

MARANATHA

ADVENT CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE

"It is this Jesus whom God raised up, a fact to which we are all witnesses." Acts 2:32

Dear Members and friends of the Eastern Regional Association of Advent Christian Churches,

It is a humbling thought to consider Peter's words to those present when the Holy Spirit came upon the believers at Pentecost, as recorded in the book of Acts. I am especially grateful that the charge of "witness", applied to those present, also applies to you and I today. For we, too, are lives that have been changed for eternity by the resurrected Savior, Jesus. It goes without saying then that times like these require our witness to be all the more evident.

This last year has been one of note, I believe, in the Maranatha Conference. I say that not so much because of any obvious events that have taken place, but rather because my sense from the Lord is that this is a time of much consequence. Perhaps this is a moment that, years from now, we will look back on and know that what the Spirit of God was directing and doing during this time was for the purpose of realizing an incredible harvest for His Kingdom. I encourage you to remain steady at the plow, faithful to the call He has given you. We may not yet see the fruit of what is being planted through steady industry and daily striving, but we know that in the Lord our labor is not in vain.

One major venture that we undertook this year was hosting monthly Bible Interpretation and Exposition seminars. These meetings, hosted on Zoom and led by qualified teachers, were the fruition of an ongoing burden to see our pastors and ministry leaders equipped to understand and teach the Word of God. We are grateful for our Minister of Church & Pastoral Health, Rev. Lou Going, as he continues to serve the Pastors in our conference through this ministry. His continued efforts to connect with each of our pastors, getting to know them and pray with and for them, has been a blessing. The ministers and leaders in the Maranatha Conference are worth the investment, and I pray this continues to bear fruit for Christ's Kingdom. If your conference does not have someone in a position similar to this—someone with wisdom, who has seen the ups and downs that ministry brings, and who has the time and willingness to invest in the lives of your pastors and ministry leaders—I encourage you to prayerfully consider asking the Lord to provide this.

We were saddened by the loss of two dear servants of the Lord since our last regional convention. Gerard Hardy, long time pastor of the Second Advent Christian Church in Pittsfield, NH, passed away unexpectedly in December. Steven Goodwin, pastor of the Advent Christian Church in Farmington, NH, passed away in July after a brief battle with cancer. We are confident in the hope that belongs to us and to their families, won by our Savior Jesus. Please join us in praying for the church families in Pittsfield and Farmington, as they continue to trust the Lord's leading in finding a pastor.

For the Maranatha Conference Board, I express my gratitude for the efforts by many of you who have sought to continue to be unified as we work together in serving the Lord. Efforts toward solidifying our statement of faith, evaluating our means of reporting, and revitalizing our collective education efforts through works like the Ministry Training Institute are laying an important groundwork for the generations of folks who will follow after us. May the Lord be glorified

'Til He Returns,

Rev. Joshua Rice, President