



## SWEETEN THE SEASON

Looking for a fun, festive event to host this holiday season? Chesapeake Conference's Rock Hall (Md.) church is hosting its 13th cookie party this year. Since 2010, members have decorated and baked cookies together with church and community members at the church's holiday party.

Event organizer Vickie Anderson says they planned the event—drawing about 10 to 20 nonmembers—so participants from infancy up to 90 years old can have fun. Attendees also deliver cookies to those who can't bake for themselves. "It's great to see all of the smiles on everyone's faces at the cookie party. I think Jesus must have a smile on His face as well to see our children sharing with and caring about others," she says.

Here are some other ideas to sweeten the holiday season for those around you:

- Bake cookies and share them with neighbors or care home residents who can't bake for themselves.
- Invite a new church member or neighbor who doesn't have family or friends nearby to your home for Thanksgiving.
- Set a slightly lower spending budget for presents. Donate the difference to Adventist Community Services or another organization that makes an impact in your neighborhood.
- Volunteer to play games or watch Christmas movies with seniors at a local care home.

## TALK TO US!

Have you taken the Columbia Union *Visitor* survey yet? We want to hear from readers of all ages! Tell us what topics you want to read about, *how* you want to read them, and why. Let us know what inspires you!



## MUSIC IS IN THE AIR

To find a list of holiday concerts throughout the Columbia Union territory—including annual, highly-anticipated concerts from the Washington Adventist University Music Department—visit [columbiaunionvisitor.com](http://columbiaunionvisitor.com).



## THE 2024 CALENDAR IS COMING

A free gift from us to our members, this year's *Columbia Union Conference Calendar* focuses on the union's strategic motto to **Empower, Equip, and Engage** members to share their faith and **Experience the Mission**. One easy way to participate is by ordering additional free copies of the calendar to share. To order, call Pacific Press Publishing Association at (800) 545-2449, for just the cost of shipping.

## BE THANKFUL!

It's been long accepted that showing gratitude improves your personal outlook on life, but a study by the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* has found that expressing gratitude also provides the "witnessing effect," which provides benefits to those who hear or observe others' reactions of gratitude. Just witnessing interactions can help build the viewer's affinity toward those involved.



## We are about evangelism.

In his third quarter President's Report, Dave Weigley reminded members of the Columbia Union Conference Executive Committee of the union's central mission—evangelism. Noting the growing number of natural disasters in the United States and beyond, the president emphasized the need to empower members to prepare their communities for the times we are living in.

The number of Columbia Union Conference members who are currently participating in the union's initiative, which invites members to take and hold on to a Bible and baptismal robe, while praying for a potential believer to accept God, receive the Bible and eventually be baptized in the robe.

# 3,218