ENVISION

A Newsletter for the members and Friends of the Northeastern Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

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VOLUME 5, NUMBER 1 **MARCH 2007**

From The Desk Of The President - *Trevor H.C. Baker*

Silver Anniversary Held

The Northeastern Conference held its annual Church Officers Training Convention on February 18 - 21, 2007, in Albany, New York. This year's convention which was attended by more than one thousand church officers and members marked the 25th year of this event which was held, as it has been from the beginning, at the Holiday Inn Turf.

On hand for this silver anniversary celebration was Pastor Robert L. Lister, who in 1982 served the Northeastern Conference as the Personal Ministries Director, and who along with the late Elder J. P. Willis led out in coordinating the very first convention. Pastor Lister currently serves in the Central States Conference, and on the opening morning of the convention recounted the history of the early beginnings. Also present for the occasion were former Conference Sabbath School directors Pastor Arthur Morgan and Mrs. Lois King, who over the years served as coordinators of the convention.

Dr. Oswald Euell, the current Personal Ministries and Sabbath School Director, coordinated this year's convention, and reports that as customary, there were attendees from as far away as the Cameroon Mission in Africa, the Caribbean and Bermuda, as well as guests from the North American Division and the Atlantic Union Conference.

One feature of the convention that is always appreciated is the daily morning devotional session. This year's devotional speaker was Pastor Randolph Stafford of the South Central Conference.

First Female Pastor Installed

On Sabbath, February 10, 2007, Donnett M. Blake was installed by President Trevor Baker as the assistant pastor of the Kingsboro Temple, in Brooklyn, New York. This was a historic occasion in as much as it is the first female pastor for the Northeastern Conference.

Prior to her assignment by the Conference Executive Committee, Pastor Blake served for several years as the chaplain for the elementary schools of the Conference. As chaplain, she worked with the school principals in counseling and preparing students for baptism, as well as conducting Weeks of Prayer as needed.

Pastor Blake holds a Master of Divinity degree from Andrews University Theological Seminary, as well as a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work. She was well received by both the senior pastor, Pastor Ainsworth Joseph and the entire congregation. On hand for the installation were some departmental directors and staff from the Conference office.

Clerks' and Treasurers' Seminar Draws Hundreds

Approximately 500 hundred Clerk and Treasury staff members from churches across the Conference attended the annual Clerks' and Treasurers' Workshop and Seminar which was held at Camp Victory Lake on February 9-11, 2007. Elder Larry Bailey, Conference Executive Secretary and Elder Ebenezer Agboka, Treasurer, with their respective staff led out in the training. This year the clerks had some intensive training in utilizing the new e-membership program.

Sinai French Church Nears Completion

The Sinai French Church of Spring Valley, New York has set an opening date of May 19, 2007. The church which has been under construction for approximately two years is a welcome prospect for the congregation which has been worshiping in very cramped rented quarters.

Norwalk Church Set to Reopen

The Norwalk church in Norwalk, Connecticut will officially re-open its doors to its members and to the community on Sabbath, April 7, 2007. For the past four years the congregation has been worshipping in rental quarters due to the extensive reconstruction and expansion program, and looks forward to being in its own church home.

New Churches Organized

On January 27 and February 17, 2007 respectively, the Conference officers organized the Central Falls Hispanic Church in Central Falls, Rhode Island, and the New Brighton Community Church in Staten Island, New York.

The work in Central Falls was started by Pastor Javier Alcon while he served as the Pastor of the Providence Hispanic church. The work in the New Brighton community of Staten Island was the initiative of Pastor Ralph Williams, and operated for several years as the Rose of Sharon Mission.

On Sabbath, March 10, 2007, the Danbury Portuguese church was organized in Danbury, Connecticut with a charter membership of 55. That church brings the number of Portuguese speaking churches in the Northeastern Conference to three.

Pastor Henriquez Sousa has been leading that congregation, and looks forward to continuing evangelism within the Brazilian and Portuguese speaking community of Danbury.

Financial Update

By God's grace, the Northeastern Conference continues to experience a healthier Balance Sheet, which is a dramatic turnaround from prior years.

The year-end tithe report for 2006 shows a 3.5% increase over the actual tithe received in 2005; and an 8.6% increase over what was projected for 2006. For this, we give God all the praise, and thanks for the faithfulness of His people who have not only increased their returns in tithe, but have also increased their giving in regards to Sabbath School and other Missions offering by 6% over 2005.

With regard to revenue and expenses, the Conference once again operated within its budget for 2006, and it is expected that the audit results will reveal a positive net gain. The working capita continues to increase, and the debt situation continues to reduce.

2007 Camp Meeting Schedule

Spanish: May 25-28, 2007
Theme: "Tell the World"
Speakers:
Pastor Jose Campos
Pastor Emilio Garcia-Marenko

English: June 29, 30, 2007
July 6,7, 2007
Adult Theme: "United in One Hope"
Adult Pavilion Speakers:
Elder Richard Barron
Elder Alvin Kibble
Youth Theme: "Yes You Can"
Youth Tent Speakers:
Pastor Vandeon Griffin
Pastor Vincent Dehm

French: August 23-26, 2007
Theme: "United in One Hope"
Speaker: Pastor Carl Johnson