

CONNECTION

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NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE

A photograph of a young woman with dark, curly hair, wearing a white shirt, playing a silver flute. She is looking down at the instrument. In the background, other students are visible, also playing flutes, and there are black music stands. The image is slightly blurred in the background, focusing on the main subject.

MUSIC CLINIC 2022

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On Sunday, May 15, Gary Blanchard was elected as the president of our conference. He was born in Maine, attended Pine Tree Academy, and spent many summers at Camp Lawroweld. Gary served in NNEC for two years as the Freeport church pastor and PTA Bible teacher, from 2000 to 2002. Most recently, he has been the Youth and Young Adult Ministries director for the General Conference. He and his wife, Erica, have three young adult children who are each married. We are so happy that Pastor Gary and his family are joining our NNEC family once again!

Editorial Team

Linda Dayen - Editor
Dustin Johnson - Managing Editor

Administration

Gary Blanchard - President
Brad Cauley - Executive Secretary
Daniel Battin - Treasury

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About the Cover: Students playing flute in the Music Clinic band performed both Friday and Saturday nights for a packed crowd.

Photographer Ed Runnels

CoNNEction

is the official magazine of the Northern New England Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.



The DEVIL IS NOT



The Devil is NOT Concerned about Our Churches if...

...we spend little time praying together.

...we do not have the faith that God wants to co-labor with us to change lives in the communities in which we live.

...we spend more time debating theological points than building each other up in love.

...we still allow matters such as COVID, etc. to divide us and keep us from attending church services and respecting each other's perspective, etc.

...we have turned the Great Commission into the Great Omission.

...we are satisfied with the status quo and are not intentionally taking ground (i.e., spiritually lost people) away from him.

...we are not connecting well with those under 30 years of age.

...we are more concerned about our preferences than what will uncompromisingly win people to the LORD.

The reality is that many of our churches have experienced a decline in vitality that is more obviously observed in a decrease in worship service attendance. Do not think for a minute that there is nothing we can do about it! We have all the resources of Heaven to assist us as we work for the harvest of precious souls Jesus died for. The Holy Spirit is actively working on the hearts of many all around us. Perhaps God is waiting for our communities of faith to become more healthy and safe before He connects them with us?

I have worked many years in assisting churches to become healthier communities. Why? Because when our churches become healthy, they naturally grow. We do not focus on numbers but on functioning well together as a body in all key aspects of what makes up a church. For instance, our relationships will be loving, our leadership will be empowering, our worship services will be inspiring, and our ministry will be gift oriented. People are attracted to healthy churches (churches that can be described with these italicized adjectives), and all of the churches of the Northern New England Conference should be safe places for us to invite our secular neighbors. How else will we be able to fulfill our mission of, "CoNNECTing our friends to Christ"? If you want to learn more about Natural Church Development, which is a proven process to focus on getting churches healthier, please contact me.

Satan's goal is to keep as many as possible in Northern New England from rising at the return of Christ (i.e., de-populate Heaven). I encourage us all to join forces with Jesus in working to de-populate Hell! John 14:1-3 tells us He is building a wonderful place for each one right now. Jesus' mission should be our mission and that is to get family, friends, and strangers into God's heavenly kingdom. He is calling us to be a part of His plan to win-somely turn all our churches into safe, attractive, healthy, inspiring communities where lives may be changed!

To learn more about how to turn your church into a vibrant community again, check out the recently released 2nd edition of *Steps to a Vibrant Church* by Brad Cauley, or contact him directly by email: bcauley@nnec.org

<https://www.adventsource.org/store/adult-ministries/evangelism/steps-to-a-vibrant-church-38516>

Written by Brad Cauley, Executive Secretary,
Northern New England Conference

Are You Ready for a Rainy Day?



A Candid Conversation with Shaun and Sophia Milano.

Glenn: Shaun and Sophia, I've noticed that even though you are both still relatively young, you have been intentional about setting up end of life documents for your family. Why?

Shaun: We always wanted to be good stewards with our money. We love the Lord, and when you are faithful in giving, God is faithful back, and He blesses us beyond measure. You can't outgive the Lord; we've all been taught that. And the Bible says it, too: "Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you" (Luke 6:37, NKJV). You don't have to be super wealthy, either. When you have assets, you want to use them to both be a blessing for your family and for the Lord's work.

Glenn: I'm curious. When did you first decide to create a family trust?

Sophia: It was about 20 years ago. When we had our first child, and we purchased a house, and started contributing to retirement plans, and we realized anything could happen to us. We decided to set up a family trust so that if something did happen to us, our child would be taken care of. Later, when we had a second child, we had our trust updated to reflect the need to care for the additional child. We chose to use a trust instead of a will so it would avoid probate and be more private.

Shaun: We had very few assets back then, but we wanted to do our best to see that our children would be cared for. As the children grew older, their needs changed, so we did some updates, and now, as they are approaching adulthood, we have updated again.

Over the last three years, our assets have increased, and we really wanted to do more to advance the Lord's work.



When you suggested considering a CRUT (Charitable Remainder Unitrust), we did some research, talked with an excellent attorney, and concluded that the CRUT was perfect for our situation. It provides a retirement income stream for us for life, gives us great tax deductions now (while we need them), and the remainder can provide significant funding for the Lord's work! The family trust we set up can still function to provide something for our children too.

Sophia: When we were trying to determine what aspect of the Lord's work we should give to, it occurred to us that if Jesus doesn't come first, we could live another 40 or more years, and we don't know what the needs will be at that time. We feel the Northern New England Conference has been blessed with excellent leadership for many years, so we decided we would like to give unrestricted funds to our conference, so when something happens to us, NNEC can be free to utilize the resources from our estate to help where they believe the greatest need is.

Glenn: That's an excellent plan! Do you have any advice for people that have not yet had a will or trust created?

Shaun and Sophia: Just do it! Don't wait!

Shaun: It's never a convenient time, but it's so important it can't be neglected. Often life changes quickly and estate planning goes undone until it's too late. Don't let that happen to your family.

Shaun: It's more than just providing for a rainy day. It's about being faithful with the resources God has given us and being accountable to Him for His blessings. We were willing to share our story, not because we are special, but because we have been blessed, and hope others might find something in our experience that may be helpful in their journey with the Lord too.

If you are interested in having a will made or wish to discuss estate planning options, as the Milanos have done, give Glenn a call at 207-797-3760, ext. 223.

Written by Glenn Holland, Director of Planned Giving and Trust Services/Stewardship

Discipleship:

The Greatest Need of the Hour

More than ever before, time is at hand for professed Christians around the globe to rethink the importance of discipleship to accomplish their God-given task of gathering and preparing a church for Jesus' Second Coming. The inexorable task of the ministry of making disciples is at the heart of the gospel proclamation. The two parallel passages of Matthew point to the necessity of the global proclamation of the gospel (Matthew 24:14) and the ministry of making disciples (Matthew 28:19, 20). Both passages visualize the context of the second coming, originally expressed in Greek as "Parousia." This word necessitates the literal and visible presence of God to be interpreted or reinterpreted in the historical reality of Jesus Christ—the Son of God who "became flesh and made his dwelling among us" (John 1:1-3, 14, NIV).

Matthew 24:14 informs us that Jesus' Second Coming is conditional to the proclamation of the gospel; "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come" (Matthew 24:14, NIV). The task of the church today is not to leave behind any inhabitable place on earth specified in the original Greek as village, town, metropolis, and every ethnicity. Preaching of this "gospel" is aimed to restore sinners (we are all) into the image and likeness of the Creator. Jesus did not specify in Matthew 24:14 who would do the "proclamation," but the New Testament illustrates that the people of God (the church) are entrusted to occupy the frontlines of this proclamation. The work of the disciples and the early church echoes the obvious truth as to how seriously they took Jesus' gospel mandate (Matthew 28:19, 20) to heart. With discipleship as the core, phenomenal growth came about in the early church. Could it be a colossal reason—the lack of understanding and strategical involvement in prioritizing disciple making, that the modern Christian Church declines? Should we not honestly think of implementing discipleship in our churches?

Matthew 24:14 illustrates the ministry of the church while Matthew 24:19, 20 teaches the dynamics of disciple making. A believer who accepts Jesus becomes a member of the church but not necessarily a disciple of Christ. For a member to become a disciple, a believer should identify God-given gifts and utilize them to proclaim the gospel. For this reason the apostle Paul urges pastors to help equip members (Ephesians 4:12). Equipping and making disciples incorporates baptizing (baptizontes) and teaching (didaskontes). Didaskontes in Greek entails not only imparting information but also the commencement of transformation. Therefore, by instructing, mentoring, and modeling to be like Jesus, a baptized believer is empowered to become a disciple. Without focused teaching, discipleship takes no effect in the believer's life. Should the church, therefore not take seriously this profound truth of disciple making specified in the gospel commission? Can we all do something to lead at least one person to Jesus in a year? "Each One Reach One" is the theme of the year for evangelism!

Perhaps the ministry can be done by the resourceful people and experts while the discipleship can best be done in local churches. When the gospel is proclaimed in various ways, people who respond will be assimilated into the church. The primary purpose of the church is to enable non-believers to become believers, and the believers to become disciples. God ordained this dynamic to take place in the church before His eminent soon coming. Therefore, pastors and elders (equippers) ought to make every effort to contact non-believers to offer Bible studies and to connect them into a Bible study group (for new believers and church members) in the church. Bible studies and mentoring produce tenable and effectual disciples. God ordained the Seventh-day Adventist Church at such a time as this to be intentional in making disciples to prepare and present the church to Him at Jesus' Second Coming!

Written by Gration Perera, Outreach Director,
Northern New England Conference



NNEC Pathfinders' Spring Camporee at Camp Lawroweld

In the backwoods of Maine on the weekend of April 29-May 1, the Northern New England Conference Pathfinders participated in the Spring Camporee at their campground in Weld, Maine. Around 120 people attended the camporee which included seven clubs from Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont-- the most attending in two years!

Lashing and a Rain Gutter Sailboat Regatta were the main events for the Spring Camporee on Sunday. For the lashing event, creative projects made of logs and rope were prepared and displayed. These included items such as a giant swing set and a floating table. Forty-three sailboats made from recycled materials were registered and then



Trevor Schlisner spoke on "The Tie That Binds" as the theme for the camporee. TLTs and friends led out in singing praises to God. Each club presented skits, songs, or scriptures. The Saturday evening's program included an investiture of Reena Nutakki from the Farmingdale Falcons club as a Master Guide, and the induction of Tony Umbro from the Limington Lanterns club as an Area Coordinator. Four pathfinders were inducted into the Teen Leadership Training Program (TLT): Allison Deshaies from the Limington Lanterns club, and Courtney Walker, Jordann Brown, and Marjani August from the Woodstock Whitetails' club. Jim Thomas was inducted as the new NNEC Pathfinder Director, replacing Kurt Amos who moved to Tennessee. Kurt and his wife Karen, who was the TLT Director for the conference, will be missed by all.



raced in a rain gutter. Each contestant blew through a straw to propel their boat down the water-filled rain gutter.

The Pathfinders enjoyed it immensely and learned better boat construction techniques for next year. "Camporee is a great time to meet new people, hang out with friends, play music, and stay up late listening to loons," commented Kael Grover. "The best part of the boat race was when my boat won!" chuckled Christopher Grover. "Camporee this year was a wonderful experience. We were very fortunate to have no rain come on us, and I especially enjoyed the sunny clear skies," Julia Brown remarked.

Written by Holly Tardif, TLT, Woodstock Church



Music Clinic 2022 Was Hosted by Pine



The halls of Pine Tree Academy were once again filled with the sweet sounds of music and the laughter of 150 musicians at the 23rd Northern New England Conference Music Clinic, March 31 to April 2, 2022. This year's theme and song "In A Moment" were selected by Trevor Schlisner in 2020 and then the pandemic hit. With only a couple of weeks this year to practice the music, all the participants worked very hard to create a symphony of praise and celebration.

The six Clinicians for this year's Music Clinic included Dr. Janelle Westerbeck Anderson from Walla Walla College and Bradley Krueger from NNEC (Choir), Dr. J. Bruce Ashton from Southern Adventist University (Piano), Brendan Krueger from PTA (Band), Doris Krueger from





Tree Academy

PTA (Youth Choir) and Laurie Redmer Cadwallader from Southern Adventist University (Orchestra).

A special thank you goes to Sonia Edwards (Education Superintendent) and Barbara Chase, her assistant for all the time and hard work that went into this big event. Many left this year's Music Clinic with a plan to attend and participate in the next one!



The Jericho Project Impacts Communities

God is a community God. He first created his community in the Garden of Eden (Gen 1:26-28), and He will once again establish His community that will last forever, (Rev. 21:1-3). In between this time, God cares what happens to all people in their communities. If God cares about what happens in communities, then so should His people. With this concept in mind, the Northern New England Conference Prayer Ministry launched the "Jericho Project."

The goal of this ministry is for the Holy Spirit to visit every home in the community where we live through the church members prayer walking, driving, or simply using a map at home for those who are physically challenged. The method is to pray over every house on each street, asking the Holy Spirit to tear down any wall of partition in the heart of each person living in that house to be receptive to Jesus. They pray for the assistance of angels. "Angels from heaven are passing throughout the length and breadth of the earth, ...to win the hearts of men to Christ. Not one is neglected or passed by." (The Desire of Ages, pg. 639).

The results are truly amazing. In one town, a local community church noticed and asked what the prayer walkers were doing.

They were so impressed that they asked the pastor to preach at their church. God has opened the door for this Seventh-day Adventist pastor to preach the Adventist message to an entire congregation at a Sunday keeping church. Lives are being changed to such a degree that the news has spread to some surrounding communities. This has resulted in two community churches allowing this message to be presented on a regular basis. A third community is now exploring having their church open to receiving God's End-time message.



God's word is being fulfilled in calling His people into His End-time Church. (Rev. 18:4). All of this could not be accomplished without the fervent prayers of others, including the Northern New England Conference Prayer Ministry team. "Prayer does not prepare us for greater works, prayer is the greater work." (Oswald Chambers) If you would like more information on how to launch a Jericho Project in your community, please don't hesitate to reach out to the NNEC Prayer Ministry Leader. God wants to do great things through His people.

Written by Pastor Dorrin Patillo, New Pastor of the Ellsworth/Calais/Whiting district

"Your estate plan
is a gift allowing your
family to focus on

memories

not challenges."

—Eve Rusk

Director of Planned Giving and Trust Services
Idaho Conference



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Two NNEC Pastors Reach Important Milestones

A high point in pastoral ministry is the ordination service. Following the Biblical model of “laying on of hands”, our church recognizes a pastor’s calling with this sacred ceremony.

Two pastors, Ramsey Asenjo and Jesse Santos, recently experienced this important milestone. Pastor Asenjo was ordained on Friday, March 11, at the Waterville Church. The ordination service for Pastor Santos took place on Friday, April 8, at the Limington Church. Both services included many participants, including several NNEC pastors, local church leaders and other friends and family members. Brad Cauley and Daniel Battin represented the conference administration. Former NNEC President and current Atlantic Union Conference Executive Secretary, Ted Huskins, was the main speaker for both events.

God always had a plan for Ramsey Asenjo, born in San Diego, California on May 27, 1981. He was raised in a Seventh-day Adventist home with wonderful parents,

Paul E. and Ivette Asenjo. After graduating from Forest Lake Academy in 1999, Ramsey attended Florida Hospital College of Health Sciences, now Adventist Health University.

After moving to Montana in 2006, he met Jessica, and they married in the summer of 2009. They were later blessed with an amazing daughter, Sarai, currently in sixth grade at Pine Tree Academy. In the fall of 2009 they moved to Tennessee, where Ramsey pursued his BA in Theology at Southern Adventist University.

In 2013, during his senior year at SAU, our conference invited Ramsey to serve in full-time ministry. He pastored for 3 years in Vermont and New Hampshire, before attending our theological seminary on the campus of Andrews University. After completing his Master of Divinity degree, he returned to NNEC in 2019, where he continues in full-time pastoral ministry, serving the Norridgewock and Waterville Churches in Maine.



Pastor Jesse Santos was born in Goioere, Parana, Brazil on September 9, 1965, living with his Christian parents and three sisters. Jesse's father dedicated his life to winning souls for Christ as a colporteur. At 9 years old, Jesse followed his father's example, selling church publications to raise money for his Seventh-day Adventist school tuition.

Later Jesse pursued a career as a nursing assistant. Eventually Jesse decided to enter nursing school in America. While working in a hospital, he met Amy, also a nursing student. She later became his loving wife and God gave them their beautiful daughter Emily.

They were both working at Kettering Hospital in Ohio, when God revealed His ultimate plan. Accepting God's call and taking a leap of faith, Jesse and Amy left nursing

school and went to Andrews University, where Jesse graduated in 2012. While Amy was still in college, Jesse started his Master of Divinity program. He was also called to serve as pastor of two churches in Indiana, while still in the seminary. Amy graduated in 2014 as an elementary educator. After graduating from seminary in 2015, Jesse was called to pastoral ministry here in NNEC, serving the churches of Limington, Conway and Lake Region.

We are so happy to have these two pastors as part of our NNEC ministry team!

Submitted by Steve Dayen, NNEC Associate Ministerial Director
Woodstock Church Pastor



A New Tradition Begins for Men's Ministry

We have now completed for the first time ever four regional spring rallies. This was very exciting as the idea was to bring men's ministry to more men. Traditionally, there has always been one spring rally held at a different location each year. The rallies would rotate between Southern Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont. But what about Northern Maine? That's a great question, and I am so glad that you asked. Let's face it, there is a lot of real estate in our conference. Going from Bennington Vermont to Madawaska Maine is 554 miles! Plus, all the different church locations along the way. That is frankly a lot of area to cover.

Led by the Holy Spirit to reach men throughout our conference (yes, that includes the wonderful people north of Bangor) we took the Spring rally and divided it into four regions. The regions are Northern Maine which was held in the Presque Isle Church with Pastor Arnet Mathers. Southern Maine which was held in the

Brunswick Church with Pastor Nathan Stearman. The New Hampshire rally was held in the Conway Church with Pastor Jesse Santos. And the Vermont rally was held in the Barre church with Pastor Tom Ferguson.

Each location brought their own "flavor" to their rally. We were treated to a book signing and copies of Pastor Bruce Wilkinson's new book "A Draft of Cool Water" at the New Hampshire rally. Although attendance was low at each rally, the presence of the Holy Spirit was high. Each rally was a huge blessing!

It was awesome to be able to get together again with Christian men. I told the guys at each rally that I felt like a bear who just came out of hibernation. These rallies just like every Men's Ministry event is open to all men. Everyone is welcome just as they are! FMI contact Doug Berrill at dougberrillsr@gmail.com and check us out on the NNEC.org site.

Written by Doug Berrill,
Men's Ministry Leader



**Experience the joys of
Camp Lawroweld this Summer!**

www.Lawroweld.org

Family Fun

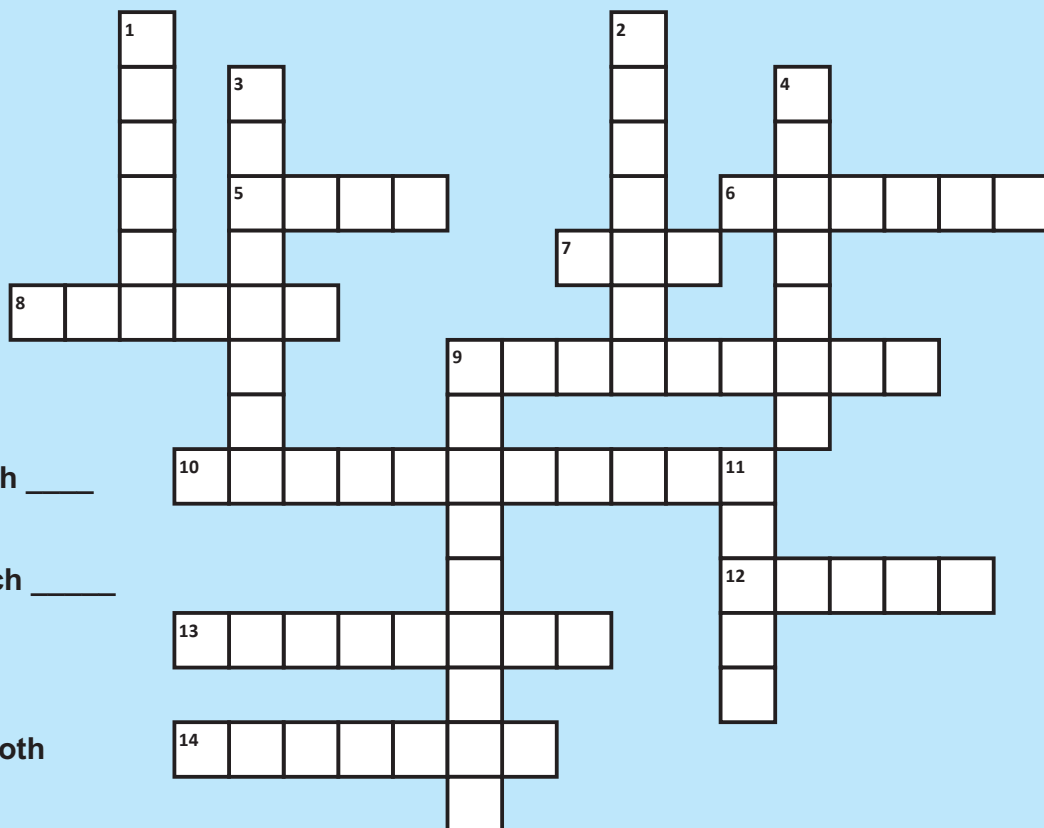
"A Day at the Beach"

Down:

1. Beach in Maine
2. Like flip-flops
3. Sun shield
4. Play disc
9. Bird with long beak
11. To dry off with

Across:

5. Musical group Beach _____
6. Lunch in a basket
7. Day use ticket
8. Drifter/seeker - beach _____
9. Protection
10. Trunks (2 words)
12. Surf on
13. Animal with suction
14. Warm and cuddly cloth



Calendar of Events

July

- 1-9 Camp Meeting
- 3-10 Blind Camp
- 10-17 Junior Camp
- 7-24 Teen Camp
- 24-31 Family Camp 1

August

- July 31- Aug. 7 Family Camp 2
- 17-19 Teacher's Retreat
- 26-28 Women's Retreat

September

- 2-4 Men's Retreat
- 9-11 Marriage Retreat
- 16-18 Young Adult Retreat
- 20-23 Elementary Outdoor School
- 23-25 Pathfinder Camporee
- 23-25 Children's Ministry Retreat

To view all events and learn more visit www.nnec.org/calendar

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NNEC Camp Meeting

Theme: "Discipleship - Transform the World"
July 1-9, 2022 at Pine Tree Academy
Something for all ages! Register at nnec.org/campmeeting