (Queens), Marty Vargas (Poughkeepsie), and Gamal Alexander (Kingston). What the Lord will do next year through regional evangelism remains to be seen.

—Duddley Francois, communication director, Northeastern Conference



Candidates are baptized during the New England South Southern District “Operation Rescue” evangelistic meeting.



George Coke, pastor of Mount Moriah and Majestic Heights churches, leads the “Good News Impact 2023” prayer team in prayer for the success of the evangelistic meetings.



Abraham Jules, Northeastern Conference president, speaks to the attendees at the Brooklyn North Region “Good News Impact 2023” evangelistic meeting. He is joined by pastors from churches participating in the campaign.



## 162 Years and Still Shining!

Like the many lighthouses providing light amid the darkness along the Eastern coast of the Northern New England Conference, the 64 churches and companies within the conference offer beacons of spiritual light in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont. Cornel Preda, a recent pastor of the Bordoville church, reports that this church was founded on November 3, 1861, by Augustin and Daniel Bourdeau, together with nine other people, among them members of their own family.

Bordoville became one of the first churches to take the name “Seventh-day Adventist Church,” even before the official decision on the church’s name was made in 1863. Church members built the still-

functioning church facility in 1863. Bordoville church is the first church building built as a Seventh-day Adventist church.

The church is open for worship services from May to October. They celebrate their anniversary on the third Saturday in September. On September 16, 2023, 50 visitors from across the nearby Canadian border joined members from around the conference for this annual event. This year’s celebration included a lively Sabbath School program and lesson study, multiple musical groups, and a choir from Canada.

Glenn Holland, Northern New England Conference Planned Giving and Trust Services director, was the speaker. After a potluck meal, Holland conducted



The Bordoville church is open for worship services from May to October.

a seminar that analyzed the phenomenal growth of the Adventist world church and what has contributed to its success. God has been overseeing

this established church as it “shines the light” in its local community.

—Planned Giving and Trust Services,  
Northern New England Conference



Members from around the Northern New England Conference and visitors from Canada who attended Bordoville church’s anniversary celebration pose for a group photo.



## Disaster Brings Churches and Volunteers Together

The towns of Montpelier and Barre, Vermont, found their downtowns and surrounding low-lying areas completely flooded on July 10. More than nine inches of rain falling in just a few days created conditions not seen since 1927. Hundreds were evacuated, and many were left without permanent shelter.

This disaster brought a new focus to the Adventist church in this area. An Adventist Community Service grant was written and submitted to help fund the door-to-door distribution of waterproof bags and supplies for the hardest-hit families. The Atlantic Union and Northern New England conferences quickly provided those funds, enabling the Barre-Montpelier church members and other local churches to deliver the bags and supplies to 122 needy families on Sabbath afternoons.

With cold months ahead, a group of churches and volunteers have come together, forming a new organization with the goal of helping those in need to rebuild before the heart of winter. HOPE Coalition, a collaboration of

local churches and other nonprofits, was formed and is providing a long-term recovery effort for those in central Vermont. A goal of helping “rebuild 100 homes in 100 days” has been set.

The Barre-Montpelier church is housing supplies for distribution, along with recovery effort groups that have been rotating in to assist. The church has been involved in other outreach efforts as well. It is exciting to see churches coming together and lending a helping hand to those around them who have lost so much. Matthew 25:31-40 defines what Jesus expects His church to do as calamities increase in the last days. “As ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me” (verse 40). Vermont is a bastion of secularism, making it a difficult area of God’s vineyard to reach for Him. The members hope that those assisted will see the loving touch of the Lord and Savior through this collaborative Christian effort, of which the Barre-Montpelier church is honored to be a part.

—Tom Ferguson, pastor, Barre-Montpelier, Rutland, So. Newbury Vermont district



The Barre-Montpelier church Adventist Community Services team takes time out for a group photo.



The Barre-Montpelier church warehouse also doubles as a gymnasium.



Warner McClure, Barre-Montpelier church first elder, is part of the team that helps to pack the disaster gift packs.



# 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Pathfinder Camporee: A Celebration of Faith, Friendship, and Adventure

On September 14-17, a vibrant community of approximately 1,000 Pathfinders, staff, and volunteers came to Camp Winnekeag in Ashburnham, Massachusetts, to recognize the 70th anniversary of the Pathfinder Camporee.

“The first camporee ever celebrated in the world happened here in Southern New England, at Camp Winnekeag. The camporee took place October 9-11 back in 1953,” explained Danny Velez, Southern New England Conference (SNEC) Youth & Club Ministries director.

Despite the forecast that Hurricane Lee would come their way, God provided a beautiful weekend with a cool breeze and blue skies. Pathfinders enjoyed the great outdoors with boat rides, the zip line, a scavenger hunt, a parade and drum corps, a one-mile run, and earning honor badges.

This anniversary camporee welcomed amazing speakers who left an impression on the audience. David McKenzie, Atlantic Union Conference Youth Ministries director, inspired Pathfinders to embrace their role in

God’s grand plan and to be a positive force for change.

Armando Miranda, Jr., North American Division Club Ministries director, emphasized the importance

of investing in youth, recognizing that they are not just the future but the present of the church. His words, “Investing in youth is the way to bring life



Mass assembly of Pathfinders celebrates with the drum corps.



Pathfinders march in a parade.



From left, Andres Peralta, guest speaker and General Conference World Pathfinder director; Edgardo Herrera, SNEC executive secretary; and Danny Velez, SNEC Youth & Club Ministries director, baptize Nathan Gomes.



Danny Velez, SNEC Youth & Club Ministries director, presides over a baptism.



Andres Peralta, World Pathfinder director, addresses Pathfinders and staff before the baptism.

into the church,” resonated deeply, underlining the vital role young people play in nurturing faith communities.

Andres Peralta, General Conference World Pathfinder director, delivered powerful messages of hope and resilience. “It doesn’t matter what you are going through,” he reminded everyone. “God has a plan for you. He will fight for you.”

A highlight of the camporee was the baptism of Nathan Gomes in the cold waters of Winnekeag Lake. Peralta had the honor of baptizing him, marking a powerful moment of spiritual rebirth.

“Through Pathfinders, leaders have been discovered and have served God in ministry at different capacities later on, some as ministers, teachers,

or just lay people,” Velez said. “Throughout the past 70-plus years, all the Pathfinders who have been through this ministry, in one way or another, have created an impact in their community or the church.”

“We are celebrating the camporee anniversary, but also giving God honor, glory, and thanks for blessing us with the Pathfinder ministry and making history

here in the Southern New England Conference,” Velez continued.

Velez encouraged Pathfinders to pray for their directors and urged parents to support their local clubs.

—Evelyn Santana, communication volunteer correspondent, Southern New England Conference

## Leadership Changes in Southern New England Conference Administration

The Southern New England Conference (SNEC) Executive Committee voted several changes to the administration: new personnel, a new position, and a restructuring of some administrative roles to better assist in achieving the mission God has given them.

Edgardo Herrera, former Hispanic Ministries coordinator and pastor of the Waterbury Hispanic district, was voted in as the new executive secretary, succeeding Cesar Perozo, who accepted a call to the Carolina Conference.

To create a more cohesive, inclusive, and streamlined approach to achieving SNEC’s mission, the executive committee voted to appoint Beverley Bucknor as the vice president for education. She previously served as the conference’s superintendent of schools. Alex Palmeira, Church Planting & Revitalization director, was voted vice president for Mission Development. These moves place the heads of Education and Church Planting and Revitalization on the larger administrative

team, giving them a direct voice to influence the leadership and missional plans of the Southern New England Conference.

The executive committee also voted to divide the SNEC Youth Ministries department into three different departments. Danny Velez, former SNEC Youth director, is now director for Youth & Club Ministries. Teddy Williamson, former SNEC associate Youth director, is director for Young Adults & Youth Sabbath School Ministries.

The executive committee also voted to create a new position, Camp Ministries director for Camp Winnekeag, which forms the third department. “As we look to invest close to \$5 million in updating the camp, we felt we needed to also invest in the management team and systems to better interface with our churches and community, as well as help with fundraising activities and in achieving the overall goals and mission of the camp,” says SNEC president, Bob Folkenberg, Jr.

Tanna Allison was hired as the Camp Ministries director. Velez will still lead summer camp, but Allison will oversee the management, develop-

ment, hospitality, and communications of Camp Winnekeag.

—Sandra Dombrowski, communication specialist, Southern New England Conference



Alex Palmeira, SNEC vice president for Mission Development



Edgardo Herrera, SNEC executive secretary



Beverley Bucknor, SNEC vice president for Education



Daniel Velez, SNEC Youth & Club Ministries director



Teddy Williamson, SNEC Young Adults & Youth Sabbath School Ministries director



Tanna Allison, SNEC Camp Ministries director

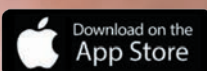


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## Sunset Calendar

Standard Time

	Dec. 1	Dec. 8	Dec. 15	Dec. 22	Dec. 29	Jan. 5	Jan. 12	Jan. 19	Jan. 26
Bangor, ME	3:55	3:54	3:54	3:57	4:02	4:08	4:17	4:26	4:35
Portland, ME	4:05	4:03	4:04	4:07	4:12	4:19	4:26	4:35	4:44
Boston, MA	4:12	4:11	4:12	4:15	4:20	4:26	4:34	4:42	4:51
South Lancaster, MA	4:14	4:13	4:14	4:17	4:22	4:28	4:36	4:44	4:53
Pittsfield, MA	4:20	4:19	4:21	4:24	4:28	4:35	4:42	4:50	4:59
Hartford, CT	4:20	4:19	4:20	4:24	4:28	4:34	4:42	4:50	4:59
Providence, RI	4:15	4:14	4:15	4:18	4:23	4:29	4:37	4:45	4:53
New York, NY	4:29	4:28	4:29	4:32	4:37	4:43	4:50	4:58	5:06
Albany, NY	4:22	4:21	4:22	4:25	4:30	4:36	4:44	4:52	5:01
Utica, NY	4:26	4:25	4:26	4:29	4:34	4:40	4:48	4:57	5:06
Syracuse, NY	4:30	4:29	4:30	4:33	4:38	4:44	4:52	5:00	5:09
Rochester, NY	4:36	4:35	4:36	4:39	4:43	4:50	4:57	5:06	5:15
Buffalo, NY	4:41	4:40	4:41	4:44	4:49	4:56	5:03	5:12	5:21
Keene, NH	4:15	4:14	4:15	4:18	4:23	4:29	4:37	4:45	4:54
Manchester, NH	4:11	4:10	4:12	4:15	4:19	4:26	4:33	4:42	4:51
Portsmouth, NH	4:08	4:07	4:08	4:11	4:16	4:23	4:30	4:39	4:48
Brattleboro, VT	4:16	4:15	4:16	4:19	4:24	4:31	4:38	4:47	4:56
Burlington, VT	4:14	4:12	4:13	4:16	4:21	4:28	4:36	4:44	4:54
Rutland, VT	4:16	4:14	4:15	4:18	4:23	4:30	4:37	4:46	4:55
Hamilton, Bda	5:13	5:14	5:15	5:19	5:23	5:28	5:34	5:40	5:47

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