THE DUMBEST WISE MAN

David B. Linn, Superintendent

The 2004 film, I, Robot, postulates a future where robots develop intelligence and personality. One such robot is running around creating havoc and is being chased by a police officer played by Will Smith. At one point he is trying to convince one of the creators of these robots, a scientist played by Bridget Moynahan, that one of her robots is thinking on its own and breaking all the safety rules. He tries and tries, but she will not go there. Finally, the Will Smith character shouts: “You are the dumbest smart person I have ever met!” Made me laugh!

I have been doing my devotions through the books of Kings and was reminded that Solomon wisely asked God for wisdom as his blessing, and this is how God responded: “Now God gave Solomon wisdom and very great discernment and breadth of mind, like the sand that is on the seashore. Solomon's wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the sons of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt” (1 Kings 4:29-30 NASB). In a world full of lies and confusion, this was a priceless gift, and Solomon distinguished himself by using this wisdom in his rule of Israel.

He built the temple of the Lord in glorious fashion and gave a remarkable prayer of dedication. The Lord gave a dramatic public affirmation of Solomon’s work by displaying his shekinah glory descending on the Holy of Holies to dwell there as promised. All good!

But then also we read that, partly on his father David’s advice, Solomon began his reign by the kingly tradition of killing off troublesome people from the previous king, including Adonijah, Joab, and Shimei. There was no tip of the hat to a court trial, witnesses, or the Law of God in any way. It was an expression of sheer power. Not as good.

We also read that, as part of his construction of Jerusalem, he built a house for an Egyptian woman he was never supposed to have married. Not far from that house, right nearby the temple, he also built accommodations for concubines he inherited from David and those he gathered on his own. This leads to a spiritually crazy scenario where both his place of worship and his heedless kingly sinning were right next door: “As soon as Pharaoh's daughter came up from the city of David to her house which Solomon had built for her, then he built the Millo. Now three times in a year Solomon offered burnt offerings and peace offerings on the altar which he built to the LORD, burning incense with them on the altar which was before the LORD. So he finished the house” (1 Kings 9:24-25).

We think of Solomon as a good king who went bad, but these personal spiritual failures were present in his life from the beginning in spite of being in possession of the Law of God, in spite of the privilege of temple worship nearby, and in spite of the all-surpassing gift of wisdom given to him.

My conclusion is that Solomon was the dumbest wise person ever. And so am I, in all the ways I fail to choose transformation in the face of my knowledge of exactly what God wants from me and for me. I am privileged with Bibles, study helps, and devotional materials far surpassing previous generations of Christians. And still it is humbling hard work to live the exhortation of Romans 12:2: “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

I do not want to go down in history as the dumbest district superintendent ever! May 2022 be a year you and I live with our hearts flung open to the God who makes us new in the deepest part of our souls.
OPEN CHURCHES

**SENIOR / LEAD PASTORS:**

Candor, NY
Dewittville, NY
Ithaca, NY
Waverly, NY
Vestal, NY (Tracy Creek)

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Transformation Northeast is a 24/7 Prayer Wheel composed of lay people, pastors, ministers, denominational and non-denominational leaders, and para-church leaders who realize we must pray together for the needs of the Northeastern United States. Born out of vision by Dr. David Janssen, Northeastern Director for Church Advance with the Alliance, it is a place we can come together and pray. It is our desire that God would visit the churches and communities of the Northeast in powerful ways.

Visit [https://transformationnortheast.org/](https://transformationnortheast.org/) for more information and to sign up to pray!

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GREAT COMMISSION FUND

Year to Date giving to the Great Commission Fund from our District Churches of $1,117,180 is 111.2% compared to the same time last year.

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Christian Based Counseling Services

Mr. James F. Lewis, LMHC
2700 Bellevue Ave., Syracuse, NY 13219
315-425-1943

Christian counseling for Individuals (Adult & Adolescent), Marriage & Family, Mental Health & Addictions.

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STM Scholarship
(Short Term Missions Scholarship)

The District Missions Committee is offering **four** $250 scholarships to anyone 13 years or older interested in doing a short-term missions trip to an international C&MA field or with a C&MA International Worker. *This is a first come first serve opportunity!* If you are interested contact Terri Groh at terrigroh@yahoo.com or 315-806-7011.

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THE NED CONNECTION, Page 2
Saturate USA
by Phil Barner

"I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me."

(John 17:23)

This is the theme verse for Saturate USA, an organization that is striving to get the Gospel of Jesus Christ into all of the 120 million households in the USA by 2027. The process is simple. Contact saturateUSA.org, adopt a zip code and a representative will contact you.

Saturate USA sends door hanger bags, "Jesus" DVD's and gospel tracts for every household in the adopted zip code. The DVD's also have information on them for free streaming of the film. We found that the effort was easiest when the churches in our area worked together. We had cards printed up with information about each of the churches. We had a packing party to fill the door hanger bags. The work went well because the meeting was well attended.

Saturate USA also provides maps of the zip code with the number of houses and apartments included. They only ask to be contacted once the job is done. One of the churches in our community has already completed their part of the job. Saturate USA has found that one person can easily cover 50 homes in an hour. Imagine how much all of the churches working together can do.

We are excited about what God will do through this effort. How about you?

"You, dear children are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world." (John 4:4)
In my local communities, there is a strong undercurrent of bitterness toward the church. For some, it is a family tradition because some long dead relative had an unpleasant experience with a church. For others, it is much more recent. Even in my case as pastor for only a few years, there are those who will not attend because of something I did or did not do. Others point to churches from outside my locality where someone failed someone in some way, and they group all churches with them and discount the integrity of the local churches.

In Joshua chapter 7, Achan sinned, and it caused Israel to be defeated in what should have been a minor battle. One man’s sin caused the defeat of an army. To restore God’s blessing to Israel, Achan and his family had to be stoned to death in the valley that became known as the Valley of Achor.

The church has many charges against it. Some are bogus, but many are real. There is little use listing the injustices and infractions of the church. The painful truth is that we are guilty of the wrongs whether we did them or not.

The Prayer of the Nines is my personal title for Ezra 9, Nehemiah 9, and Daniel 9. This trio of prayers demonstrates identificational repentance. Though not guilty of the transgressions prayed about, the men claimed the sins of their nation as their own and poured out their hearts to God in anguish.

In Ezra 9:6, Ezra declares that he was ashamed to lift his head to God because of “our iniquities”. Nehemiah 9:34-36 states that the kings, leaders, priests, and fathers did not keep God’s Law and as a result “we are slaves today”. Daniel 9:5 states “we have sinned”. The people responsible for the state of the nation were long dead or not repentant, but the result of the transgressions was the same and had not been eliminated.

What I am suggesting is that the lack of progress some of our churches are facing may be a spiritual blockage caused by long forgotten sins. It may be that in listening to the narrative of the resistant local people, we will discover things that we can have the privilege of repenting for. Maybe we should join Ezra and feel real shame for what we and the historic church have committed and properly and formally repent before God. Maybe we need to identify with sins that are really disgusting to us.

Several years ago, I participated in a session of identificational repentance with a local ministerium centered on the sins of the regional church. We drew papers from a hat. One pastor was not only repelled by his lot but indignant that he had a particular sin assigned to him. He refused to make it his own. I swapped with him.

So how about you? Are you willing to adopt a sin you did not commit and repent of it on behalf of the church? Maybe part of your breakthrough is in such a prayer. Jesus identified with my sin and swapped His righteousness for my sin. And He swapped with you. Is it time to Pray the Nines?
Missions is only effective when it’s a group effort!

14 Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles.
15 Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only;
16 for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid more than once when I was in need.
17 Not that I desire your gifts; what I desire is that more be credited to your account.

Philippians 4:14-17

Greetings from the District Missions Committee! The DMC is excited every time we see one of the churches in the district boldly promoting The Alliance’s missionary effort! Our desire is to see the passion of Dr. Simpson carried out in “such a time as this!” As we watch the news and hear of all the troubling things happening around the world, we need to take a stand and share the message that Our God is still in control! Often times, we’re too quick to join in the “choir of complainers”, and forget that while Satan may strike at the heel; God will crush his head!

We live in a time where the “heel strikes” appear to be on the rise. And if we listen to the voices of much of society, these conditions can be seen as overwhelming.

However, we would do well to go back and review the letters from the apostle Paul. I think it’s fair to say that he had been dealt some severe “heel strikes” himself. The entire church, for that matter, was under immense pressure from both inside, and outside the religious community.

In the verses I listed above, he was thanking the church from Philippi for their continued support of the work he was doing for the kingdom of God. From the confines of his imprisonment, his commitment to his calling was admirable. However, it was the support of the church that was making it possible for him to carry on. Everyone involved with The C&MA is eternally grateful for the work or our IW’s! However, they’re also grateful for all of the churches that faithfully give! And this faithful giving has to include financial giving as well as thoughtful and informed participation with their respective ministries.

As a committee, the DMC would like to assist our churches in continuing to promote a strong push to complete the Great Commission to “go ye therefore”! The committee is made up with people from all across the district, and we would love to have the opportunity to come to your church and share about missions! This could be for a “mission moment” or possibly a message. If you would be interested, please contact me at preachergregwolters@gmail.com, or you can go through either the district office or Dave Murphy.

As a district, let’s go ye therefore, together!

Greg Wolters
Creative evangelism is what we enjoy talking about since the C&MA has become quite good at it. In fact, we MUST talk about it because as our society changes, so should our discussion about how the message of Christ (which does NOT change) gets to the unreached. Teaching English is what we consider our "platform" for talking about Jesus. It is how we serve our community. Through these relationships we then have opportunities to talk about Jesus by offering "classes" on how to know God better. These are well attended, they hear the gospel and ask appropriate and deep questions.

Our most important need is prayer because we have a number of students on the verge of accepting Christ, but say they cannot. The most common reason is family. Spiritual warfare, my friends! Is family more important than God? Even Jesus dealt with that issue in Matthew 8 and 12. Unfortunately, many times, the answer is yes. Storm the gates, Friends!

We could have more influence by having more teachers. Could you come and help us teach English for 3 months? Perhaps you could do a study on women/men of the bible. For university students in the ESL/EFL program perhaps you could do an internship with us. The opportunities are in front of us; we must take advantage of the time.

Whether you can come and join what God is doing in our part of the world or not, you can definitely be a part of it by praying and supporting us and our team. If you receive our news updates, just click on the "Give" button on any of the 4 pages. If you don't receive our updates, let us know and we can add you! Please contact us SubSahara@weareenvision.com

Keith and Krista
CAC International Workers
SAVE THE DATE

TRAINING GROUND - 2022 -

JANUARY 29
9 AM - 4 PM

Lunch Provided

Live Location:
Kenmore Alliance Church, Buffalo

Satellite Location:
Pine Knolls Alliance Church, South Glens Falls

Registration Opens Oct. 15:
Early Bird (by Dec. 1): $35
Student: $35
After Dec. 1 / Walk In: $50

“Navigating Tough Questions About God”
This one-day training event will inspire, encourage and equip you to lead and disciple in your ministry area.

Register Online: TrainingGroundNED.com
For more information contact Lisa Vogan at LVogan@nedcma.org
Training Ground 2022

The mission of Training Ground is to bring national-caliber speakers to our backyard for an interactive disciple-making training workshop at a cost that enables every church in the Northeastern District to send their entire leadership team. The Gospel of Jesus Christ does not change, but we preach it in the middle of a culture that is changing every day. While people’s core needs remain the same, the questions that they need answered and the roadblocks standing in the way of faith are always different, and often confusing. Followers of Christ need to be prepared to answer those questions with truth and grace.

Training Ground 2022’s keynote speaker is Rebecca McLaughlin. Dr. McLaughlin holds a Ph.D. in English Literature as well as a degree in Theology. She spent 9 years with the Veritas Forum, identifying and equipping Christian professors to speak about their faith. She works closely with the Gospel Coalition, where she is a frequently-featured speaker, and her first book, Confronting Christianity: 12 Hard Questions for the World’s Largest Religion, was named “Book of the Year” in 2019 by Christianity Today. She has written books addressing key apologetic questions aimed at Pastors, lay people, and teenagers. And she speaks in a cool British accent!

Dr. McLaughlin brings a unique blend of a British immigrant’s perspective on the American Christian movement, deep academic training and experience, a winsome, compassionate, and engaging style, a captivating personal story, and keen insight into the questions that both Christians and seekers need to have answered.

At Training Ground, you’ll be able to hear from, ask questions of, and meet Dr. McLaughlin face-to-face. In the mean time, her books are great and easily obtainable, and her Twitter feed is fantastic. You can prepare yourself and your team for Training Ground ahead of time by interacting with some of these materials yourselves.

Please pray for Dr. McLaughlin and for all our speakers for this upcoming Training Ground, please register your whole team, and please come ready to engage.

Training Ground will take place on January 29, 2022 from 9 AM – 4:30 PM, with Dr. McLaughlin live and in person at Kenmore Alliance Church in Kenmore, NY, and a satellite location with full interactivity at Pine Knolls Church in South Glens Falls, NY. Lunch is included in the registration cost of $35; after December 15, the price increases to just $50. For more information or to register online, please go to http://www.traininggroundned.com
NED COFFEE BUYING PLAN

Our new social enterprise, Generous ROASTING, is up and operational. We are excited to offer an exclusive line of coffee for NED Churches.

Our team of roasters will prepare this special blend each week for your church. A portion of the proceeds will go towards various projects.

Lakeview Drive Blend is a smooth medium roast that we are selling for $10/pound.

To place an order, send an email to roaster@havencamps.com.
NED RESOURCES BULLETIN BOARD

NED Connection Articles
for the February edition are due by January 24, 2022. 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 Bible Quizzing
Claudine Campbell
District Quiz Coordinator
607-529-8879 cell
claudine@northeasternquizzing.org

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

NED Office Hours
Monday-Friday
8:30 AM-4:30 PM

The NED Web
nedcma.org

THE NORTHEASTERN DISTRICT
OF THE C&MA
6275 Pillmore Drive
Rome, NY  13440
Phone: 315-336-4720
Fax: 315-336-0347
Contact via E-mail
office@nedcma.org

District Superintendent
David B. Linn
dlinn@nedcma.org
Barbara S. Linn
barb.linn@twc.com
Assist. to DS/Missions Mobilizer
David M. Murphy
dmurphy@nedcma.org
Leadership Development Specialist
Sally V. Fry
sfry@nedcma.org
Executive Assistant
Melanie M. Thornton
mthornton@nedcma.org
Disciplemaking Specialist
Lisa L. Vogan
lvogan@nedcma.org
District Business Assistant
Edward W. Lyau
elyau@nedcma.org
Alliance Women Director
Terri A. Groh
terrigroh@yahoo.com
NED Men’s Ministry Director
Mark A. Perkins
rev.mark.perkins@gmail.com

Calendar

December

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>DEXCOM Zoom Mtg. 9 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Evangelism Comm. Mtg. 12 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-31</td>
<td>Christmas Holiday—D.O. Closed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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January

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>New Year’s Day (Obs.) - D.O. Closed</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>DDMT Zoom Mtg. 9:30 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>9-13</td>
<td>Converge—Columbus, OH</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>LO&amp;CC Meeting 9:30 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Missions Comm. Mtg. 10 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Training Ground</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Our District Committees are ready and available to offer resources and support to NED churches!

Evangelism
Mrs. Bonnie Koonsman (Chair)
bjgable@gmail.com
(215) 518-2508

Missions
Rev. Greg Wolters (Chair)
(315) 237-9864

NORtheastern District C&MA
Upstate New York