



## MAINE STATE ADVENT CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE

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Dear Delegates to the Eastern Regional Association Convention,

I greet you in Jesus' precious name! Everything about our individual lives, churches, conference and other denominational agencies need to be about giving glory, honor and praise to our Savior, Jesus Christ and our Heavenly Father. Also, it is my pleasure to report to you all the ways the Holy Spirit has been leading our conference officers.

We are very thankful for the good number of pastoral candidates we have had to work with. Recently, James McClay, Charlie Thiemann and Donna Nickerson have inquired and are entering into the credentialing process. We also celebrated with Vince Hartford his transfer of credentials to the Maine State Advent Christian Conference on Saturday, June 5 as well as with Darrell Young and Darren Bantz their ordinations on August 7 and September 18, 2021. We have an ordination service planned for October 30 for Andrew Blackstone. We continue to work with Josh Cheney and Kent Davis in their quest for ordination credentialing.

God has opened the doors for our conference to work closely with Matt Larkin and the Ministry Training Institute (MTI), sponsored between Advent Christian General Conference and Berkshire Christian College. We believe this new educational initiative and partnership is the answer to prayer for which we Advent Christians have prayed for well over 30 years! This leadership development program is thoroughly Advent Christian, and tailor-fitted for our unique denominational needs. It is my prayer that all Advent Christian people, churches, conferences and regions will be on board to support the training of our future church leaders, pastors and missionaries. We are grateful, as the conference board, to be able to work with Rev. Matt Larkin, and to scholarship some students within the program that have applied for tuition support.

A few years ago it became apparent that we needed to establish a more effective way to communicate with our pastoral candidates, their mentors as well as between the members of the executive and ministerial committees. We created an account with Google for the Maine State Advent Christian Conference, which we are continuing to develop and are now implementing. Instead of hunting through the hundreds of e-mails that we all collect, we can create shared folders and files, where the information safely resides. Please pray for the continued development and use of this system.

The ministerial committee has worked for the past two years on developing a lay ministry credential. This credential is not intended for those called to a part-time or full-time ministry, though it may be a first step in God's call on an individual's life. Instead, this credential allows the conference to stand with men and women that are called to para church ministries, such as that which is conducted in nursing homes, among the incarcerated, and pulpit supply, etc. The officers of the conference are asking the delegate body for approval for this new credential.

We were very sorry to report that our Auburn Advent Christian Church found it necessary to close its church doors. Let us pray for the members and friends of that congregation as they find new church homes. Let us also thank God, and them, for their investment in our conference as they disbursed the remaining assets. Let us also pray for Christ Chapel as they seek God's direction for they are seeking ways to be more connected to the communities they serve.

We are thankful for God's provision of pastoral leadership among our churches: Charlie Thiemann, Stroudwater Christian Church; James McClay, Crouseville Advent Christian Church; and Donna Nickerson, Christ Chapel. I had the wonderful privilege of serving the South Eliot Advent Christian Church for the past ten months.

The conference officers believe God is ready to move within our conference for church planting. As we have seen the unfortunate closure of several of our churches--Auburn, Castle Hill and Mechanic Falls in the past few years, we believe it is time to pray earnestly for God to raise-up church planters, so that we can plant new churches in Maine and New Brunswick. Will you join us in that prayer? And if God is leading you to plant a new Advent Christian Church in Maine or New Brunswick, please reach out to me, so an interview with the ministerial committee can be arranged. We are also hoping that our new partnership with MTI will provide not only pastors for our churches, but also church planters.

Finally, I want to call all of us--members, friends, pastors and churches--to a concerted discipleship movement among our conference, region and denomination. It is always tempting to "maintain" what we have, when Jesus has called us to a lifestyle of discipleship. Jesus disciplined an inner circle of leaders--Peter, James and John--as well as the 12, friends and the masses. He called them to a life of servanthood and submission. We need to do the same today. This was the focus of our annual meeting this past June 5 at the Bangor Advent Christian Church. We were blessed to hear challenges from Charlie Thiemann, Jim Havener and Josh Cheney regarding discipleship.

May God richly use the Advent Christian Church and bless our efforts for the kingdom's cause and purpose.

Blessings,  
Rev. David W. Davis, President