Columbia Union Constituency Overwhelmingly Approves Ordination Without Regard to Gender—In a specially called session of the Columbia Union Conference Constituency, delegates from its eight conferences voted overwhelmingly to approve a recommendation from the union executive committee authorizing ordination without regard to gender. The historic vote was 209 in favor and 51 opposed, with nine abstentions—a ratio of 4 to 1. The approved motion states: “That the Columbia Union Conference authorize ordination to the gospel ministry without regard to gender.”

“I appreciated the spiritual tone of the meeting and the calls to prayer,” says Rick Remmers, Chesapeake Conference president. “In an open and supportive discussion, delegates engaged in expressing concern for the mission of the church. A natural question to ask is what does this mean for the Chesapeake Conference? While the action taken at the Union session was quite simple and clear, the implications for Chesapeake are not so easily assessed. Our governing documents contain different language and we are in the process of seeking counsel from various sources in order to clarify the options for moving forward. Please do not rush to judgment, either positively or negatively. What is easy to ascertain is the significant contributions being made to the advancement of God’s kingdom by women in ministry here in Chesapeake. Ann Roda and Marilyn Scott, current pastors here, are building well on a strong tradition of female pastors. In addition, half of our department directors are women who bring years of training, experience and expertise to their ministry roles. We value each one. Please pray for the Lord’s continuing guidance as we move forward in His service.”

Pastor News and Transitions:

Congratulations to—
~ Mark Sigue, who will be ordained this Sabbath, August 4, at 4 p.m., at the Frederick, Maryland, church where he serves as youth pastor. He and his family—wife, Marifel, and toddler son, Marco—came to the Frederick church from Virginia in December 2011.
~ Volodymyr and Agnesa Grinchenko, who welcomed their fourth child, Gustav Mark, born July 23. Elder Grinchenko pastors the Waldorf, Maryland, church.

Best wishes to—
~ Pastor Eliezer Tineo and his wife, Josi, as they transition for one year to the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University (Michigan) where Pastor Tineo is enrolled in the Master of Divinity program. Tineo has served the Salisbury (Maryland) and Seaford (Delaware) Spanish churches on Maryland’s eastern shore.
~ Hal Butman, who retires September 1 after 34 years in ministry. Currently, Elder Butman is interim pastor at the Catoctin View church in Thurmont, Maryland. Prior to this current assignment, he pastored the Berkeley Springs, West Virginia, church. Farewell wishes and heartfelt thanks are extended to Elder Butman and his wife, Louise, as they embark on a new chapter of their lives.

A hearty to welcome goes out to these new pastors—
~ Lal Ro Puia comes from Myanmar to serve as pastor of the Mizo church in Laurel, Maryland. Chesapeake Conference is home to the only Mizo church in the North American Division.
~ Charles Blythe joins the conference staff as pastor of the Pikesville International church (Maryland). He comes from the Jamaican Union where he has been the Youth Ministries director.
~ Francisco Julca transitions from the Pikesville/Reisterstown Spanish district to the Salisbury/Seaford Spanish district.
~ Mark O’Fill comes aboard as part-time interim youth pastor at Atholton church in Columbia, Maryland. His wife, Sherilyn is associate youth director for the Potomac Conference.
~ Gary Patterson, retired General Conference field secretary, begins this month as interim senior pastor at New Hope church in Fulton, Maryland.

Education Update:

August 20 marks the first day of school for the 2012-2013 school year at Chesapeake Conference schools. This fall, the Gateway Christian School in Salisbury, Maryland, reopens. All schools—elementary, junior academy, and high school—are accepting students for the upcoming academic year. For school contact information, call the conference Office of Education at (410) 995-1910 or (301) 596-5600.

A warm welcome is offered to the following new and transitioning faculty:
~ Candace Isminger (vice-principal) and Mark O’Fill—Atholton Adventist Academy
~ Rose Gamblin—Baltimore White Marsh (from HVA)
~ Alyssa Valenzuela—Crest Lane (from Baltimore-White Marsh)
~ Angela Acosta—Crossroads Adventist Preparatory School
~ Jennifer Miller—Eastern Shore Junior Academy/Dover Satellite
~ Robby Herr—Frederick Adventist School (from HVA)
~ Carolyn Scheller—Gateway Christian Academy
Single Adults are invited to a Corn Roast, Sunday, August 12, at noon, at 6555 Cedar Lane in Columbia, Maryland. Bring a lawn chair and a dessert to share. RSVP to Shirley Bankes at (410) 531-3192, or email Fred Thomas at fmthomas1950@yahoo.com.

An Asian Flair Cooking Class takes place Sunday, August 12, 2-4 p.m., at the Middletown Valley church located at 1811 Arnold Road in Jefferson, Maryland. The cost is $15. To register, contact Angela at (301) 834-5056, or email RSVP@crystal-lake.com.

Let’s Move Day/Adventists InStep for Life—Many churches have been participating in the Adventists InStep for Life initiative sponsored by the North American Division (NAD). Several area churches (including Spencerville church), as well as Vibrant Life magazine, are hosting a 5K Fun Run on September 23, Let’s Move Day. To participate in the 2012 Vibrant Life 5K Fun Run/Walk, in the park-like setting of the three-mile course on the campus of the Review and Herald Publishing Association in Hagerstown, visit VibrantLife.com. To find out how your church can be part of Let’s Move Day, join a Webinar on August 27. To learn more, visit AdventistsInStepforLife.org, or contact Deloris Bailey by email at Deloris.Bailey@nad.adventist.org, or by phone at (301) 680-6000.

Attend the REACH OUT Symposium, September 8-9, and learn how to spread the gospel using a hands-on approach. Sponsored by North American Division Adventist Community Services (ACS), the event features specialty tracks in Crisis Care—taught by Steve Willsey, and Community Development and Urban Ministry—taught by Sung Kwon. The event is held at the Chesapeake Conference office located at 6600 Martin Road in Columbia, Maryland. A modest $30 registration fee covers materials and lunch each day. Register by August 28, by contacting Evelyn Gates at (410) 995-1910, or email egates@ccosda.org. Don’t miss this practical training opportunity.

Tour a life-size replica of the Old Testament Sanctuary, September 8-16, at the Review and Herald Publishing Association located at 55 West Oak Ridge Drive in Hagerstown, Maryland. Tours run from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. daily. For more information, call (301) 733-4411.

Youth and Children’s Ministry leaders are invited to a weekend of training covering topics such as Pathfinder and Adventurer leadership, outreach and creative ministry ideas. Frank Bondurant, Columbia Union vice president for Ministries Development, is the featured speaker during general sessions. The Children’s Ministry track focuses on “The Family-Friendly Church,” takes place Sabbath only, and is open to anyone who registers. The event takes place September 7-9 at Mount Aetna Retreat Center in Hagerstown, Maryland. New leaders and directors, especially, will benefit from this smorgasbord of workshops. For more information and to register, contact Ann Reynolds at (410) 995-1910, or email areynolds@ccosda.org.

Church Ministries Leadership Training events are planned for the various regions of the conference. Each meeting will run 3:30-6:00 p.m. on the dates specified below. Conference representatives will host workshops for church elders, treasurers and membership clerks. Additional seminars will cover stewardship, outreach, communication, education, trusts and youth ministries. These classes are especially for local church leaders, but are open to anyone who has an interest. There is no need to register—just show up!
- September 15, Baltimore White Marsh church, 7427 Rossville Blvd, Baltimore, Maryland
- October 13, Williamsport church, 16421 Lappans Road, Williamsport, Maryland
- November 10, Spencerville church, 16325 New Hampshire Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland

A date has not yet been determined for a training event in the eastern region of the conference. Stay tuned...

Take note! An eastern shore gathering of the saints is planned for Sabbath, September 29, at Governor’s Hall at Sailwinds Park, 200 Bym Street, in Cambridge, Maryland. Come for a day of spiritual renewal and fellowship. Pastor Lonnie Melashenko, former speaker-director for the Voice of Prophecy, is the featured speaker. Look for more information soon in local church bulletins and on the conference website—ccosda.org—and on the conference Facebook page.

TeamWord Bible Bowl Program—the Triadelphia church invites all area church members to participate in a Bible Bowl program on the books of 1 and 2 Thessalonians. Since these books are also the focus of study in the current adult Sabbath School quarterly, it is a great opportunity for church members to test their knowledge on Sabbath, September 29, at Triadelphia’s TeamWord Bible Bowl program. Families are especially encouraged to participate as a team. For more information, contact Sharon at (301) 219-1028, email TriadelphiaTeamWord@gmail.com, or visit TeamWord.org.

The 2012 Maryland Men of Faith Conference is planned for October 6 at Mount Aetna Retreat Center in Hagerstown, Maryland. Get full details and register online at mmof.org.

Plan now to attend a Prayer Conference, October 26-27, sponsored by Chesapeake Conference Prayer Ministries. Pastor and author, Pavel Goia, shares his extraordinary journey of faith as an Adventist Christian in communist Romania. The event runs Friday evening and all day on Sabbath at the Atholton church located at 6520 Martin Road in Columbia, Maryland. A $15 registration fee covers materials and lunch on Sabbath. Contact Pam Strahle by email at pstrahle@ccosda.org, or call (410) 995-1910 to register.
Women, get away for a weekend in beautiful western Maryland, and renew your connection with God. “Mind, Body, Soul” is the theme for the 2012 conference-wide women’s retreat. The retreat will be held at the beautiful Rock Gap Resort in western Maryland, and features meetings and seminars in English and in Spanish. Heather Quintana, editor of Vibrant Life, is the keynote speaker for the English-language meetings. Susana Schulz, managing editor of Dialogue magazine, a publication of the General Conference Office of Education, is the featured speaker for the Spanish-language sessions. Register online at ccosda.org. Have questions? Call (410) 995-1910, or email jstefan@ccosda.org for more details.

The Executive Committee, at its June 26 meeting, voted to reappoint the departmental directors, associates and assistants to their current positions.

Conference finances at a glance—The Chesapeake Conference is still experiencing the effects of the slow economy as tithe—our main source of income—shows a zero increase for the month of June. A zero increase is a break-even when compared with the same period of 2011. “We are thankful to our God because we have been able to meet our obligations,” says Eduardo Muñoz, conference treasurer. “We are confident that the Lord will bless the faithfulness of our members.”

Condolences are offered to two staff members—DeWayne Boyer, Bible Teacher at Spencerville Adventist Academy, and Richard Minty, associate conference treasurer—who recently suffered the loss of their fathers. Please remember them and their families as they grieve the loss of those they loved deeply.

Resource:
Adventist Hymnal Software—Seventh-day Adventist Church media teams, or anyone for that matter, can digitally access the Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal in English or Spanish, and use it during church services. Visit DigitalHymnal.org for details.

August Sunset Calendar and Offering Schedule:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Sunset</th>
<th>Offering</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 4</td>
<td>8:17</td>
<td>Local Church Budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 11</td>
<td>8:09</td>
<td>Oakwood/Andrews/Loma Linda Univ./World Budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 18</td>
<td>8:00</td>
<td>Local Church Budget</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 25</td>
<td>7:50</td>
<td>Chesapeake Advance</td>
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Note: Sunset times published above are for Baltimore, Maryland. For Delaware and the Eastern Shore, subtract two minutes. For West Virginia and Western Maryland, add three minutes.

Chesapeake Currents is published monthly by the Communication Department – Samantha Young, director/editor
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