



THE NED CONNECTION

NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHEASTERN DISTRICT C & MA



A LEPTON FOR YOUR THOUGHTS

David B. Linn, Superintendent

A *lepton* (Gr.) was the smallest of coins used in Jesus' day and was made of copper. Like our erstwhile pennies--which we are no longer making, since each one costs 3.7 cents to make! This coin figures large in a teaching of Jesus which we really need to hear: **"And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury. And He saw a poor widow putting in two small copper coins"** (Luke 21:1-2 NASB).

The scenario is simple. Obviously rich people were putting in obviously large gifts into the horn-shaped receptacles at the temple. And an obviously poor widow put in two leptons. How did Jesus know that she was a poor widow? Those facts could have been at least partially observed, but the biggest fact about this woman could not have been known by anything except divine omniscience: **"And He said, 'Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all of them; for they all out of their surplus put into the offering; but she out of her poverty put in all that she had to live on'"** (Luke 21:3-4). Jesus knew that she had put in a different kind of offering than the rich people he had observed because he is the *kardiognosta* (Gr.), the knower of hearts.

We need to do some parsing of this teaching to keep from missing his point. The point cannot be that Jesus wants us all to give until it hurts, as some have taught. No, we are explicitly told that God blesses his children for our own sakes and that we may give to others. If we gave everything away we would be refusing his blessing and negating our opportunity to give to others.

It cannot mean that the gifts of rich people don't matter much simply because they are rich. That would include all of us in the West, by the way, since even the humblest of us is in possession of many things only available to kings and queens in the past. No, God has used wealthy people of faith to propel the plan of redemption through the ages, namely Abraham, Moses, Joseph of Arimathea, Joanna the wife of Chuza, unnamed women of means who supported Jesus, and many others.

Allow me to pull in a Biblical concept from the broad context. Jesus told the Samaritan woman at the well that God seeks those who will worship him in spirit and in truth. I take that to mean that no external acts are intrinsically worshipful. Everything depends on the intent of our hearts. And Jesus knows that intent full well. The same exact act could be meaningful or not when done by different people for different inward reasons.

What drew the praise of Jesus for the gift of the poor widow is immensely beautiful. First, he knew that her gift, which was tiny in monetary terms, represented an inward trust in God for her daily needs. This is a precious jewel to our Lord, and he has ordered the providential course of our lives to draw this kind of restful faith from within us.

Second, in spite of her own need, the poor widow prioritized the needs of others over her own. Paul said this about the materially poor Christians in Macedonia as they gave to the starving believers in Jerusalem: **"For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability, they gave of their own accord, begging us with much urging for the favor of participation in the support of the saints..."** (2 Corinthians 8:3-4).

Our hearts should be pierced by her example. Our intentions deserve a regular and intense examination by the Holy Spirit using the scalpel of the word of God. Am I thinking that just because I do a certain thing that I have genuine faith in that area of my life? Jesus knows whether I do or do not. Am I thinking that outwardly large deeds have more value than outwardly small deeds? Jesus knows, and he yearns for us all to learn faith and love in the depths of our being. The outward deeds are merely the context by which the inward spiritual life is revealed.

Two leptons revealed the thoughts of the poor widow. So it goes for us in work, family, ministry, community, and all of life. May we give our Lord what he wants most of all, and may we enjoy his immense pleasure in so doing!



NED NOTICES



DECEMBER

and

JANUARY

OPEN CHURCHES

SENIOR/LEAD PASTORS

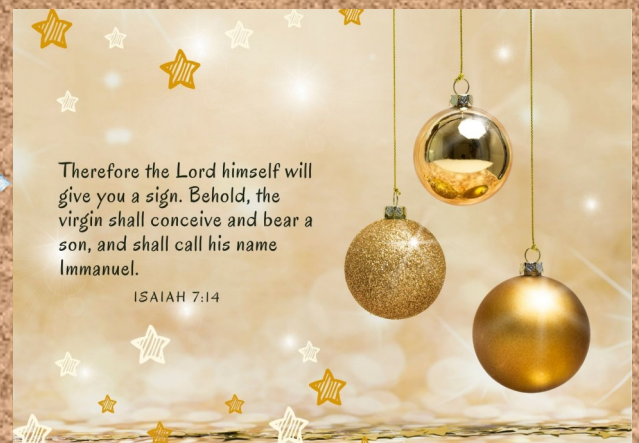
- ⇒ Saranac Lake, NY
- ⇒ Macedon, NY
- ⇒ Schodack, NY
- ⇒ Sidney, NY
- ⇒ Syracuse, NY

STAFF POSITIONS

- ⇒ Corning, NY (Beartown Road - Dir. of Student Ministries)
- ⇒ Rome, NY (Associate Pastor)
- ⇒ South Glens Falls, NY—Pine Knolls Alliance (Discipleship Pastor)

GREAT COMMISSION FUND

2025 year to date giving to the Great Commission Fund from our District churches of \$1,265,941 is 105.7% compared to 2024.



Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

ISAIAH 7:14



Registration opens **February 1st**

Stay tuned for emails from the District Office

95TH DISTRICT AND PRAYER CONFERENCE

MAY 4-6, 2026

LOCKPORT ALLIANCE CHURCH

LOCKPORT, NY





SOULCARE

C O N F E R E N C E TM

Gain a new life of freedom through healing and spiritual renewal. Join Dr. Rob Reimer as he explores biblical principles and provides practical tools for deepening your relationship with God and living free.



Dr. Rob Reimer
Speaker



February 26-28

8:45 am - 5 pm each day
(doors open Thursday at 8 am)



Auburn Alliance Church

630 N Seward Ave. Auburn, NY 13021



Accommodations Available

Holiday Inn Auburn-Finger Lakes Region
75 North St. Auburn, NY 13021

LEARN MORE!

Register Today

go to auburnalliance.com

Early Bird - \$100 until Dec. 31st!
Regular - \$125 (Group Rate Available)

Questions?



(315) 253-2650



church@auburnalliance.com

Scan Here For
More Information



TRAINING GROUND

» **SAVE ^{THE} DATE** «
January 30-31, 2026
9:00am-4:00pm



Keynote Speaker: Jeff Vanderstelt
“Becoming Gospel Fluent”

Youth Track Speaker: Clint Bieri
“Maximizing youth contributions”



Kids Track Speaker: Ann Weimer
“Connecting the Alpha generation with Jesus”

Kids Track Speaker: Sande Paul
“Connecting the Alpha generation with Jesus”



Kenmore Alliance Church
175 Bonnett Ave, Tonawanda, NY 14150
traininggroundned.com

Sponsored by Northeastern District of CM&A



Lisa L. Vogan, CWM
Disciplemaking Specialist
Lvogan@nedcma.org

The “Wins” Training Ground Offers

“So many options, so little time.” And then there is best stewardship of resources. As leaders, how do we choose the best among all the good options presented to us at any given time?

Let me share what I believe are the “wins” our District Disciplemaking Training Ground event can offer every one of our churches, no matter the size:

1. **Inspiration and Growth:** All research shows that “working out with a buddy” yields long term commitment. I would add inspiration, higher goals, and encouragement to that list. Don’t underestimate the power that comes with being together. *Win!*
2. **“Current” Content:** Excellent, nationally known speakers who are guiding the conversations of how to make disciples in our current culture. We will be both encouraged and challenged. We will be given practical tools and opportunities to keep the conversation going with our local leaders and volunteers as we return home. *Win!*
3. **Leadership training:** Opportunity to bring leaders/volunteers as a team-building event that will have the potential for follow-up conversations and long-lasting growth. And you have the benefit of “*just showing up*” because all the work is done for you, including times of worship! *Win!*
4. **Community and Connection:** Gathering with those who share the journey provides a unique opportunity of encouragement and collaboration through worship, time of connection, and learning together. *Win!*
5. **Affordability and Accessibility:** It can cost over \$1,000.00 to attend a conference when you add all the expenses. Our district has committed to providing our district churches with an event of excellence for extremely low cost. For as low as \$40 and the cost of your time and travel, you and your team can benefit from all this conference day offers. Most of our churches can get to and from the conference in the same day or use it as a “mini” leadership retreat and stay overnight. *Win!*

This year, because Jeff Vanderstelt is our Keynote Speaker and because he is passionate about supporting pastors and ministry staff, we are again providing a Friday, pre-conference ½ day workshop/retreat event for Official workers, pastors, ministry staff, and spouses.

We encourage you to sign-up today and take advantage of this event, designed to help you ...*win!*

For more information: www.traininggroundned.com Don’t let cost deter you. Reach out to me should you need assistance.

Fostering a Positive Ministry Environment
Building Trust and Openness

by Terri Groh
Northeastern District Alliance Women Director

One of the key characteristics in a thriving and positive ministry environment is trust among the members of the team. Trust is something that takes time and is earned. Every church we've entered as a new ministry couple was one in which we had to build relationships and earn trust. We discovered that as people learn that you care about them, and have their best interest at heart, they begin to trust you and open up. And that is something you cannot rush.

In fact, I've often found that people who are immediately open and transparent are often the ones that end up being a problem down the road. It is the people who take time to learn to trust and feel comfortable that often become our biggest supporters.

As team members learn to trust you, they will begin to share their struggles, joys and concerns. They will do this because they know that no matter what they are struggling with you are in their corner and that you seek to help them thrive and grow.

As we seek to build a positive ministry environment, we must understand that this will only happen as we strive to help others be the best version of who God created them to be. That happens as we notice their strengths and point those out. It happens as we affirm their spiritual gifts and give them opportunities to gain confidence in using them in ministry. And it also happens as we have those harder conversations and address weaknesses in a loving manner.

When people trust you and know you want to build them up, it creates an environment where they will flourish. And a thriving and flourishing team is one that is a joy to work with in ministry.

Questions for Reflection: Building Trust and Openness

1. What strategies can we use to build trust among ministry members?
2. How do transparency and open communication contribute to a positive church or ministry environment?
3. Have you ever felt hesitant to share your thoughts or concerns in a ministry setting? What helped you, or what could have helped you, feel more comfortable?

Why Do We Sing Carols at Christmas?

By Melanie Thornton

The tradition of singing carols at Christmas has a very long and complex history dating back thousands of years. Song has often been used in various forms to unify a people, to preserve, and to pass down important events in history and culture. The birth of Christ is no different.

The first century church incorporated many of the worship elements found in the Jewish synagogue into Christian worship, including chanting and the singing of Psalms. In Ephesians 5:19, Paul encouraged the early church to “speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs from the Spirit.” As the gospel message spread throughout the world and the Roman Empire, early church music was sung in Latin and was not understood by the common parishioner.

The first known Christmas carol was commissioned by a Roman Bishop in 129 AD and was titled “Angel’s Hymn”. This began a tradition of composers writing carols to be sung during the Latin Christmas Mass, continuing until the arrival of the Middle Ages around 1200 AD. During these dark times, most people in Europe lost interest in celebrating Christmas completely - widely assumed due to the language barrier of the Latin liturgy.

In 1223 AD, a young monk by the name of Francis of Assisi had a burden on his heart to reach the common man with the message of God. Francis recognized that the message of salvation wasn’t being translated (literally) from the clergy to the people. He began presenting Nativity plays in the Umbrian language of his region in Italy, and included songs telling the account of the birth of Christ. These songs became increasingly popular among the people, spreading to countries all over Europe. The tunes were the same, the message was the same, and these carols were translated into languages all could understand. Through Christmas carols, the story of how our Savior came to dwell among us was now able to be heard, understood, and passed down from generation to generation!

Today, carols are sung at Christmas all around the world and in many different languages. These songs are well known and are included in traditions outside of the church walls. The message of salvation is being proclaimed through carol singing as a powerful evangelism tool!

“Sing to the LORD, praise His Name;
proclaim His salvation day after day.
Declare His glory among the nations,
His marvelous deeds among all peoples.” Psalm 96 : 2-3 (NIV)

As we sing our favorite carols this Christmas season, let’s pray that the message of hope, peace, love, and joy will bring to salvation those all around the world joining in the same song.

DELTA LAKE

TEEN CHILL

UNSHAKEN



**ATTENTION
YOUTH
LEADERS!**

FEBRUARY 27 - MARCH 1 | GRADES 6-12

We can't wait to welcome your group to Teen Chill, a high-energy, Christ-centered weekend filled with **worship, winter fun, and biblical truth!** This year's theme, "Unshaken," ties into our 2026 focus at Delta Lake to "be strong" and will feature apologetics teaching to help students to a deeper understanding of their faith, and how to confidently live it out in today's world.



IMPORTANT REGISTRATION UPDATE

We're streamlining our registration process this year to make things smoother for everyone! **Parents/guardians must register each camper directly through CampBrain via deltalake.org/teen-chill.** This ensures that we have accurate information, completed forms, and a clear record of all attendees before arrival.

If your church plans to **pay for your students, here's how it works:**

1. Parents complete the online CampBrain registration.
2. When prompted for payment, they can **skip that step** if your church is covering the cost.
3. Parents should notify the church office so that a **church check** can be sent to Delta Lake.
4. Please mail group payments **before the event (by February 13).**

Checks should be made payable to
Delta Lake Bible Conference Center
6420 Pillmore Drive Rome, NY 13440
Memo: Teen Chill + Camper Name

YOUR ROLE AS A LEADER

We need you! As always, churches are encouraged to:

- Promote Teen Chill to your youth group
- Recruit chaperones and help transport your students
- Join your group for the weekend. Your involvement is so important!
- **Chaperones register online (select "Chaperone" under registration type).**

DELTA LAKE

TEEN CHILL

UNSHAKEN



FEBRUARY 27 - MARCH 1 | GRADES 6-12

Winter's coolest weekend is back! Get ready for 3 days packed with **fun, worship, friends, and snow-filled adventure** at Delta Lake!

This year's Teen Chill theme, "UNSHAKEN," kicks off our 2026 focus across Delta Lake Ministries to "Be Strong." Students will be encouraged to stand firm in their faith through engaging apologetics sessions designed to help them understand why they believe what they believe.



HOW TO REGISTER

This year, registration will look a little different – and easier than ever! All campers must now **register through our CampBrain registration system.**

During registration:

- Parents/guardians will fill out all camper info directly on the CampBrain portal.
- You'll be asked to pay online to reserve your teen's spot.
- If your church is covering the cost, simply skip the payment section and let your church office know. They'll send Delta Lake one group payment for your camper(s).

Please register early! Space is limited, and we want to make sure every camper is ready to go when the weekend arrives.

EVENT DETAILS

- **Cost:** \$125 per camper | \$95 per chaperone
- **Deposit:** \$50 (applied toward total)
- **Check-In:** Friday, Feb 27, from 4-7 PM
- **Check-Out:** Sunday, Mar 1, at 1 PM



2025 Christmas Giving Tree

Help "decorate" our ministry through the 2025 Giving Tree! Each ornament on the tree represents a specific project, need, or improvement around camp - from a single flooring square, to general ministry operations.



GENERAL MINISTRY OPERATIONS

Your year-end giving helps sustain the daily work of ministry, keeping programs running, facilities maintained, and lives impacted for Christ. Partner with us to ensure a strong foundation for all God is doing through this ministry in the year ahead.

GIVE THE GIFT YOUR HEART DESIRES



MAIN LODGE CARPET REPLACEMENT

Help refresh the heart of camp! Each \$29 5'x5' square brings us closer to replacing the worn carpet in the Main Lodge, creating a warm, welcoming space where guests and campers can gather in comfort and community.

5' x 5' CARPET SQUARE \$29



BATH HOUSE FLOOR REFINISH

Partner with us to upgrade both bath houses with durable, easy-to-clean epoxy polyurea flooring before the 2026 season. Each \$29 5'x5' square supports a lasting improvement that enhances both the appearance and functionality of these essential facilities.

5' x 5' FLOORING SQUARE \$29

Thank you for partnering with Delta Lake!

[DELTALAKE.ORG / GIVING-TREE](https://DELTALAKE.ORG/GIVING-TREE)





ALLIANCEMISSIONS

CONVERGE



CONVERGE 2026

For and From: Gospel Access Unleashed

As The Alliance, "We are committed both to bringing gospel access and impact to peoples of the world who lack these, as well as to assuring that receivers of access among any people group can sustain it for their own people and multiply it to still others lacking access."

- For every person who loves Alliance Missions
- January 19-21, 2026
- Embassy Suites, Dublin, OH (Columbus Airport)
- Customizable room and commuter options are available.
- Visit cmaconverge.org for more information and to register.

ALLIANCEMISSIONS



aXcess



CAMA



Envision



**marketplace
ministries**

“Men of Iron” Men’s Ministry



Jon Coykendall

Thanksgiving Precedes the Blessing

I have said that November is the giving thanks month, first we express our thanks to our veterans for their service and sacrifices while protecting our families and country. Without them we would not enjoy the freedoms we have to worship and fellowship together. Then we gather together in our homes with family and friends on the last Thursday of the month to fill our bellies and thank our Lord for a wonderful year and a bountiful harvest. Paul tells us; *Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.* (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18). So, the month of November is when we give God the Glory He deserves right? Not so, because Paul says to **rejoice always**. Everyday should be a day to give thanks.

The blessing? Where does that come in? December is the great blessing month, things seem to be a little more festive, generosity is more plentiful. People seem to be a little more willing to give during the month of December. But the greatest gift and blessing to the world is Christmas. That quiet night in Bethlehem God sent His son Jesus to be a blessing, the savior the light of the world, the prince of peace. Again, Paul says, *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.* (Philippians 4:6-7). In some way when we are truly thankful to God, and we allow His glory to rule our lives in prayer a blessing will follow. Sometimes it’s just His peace that we need. But in every case thanksgiving precedes the blessing. As men of God, we must all be prayer warriors giving the Father His glory and allowing Him to decide the blessing He will send and then thanking Him again. Amen. ***Have a Great and blessed Holiday Season.***

Please make sure the men in your congregation know of the Men’s ministry. We have a website, www.nedmenofiron.org

Northeastern District *EVENTS CALENDAR* – 2026



NORTHEASTERN
DISTRICT C&MA
UPSTATE NEW YORK

JANUARY

1 – **NEW YEAR'S DAY (Obs.)** – District Office Closed
13 – Credentialing Council Meeting, 9:30 AM
19, 20, 21 – CONVERGE in OH
31 – Training Ground @ Kenmore Alliance

FEBRUARY

10 – DEXCOM meeting, 10:00 AM
16 – **PRESIDENTS' DAY** – District Office Closed
2/27-3/1- Teen Chill @ DLBCC

MARCH

2,3,4 - Lg. Church Coaching Cluster @ Auburn Alliance
6,7,8 – Pastors' Wives Retreat @DLBCC

APRIL

3 – **GOOD FRIDAY** – District Office Closed
14 – Credentialing Council Meeting, 9:30 AM
24, 25 – AW Spring Refresh @ Auburn
28 – District In-Service, 10 am-3 pm @ D.O.

MAY

4, 5, 6 – District Conference @ Lockport Alliance
25- **MEMORIAL DAY**- District Office Closed

JUNE

5,6 – Men's Retreat@ DLBCC
5,6,7 – The Gathering (AW) in Columbus, OH
16 – DEXCOM Meeting, 10:00 AM
19,20 – NED AW Leadership Team Retreat
27-7/1 – Youth Camp (grades 3-5) @ DLBCC

JULY

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 - Family Camp @ DLBCC
3 – **INDEPENDENCE DAY OBS.** – D.O. Closed
5 – AW Summer Renew @ DLBCC, 3 pm
14 - Credentialing Council Meeting, 9:30 AM
7/26-7/31– Youth Camp (grades 6-12) @ DLBCC

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

7 – **LABOR DAY** – District Office Closed
15 – DEXCOM Meeting, 10:00 AM
25,26,27– AW Fall Refocus @ DLBCC

OCTOBER

6 – Credentialing Council, 9:30 AM @ District Office
17– Missions Summit @ Syracuse Alliance, 8:30-3:30
27 – District In-Service, 10 am-3 pm @ D.O.
30,31 – Men's Retreat @ DLBCC

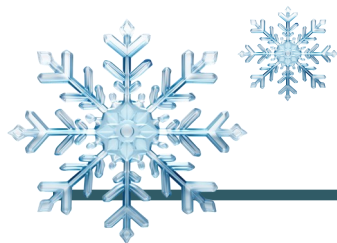
NOVEMBER

26-27 – **HAPPY THANKSGIVING!** – D.O. Closed

DECEMBER

8 – DEXCOM Meeting, 10:00 AM
24- Jan.1 – **CHRISTMAS BREAK** – D.O. Closed

District Events Calendar 2026



NED RESOURCES BULLETIN BOARD

Calendar

December

9	10am—DEXCOM meeting @ District Office
24-31	Christmas Holiday—District Office Closed

January

1	Happy New Year—D.O. Closed
13-15	CONVERGE in Dublin, OH
31-Feb.1	Training Ground @ Pine Knolls Alliance



NED Connection Articles
for the February edition are
due by January 23, 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

THE NORTHEASTERN DISTRICT
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6275 Pillmore Drive
Rome, NY 13440
Phone: 315-336-4720
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