



THE NED CONNECTION

NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHEASTERN DISTRICT C & MA

UNDERSTANDING “ALLAHU AKBAR”

David B. Linn, Superintendent

Observant Muslims pray five times a day to Allah, and their prayer begins with the words “Allahu Akbar.” Every jihadi also screams these words as they are committing acts of violence and destruction in the name of Islam. We had better know what they do and don’t mean.

It is often said that Allahu Akbar simply means “God is great!” This is not so, and it is an attempt to conceal the true meaning from people who will be greatly affected by what those words actually mean. First of all, Allah is not the God of the Old and New Testaments. In the seventh century after Christ, Mohammed, the founder of Islam, adapted a local star or moon deity named Elleh (or Allah), a pagan god in Arabia, who was worshiped in pre-Islamic times. This became the god of his new religion.

The nature of the worship of Allah is explained by the word Islam, which means submission. This is the key concept of the entire religion: Allah demands unquestioned obedience from all people and nations. In fact, Allah requires that his followers sacrifice themselves for him in many ways. The only sure way to go to Islamic heaven is to please Allah by martyring oneself.

Allah’s demand for his followers to serve him is the opposite of Jesus Christ, who said: “...**The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many**” (Matthew 20:28). Jesus sacrificed himself on the cross as the most important demonstration of his nature that could ever be. The crushing demands of legalistic obedience are lifted from us because our Lord’s perfect obedience has opened the way to love and life through faith in him (Romans 5:19). These deities and the religions they founded could not be more different.

Secondly, “Akbar” does not merely mean “great,” it means “supreme.” It is a direct claim to universal dominion by Allah, who is said to be superior to Yahweh God and Jesus Christ in particular. This means that there is a colossal collision between Christ and Allah! Paul wrote: “...**[the Father] raised [Christ] from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come**” (Ephesians 1:20-21 NASB). There can’t be two supreme beings in the same universe. The great spiritual war of the ages is taking place right before our eyes.

So let us be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. Let us not confuse our witness by using the term “God” to mean both the Almighty and also Allah. All roads do not lead to the one true God! Let us have pity for those who are trapped in a dead-end religion where they must serve their god, but they cannot ever know for sure if they are accepted by him. The gospel remains their one best hope, but the vast majority do not know it—yet.

Let us welcome our ever-increasing Islamic neighbors and honor them as beings created by God and stamped with his divine image. We do not war against flesh and blood. We are the faces and voices of the kindness of God to lead them to repentance (Romans 2:4).

Finally, let us pray for the great Muslim world, consisting of about two billion people! There are rumors and some solid reports of many conversions to Christ during these days of social unrest and war in Iran. There are exciting reports of Christ appearing to many people in Middle Eastern lands by dreams. Our Lord is reaching out, and may we be his instruments in releasing many people from bondage and welcoming them into freedom in Christ!



NED NOTICES



Ordination Congratulations!

April 26, 2026

Eber (Jennifer) Kinne

CrossTown Alliance

Olean, NY

OPEN CHURCHES

SENIOR/LEAD PASTORS

- ⇒ Clinton, NY
- ⇒ Saranac Lake, NY
- ⇒ Schodack, NY (Clearview Alliance)
- ⇒ Sidney, NY (Gateway Alliance)
- ⇒ Tonawanda, NY (Kenmore Alliance)

STAFF POSITIONS

- ⇒ Corning, NY (Beartown Road Alliance - Dir. of Student Ministries)
- ⇒ Rome Alliance (Associate Pastor)
- ⇒ Syracuse Alliance (Associate Pastor) (Worship Director / Part-Time)

GREAT COMMISSION FUND

Total year to date giving to the Great Commission Fund from our District churches of \$224,160 is 111.9% compared to 2025.



In Memoriam

Rev. Michael W. Heaton
 March 14, 2026
 Syracuse Alliance Church



NORTHEASTERN DISTRICT C&MA UPSTATE NEW YORK





SPRING RETREAT

Men of Iron

“ Carry the Torch ”

JUNE 5&6 2026

DELTA LAKE

BIBLE & CONFERENCE CENTER

EARLY BIRD PRICE \$79.00 BEFORE

MAY 22ND \$85.00 AFTER.

REGISTRATION OPENS APRIL 22ND

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

GUEST SPEAKER

GROUP ACTIVITIES

DAVID LINN

SEE WWW.NEDMENOFIRON.ORG

FOR DETAILS

GAMES AND SOCIAL TIME

PRAYER AND WORSHIP



More information can be found on our website at www.nedalliancewomen.org under Spring Refresh 2026

HIS MASTERPIECE: SURRENDERED FOR TRANSFORMATION



ALLIANCE WOMEN

Spring Refresh

CONFERENCE

Registration Link:
<https://bit.ly/3Ns479t>



Ana is the national director for Alliance Women; she has also served as a district director, worship leader, children's ministry director, and short-term mission trips coordinator. She currently works as an elementary school teacher, and her husband, Jorge, serves as the Project Manager for Church Multiplication at the C&MA National Office.

Keynote Speaker
National Alliance Women's
Director, Ana Cuevas

April 24-25, 2026
Auburn Alliance Church

MAY 29-31, 2026 | HOUSTON, TX

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NORTHEASTERN DISTRICT

ALLIANCE MISSIONS SUMMIT

GOSPEL ACCESS: FOR ALL FROM ALL

SAVE THE DATE

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2026

9 AM - 3:30 PM

AUBURN ALLIANCE CHURCH

- Inspiring Speakers
- Emerging Leaders Track
- Breakout Sessions
- Networking Opportunities
- Lunch provided
- Adults - \$40 Teens - \$25
- Deadline - Fri. Oct. 9, 2026

Don't miss being a part of something bigger!
Whether you're new to Alliance Missions or a
seasoned veteran, the NED Alliance Missions
Summit offers something for everyone.

**MORE DETAILS
AND
REGISTRATION
LINK TO COME**



Trauma Informed Children & Youth Ministry Workshop

Saturday, April 25th

9am - 4 pm

Lockport Alliance Church

We invite you with your team to join us as we acquire insights and practical strategies to support the students facing trauma challenges in our ministries.

Training Topics encompass: Date: Saturday, April 25th

- How Trauma affects the kids we love and what do we do about it
- Discipline: Obstacle or Opportunity
- Reaching and Teaching Hurting Kids
- Create a Life Changing Small Group

Time: 9 am - 4 pm

Place: Lockport Alliance Church

555 Davison Rd, Lockport

Cost: \$10/person, includes lunch

Register by April 19th



For questions or more information, please contact Jen Vitich at jveitchkidzmin@gmail.com or by text/call at 518-932-5399



The Alliance PEAK Profile is becoming an increasingly valuable resource for churches across the Northeastern District that desire to grow in health, effectiveness, and Kingdom impact. More than just a survey, the PEAK Profile is a developmental assessment designed to help churches identify strengths, uncover opportunities for growth, and cultivate a culture of intentional improvement.

At its foundation, the PEAK Profile provides an accessible, Alliance-aligned tool that evaluates church health through nine essential elements of an advancing church. These include spiritual leadership, personal growth, missions focus, loving community, worship gathering, vision alignment, Alliance partnership, financial stewardship, and effective organization. Together, these elements offer a holistic picture of how a church is functioning and where God may be leading it forward.

One of the unique strengths of the PEAK Profile is its ability to create a shared language for growth. The coaching process fosters positive dialogue and common language around church development, helping leaders move beyond assumptions and subjective hunches toward objective, actionable insight. This is particularly valuable for leadership teams seeking clarity in decision-making and alignment in vision.

The process itself is both comprehensive and flexible. PEAK includes leadership and congregational surveys, reporting tailored to the church's context, and optional components such as elder board, youth, and children's ministry assessments. It is also accessible across diverse congregations.

However, the true impact of the PEAK Profile is often realized through the coaching that follows. Experienced coaches walk alongside pastors and leaders to interpret results and apply them in meaningful ways. This coaching creates space for honest reflection, helping leaders address challenges such as communication breakdowns, team dynamics, or ministry alignment.

Church leaders who have engaged the process consistently note its value. PEAK creates good healthy dialogue to issues that are often seen but never talked about. PEAK provides objective insight to strengthening overall leadership effectiveness. These outcomes point to a deeper benefit: PEAK not only informs – it transforms.

Additionally, the PEAK Profile supports the biblical call to ongoing growth and accountability. Advancing the Kingdom requires a culture of evaluation, assessment, and responsiveness to the Holy Spirit's leading (Acts 1:8). By engaging in this process, churches position themselves to more faithfully steward their mission and expand their impact in their communities, region, and beyond.

For Northeastern District churches, the PEAK Profile represents an opportunity to invest intentionally in leadership development and church health. PEAK equips churches to prepare for what God wants to do next.

For more information about the Alliance PEAK Profile or to explore coaching opportunities for your church, please contact:

David M. Murphy

Email: dmurphy@nedcma.org

Northeastern District of The C&MA

Church Advance Specialist/Missions Mobilizer

I would be glad to help you take the next step in strengthening your church's health and Preparing to Expect the Advance of the Kingdom.



SEEK YE FIRST
THE
Kingdom
OF
God
AND
His righteousness;
AND ALL THESE THINGS
shall be added unto you.
MATTHEW 6:33

Challenges of Church Revitalization in the Northeastern District of the Christian and Missionary Alliance

Church revitalization is an essential process for refreshing congregations that may have lost their vitality. In the Northeastern District, this undertaking presents unique challenges shaped by geographical, cultural, and sociological factors. Understanding these challenges can help leaders strategize effectively for revitalization efforts.

Cultural Shifts

The Northeastern United States is characterized by a rapidly changing cultural landscape. Traditional values are often challenged by secular ideologies, leading to a decline in church attendance and engagement. Many congregations find themselves grappling with how to connect with younger generations who may prioritize different values and lifestyles. Revitalization efforts must therefore include a cultural evaluation to identify how to reach these demographics effectively.

Demographic Changes

The demographics in the Northeastern District are evolving, with increasing diversity in ethnic backgrounds, languages, and cultural practices. While this presents opportunities for growth, it also poses challenges in terms of communication, outreach, and integration within the church community. Leaders must develop culturally relevant ministries that resonate with a variety of backgrounds while still remaining true to the core tenets of the C&MA.

Declining Resources

Many churches in the Northeastern District face financial constraints as membership dwindles. With fewer members, there are fewer resources available for ministry programs, outreach initiatives, and facility maintenance. This financial strain makes it difficult to implement revitalization strategies effectively. Leaders are tasked with being innovative in resource management, potentially seeking partnerships with other organizations or churches to share resources and expenses.

Leadership Challenges

Revitalization often requires strong, visionary leadership committed to change. However, many church leaders may feel overwhelmed by the demands of revitalization efforts or may lack the necessary training and experience. This can lead to burnout and turnover, further destabilizing the church community. Investing in leadership development and creating a supportive network for leaders can mitigate these challenges.

Resistance to Change

Change can be difficult for any organization, especially for churches rooted in tradition. Congregational members may resist new ideas and approaches, preferring to maintain the status quo. This resistance can stem from a fear of the unknown or a deep emotional attachment to established practices. Successfully navigating this resistance requires patience, clear communication, and the involvement of congregational members in the revitalization process to foster a sense of ownership and commitment to change.

Community Engagement

Building relationships with the surrounding community is crucial for revitalization. However, many churches struggle to establish meaningful connections. The local context must be understood, and efforts should be made to engage residents in ways that are relevant and inviting. Outreach programs that address community needs, such as food banks or youth programs, can serve as effective entry points for building trust and attracting new members.

Spiritual Health

Finally and most importantly, the spiritual health of the congregation plays a vital role in revitalization. Many churches may find that spiritual practices, such as prayer and discipleship, have waned. Revitalization efforts should prioritize fostering a robust spiritual life within the church, encouraging members to deepen their faith and commitment to the church community.

Conclusion

Working on church revitalization in the Northeastern District presents numerous challenges, from cultural shifts and demographic changes to resource constraints and resistance to change. However, by addressing these issues with creativity, compassion, and a commitment to spiritual growth, church leaders can navigate these challenges and breathe new life into their congregations. The journey may be arduous, but the potential for renewal and impact within the community is significant.

By leaning on faith and the guidance of Scripture, leaders can find the strength and wisdom needed for revitalization.



Dave Murphy

**Northeastern District of the C&MA
Church Advance Specialist/Missions Mobilizer**

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REV. CARL JOSEPH
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JOSEPH STARKEY
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GRADES 3-5

JULY 26-31

GRADES 6-12



2026
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NED RESOURCES BULLETIN BOARD

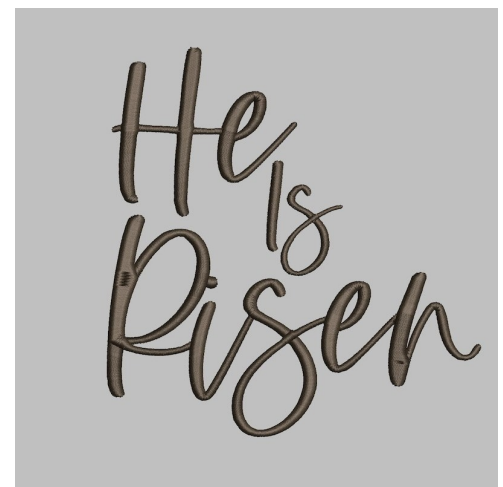
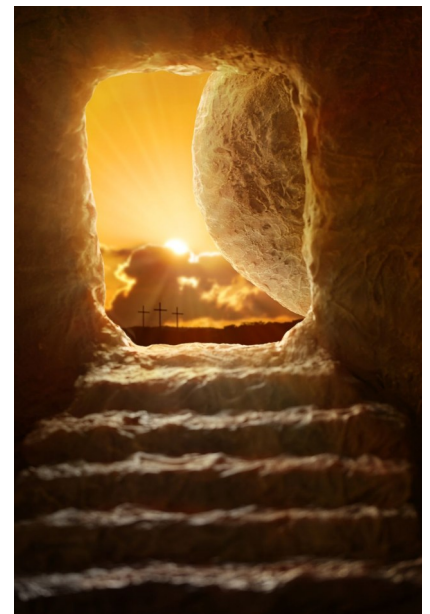
Calendar

April

3	Good Friday—D.O. Closed
28	In—Service @ District Office

May

4-6	District Conference @ Lockport Alliance
25	Memorial Day—D.O. Closed



THE NORTHEASTERN DISTRICT OF THE C&MA

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NED Connection Articles

for the May edition are due by April 24, 2026.
office@nedcma.org

Membership Certificates

Please contact the District Office at 315-336-4720 Ext. 201 or office@nedcma.org to request church membership certificates.

District Prayer Chain

Lorraine Regnier

District Prayer Coordinator

Prayer requests will be distributed throughout the Northeastern District family by contacting Lorraine directly at lorregnier@aol.com or 518 - 847 - 4323 .

NED Office Hours

Monday-Friday
8:30 AM - 4:30 PM



NORTHEASTERN
DISTRICT C&MA
UPSTATE NEW YORK