

# The Good News

Your local Christian newspaper in New York State



“Go Into All the World and Preach the Good News to All Creation” (Mark 16:15)

November/December 2016 (Published since 2005)

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## Operation Christmas Child Testimony: Man With A Shoebox

By Susan LeDoux

Yves Dushime wore a big smile as he met members of the Finger Lakes West Area Team of Operation Christmas Child.

“Let me hug you. I’m a hugger,” he said as he greeted me at the “Breakfast of Champions” volunteer get-together at Hope Church on August 13. Dushime was there to share his story of how an Operation Christmas Child gift-filled shoebox changed his life.



Operation Christmas Child is a project of Samaritan’s Purse, an international Christian relief and evangelism organization headed by Franklin Graham. It reaches children in coun-  
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## David Bereit, Champion For The Unborn, Speaks At New Hope Annual Banquet In Syracuse, NY

By Tim Bennett

New Hope Family Services celebrated its 30th year of pregnancy counseling in Central New York September 26th at the Carnegie Conference Center at Driver’s Village, with over 400 people in attendance.



Over the years, New Hope has grown and now has a staff of 16 (mostly volunteers) and offers a wide variety of services in the community, and at their location of 3519 James Street, including: abstinence education (Real Love Respects), pregnancy counseling, parenting education, abortion recovery, ultrasound screenings, and childbirth education. In 2005, they opened a satellite office on 500 Walnut Street, right next to the Planned Parenthood building. The annual fundraising banquet has become an anticipated fall event for the body of Christ in CNY as it brings together people  
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## Christian Ministries At SU Unite To Host “Worship The King” At The Dome

By Tim Bennett

Instead of the sounds of squeaky sneakers, grunts and groans, whistles, and a leather ball bouncing on the hardwood floor of the Syracuse University dome, those in attendance for “Worship the King” on September 16th heard something radically different — sounds of worship and praise to God, testimonies by students about His goodness, prayers, and an inspirational message from Mike Hopkins, the man expected to follow Jim Boeheim as SU’s head basketball coach.

These types of events are nothing new to Syracuse University. As far back as 2008, leaders of student ministries have been praying together and organizing events to reach out to incoming students knowing that this is a very vulnerable time for new students. Starting out as “First Night” and then “Vespers” in 2012 at Hendricks Chapel, the evening became “Worship the King” in 2014. This is the first time, however, that the outreach has taken place at the dome with 15 Christian groups participating.

Alex Thevaranjan, an Associate Professor of Accounting at SU and the director of House of Daniels, a ministry to international students,



Photo by Jason Foggie

Over thirty churches were on board to support the evening and many Christians in the community showed up. The crowd was estimated to be more than 2000 people.

confirmed the importance of reaching college students early. At a luncheon for Christian leaders before the event he said, “Seventy percent of all college students from Christian families walk away from the faith. This is a key time to

reach students.” His daughter, Asha Thevaranjan, president of BASIC (Brothers and Sisters in Christ) at SU was one of the student coordinators and speakers. She said, “I got involved be-  
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## Silver Bay YMCA Is Not Your Typical YMCA

By Jennifer Lamey

When most people think of a YMCA their mind is probably flooded with images of city streets, locker rooms, busy gymnasiums, and an Olympic-sized pool. However, with its stunning location and retreat facilities, Silver Bay YMCA does not fit the stereotype. After visiting, your mind will wander back to sitting in front of the stone fireplace, looking out over the beautiful scenery, and the memory of a morning fitness class in the fresh mountain air. This YMCA is located on Lake George in Silver Bay, NY.

The 32 mile long and three mile wide lake has inspired awe in visitors for centuries. Thomas Jefferson wrote, “Lake George is without comparison, the most beautiful water I ever saw; formed by a contour of mountains into a basin... finely interspersed with islands, its water limpid as crystal, and the mountain sides covered with rich groves... down to the water-edge: here and there precipices of rock to checker the scene and save it from monotony.” Jefferson in a letter to his daughter May 31, 1791. ([www.LakeGeorge.com/news/Thomas-jefferson.cfm](http://www.LakeGeorge.com/news/Thomas-jefferson.cfm))

Just over a century later, Lake George captured the hearts of the Silver Bay Association for Christian Conference & Training. The site boasting over 1 mile of shore line and 700 acres



Photo by Silver Bay YMCA

Chief Executive Officer Steve Tamm says that Silver Bay YMCA stands out because “it is the kind of place that people come back to, year after year, generation after generation.”

of land, is also on the Registry of Historic Places with the U.S. Department of the Interior. Operating as a year-round family retreat and conference center, Silver Bay hosts many church and organization events, as well as, family reunions and vacations. Chief Executive Officer Steve Tamm says that Silver Bay YMCA stands out because “it is the kind of place that people come

back to, year after year, generation after generation. It is not uncommon at all for someone to walk up to me, introduce themselves and then tell me that they have been coming for decades; or that they met their spouse here or that their grandparent first brought them here years ago. It is so great seeing generations of families com-  
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## Christian Camps and Retreats

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## Getting On The Pathway To Hope

By Robert Barlow

New data from the Census Bureau shows Rochester ranks 15th out of nearly 600 cities for the number of residents living in poverty. Poverty is defined as households that had an income below \$24,257 last year for a family of four. The data showed that the level of poverty in Rochester continues to grow with more than 33% of Rochester's population impoverished with more than 50% percent of that population under the age of 18.

Studies have also shown that children who live in poverty for half their lives are 32 times more likely to remain in poverty. This means the epidemic is passed down from one generation to the next, over and over again. The Salvation Army's Pathway of Hope is a new initiative designed to break this cycle of intergenerational poverty by addressing its root causes.

"The initiative marks a pivotal shift from treating the symptoms of poverty to preventing the epidemic at its root, said Jerrold Melville, Pathway of Hope Coordinator for the Finger Lakes region. "By helping families overcome barriers like unemployment, unstable housing, and lack of education, we can break the cycle of crisis and vulnerability, leading families down a path of increased stability and ultimately self-sufficiency."

A pilot version of Pathway of Hope began in the Midwest in 2011, backed by several major foundations. Among the promising results from those communities, 74% of families who fully engaged in Pathway of Hope demonstrated increased stability. Now, the initiative is being rolled out in more than 300 communities across the country including Rochester, Canandaigua and Geneva.

Pathway of Hope was designed with tools to measure progress and benchmarks to track success. Case workers will design a plan around individual goals, needs, and strengths to provide targeted services to families – celebrating small victories, as well as significant achievements, throughout their journey.

"The admittance rate is low, the standards are high, and the vision is long-term," Melville said. "Through Pathway of Hope, we are identifying families who are ready to change and willing to work hard to achieve a different life for themselves and their children."

Families selected to participate in Pathway of Hope will undergo a careful review to ensure their strong commitment to improving their lives if given incentive, support, and opportunity. In return, Salvation Army social workers will provide intensive case management, linkage to resources, and tangible support to help empower families to take their first steps out of poverty.

"Unlike other programs, Pathway of Hope is not about cookie-cutter outcomes; implementation will be phased and results will be realized in limited numbers," said Melville. "However, our numbers have the potential to represent sustainable change for families of lifelong instability."

Melville stated that Pathway of Hope is an evidence based approach including goals of employment, financial stability, housing, education and transportation for Pathway of Hope families.

"Pathway of Hope is not for people looking for handouts, but rather for families who are committed to working hard to change their circumstances, and just require a 'hand up' along the way," he said. "The Salvation Army is committed to going the distance to help these families achieve lasting change."



## Christian Ministries At SU Unite To Host "Worship The King" At The Dome

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cause I liked the spiritual challenge and that it would push me to go deeper with God. I didn't know what to expect but it was great to see so many people come together from so many different backgrounds, churches, and denominations."

The goal of the organizers, however, went well beyond reaching students. The caption below the event poster title said: "To Unite the Body of Christ and To Transform the City of Syracuse." Over thirty churches were on board to support the evening and many Christians in the community showed up. The crowd was estimated to be more than 2000 people. Jay Koshi, the prayer coordinator for the event, said that in Psalm 133 "the Lord 'commands' a blessing when His people come together in unity." In other words, when Christian churches unite in purpose and focus on God, He will bless that community.

The evening began with a welcome by Asha Thevarnjan and greetings by Dean Samuel Clemence representing Henricks Chapel and then a presentation of civil leaders in attendance that included Frank Fowler, the Chief of Police, and Van B. Robinson, the President of the Syracuse Common Council. Although the Chancellor Kent D. Syverud did not attend, two weeks before the event he invited 25 pastors for breakfast on campus to encourage their churches' participation. Organizers were thrilled with such enthusiastic support from top SU leaders.

The introductions were followed by worship led by a group of students from several Christian ministries. The songs selected focused on God's character such as His "goodness and mercy endures forever" and "You're a good, good Father." One of them even spoke about "laying down my religion" and focusing instead on a personal walk with God. The refrain that stayed with me the longest after the event was: "You make all things work together for my good" taken right from Romans 8:28.

After four or five songs, the format changed and a student shared a testimony, a song, a testimony, etc. The most dramatic testimony came from Vinny, a 27-year-old student from the University of Binghamton. He explained how he experienced two tragic events almost simultaneously several years ago—the death of his mom, and a serious motorcycle accident which made it necessary for him to take prescribed painkillers for his injuries. Things went bad to worse, however, when he lost his health insurance and could not afford the medication anymore. He decided to switch to heroin

## Go Again

By Ngozi Nwoke

Are you about to be giving up on God for not answering your prayers? God does not store prayers, He answers them. Unanswered prayer today does not mean unanswered prayer tomorrow. There is a need for you to be persistent until you receive your answers. You should not quit, but you should go again.

So Ahab went up to eat and drink. Elijah went up to the top of Carmel, then he bowed down on the ground and put his face between his knees, and said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea."

So he went up and looked, and said, "There is nothing." And seven times he said, "Go again."

Then it came to pass the seventh time, that he said, "There is a cloud, as small as a man's hand, rising out of the sea!" So he said, "Go up, say to Ahab, 'Prepare your chariot, and go down before the rain stops you.'" - 1 Kings 18:42-44 (NKJV)

There may be things you believe God for that are yet to be answered and you are getting tired of expecting it. You may have gone many times in pursuit of them and you are about quitting; I am here to tell you to go again, till you re-



Photo by Jason Foggie

The evening ended with student ministry leaders praying for educators, pastors, and parents.

to dull his pain. The latter, he said, resulted in a summer stay at a homeless shelter where he hit bottom. "I guess God sometimes allows us to experience enough of our consequences to get our attention," he said. It was at this low point in his life that he entered the Teen Challenge program and kicked the drug addiction and gave his life to Christ. He concluded his testimony by telling of his eventual success at college and an upcoming internship at a prestigious company. "They even created a position to hire me," he said smiling, as thousands of his listeners erupted into spontaneous applause and praises to God.

When keynote speaker Coach Mike Hopkins took the podium he began by saying, "I consider myself a religious mutt. I'll explain. I was baptized Presbyterian. I went to a Catholic high school. I was in a Jewish fraternity. I was in Athletes in Action in college and now I spend a lot of time with FCA." (Fellowship of Christian Athletes) After laughs from the audience, Hopkins spoke about his failures to play in professional sports and his difficulties getting a job after graduating college. Then came that fateful day, he said, when Jim Boeheim invited him to assist him as a coach at SU, with whom he has now been working for 20 years. "I know God puts people into our lives," Hopkins said. "The only experience I had coaching was with six graders at the time and then (Hopkins choked up before continuing) Jim Boeheim gave me an opportunity. I was born to coach. It's my calling. I feel I've been led there." Hopkins concluded his remarks by saying: "Imagine everyone in this room sacrificing for a greater goal and working together in

the same direction for the most important team with the greatest coach in the world: Team Jesus Christ!" to which the dome exploded with applause and hearty agreement.

Following Hopkins' message, the Christian ballet company, Light of the World, led by Ashley Rollinson from Syracuse, performed a well-choreographed and synchronized dance, adding another creative way to worship the King.

The evening ended with student ministry leaders praying for educators, pastors, and parents from the podium, Stephanie Castro singing an impassioned rendition of "Take Me to the King," a rousing prayer by Rev. Pedro Castro from the Historically Black Church, and a call to salvation from Alex Thevarnjan.

Before leaving, I asked a young man, Charlie Esposito (22), what his take away was from the evening. He said: "What I come away with is not to judge other Christians because of the group they are with. The important thing is focusing on Jesus."

John Decker from Campus Renewal at SU summed up the vision for "Worship the King": "The plan is to keep the movement going throughout Central New York. Regular prayer is being established, plus one or more WTK events at Hendricks Chapel are being planned for this academic year and another WTK event in the dome next fall. The hope is that this will spread nationally as it will become evident of what God can do when campus ministries and local churches come together to advance the gospel among the youth and college students in any city."

ceive the answer. What God has promised in His word to be your inheritance or portion you should not let go of. God is watching over His word to perform it (Jeremiah 1:12).

Elijah was praying for rain and never stopped until he saw a sign of his answered prayer. Seven times he told his servant to go again and check for a sign of rain while he prayed. You may have gone twice in pursuit of your desire; I believe God is saying you should go again. Have you gone ten times? Still go again till you receive your answer.

In Luke 18:1-8, Jesus told a parable that men always ought to pray and not lose heart. The widow was persistent in her request, that the unjust judge had no choice but to grant her justice so that she would not weary him. And Jesus concluded that God would do better by avenging His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them. Job summarized it well by saying that all the days of his appointed time will he wait, till his change comes, (Job 14:14).

You are to adopt Job's attitude that until your change comes you will keep going again and again. People may mock you but don't be disturbed by them, they will soon join you in celebration. God who remembered Hannah

during her 'another visit' to Shiloh (1 Samuel 1), will remember you; only hold on to your faith (Luke 18:8).

Therefore, whatever you have been doing before in obedience to God's word so that you may receive your desired answer, I encourage you to continue doing so. Go again until your change comes.

*Ngozi Nwoke is a teacher and a counselor. A product and distributor of love. She has a passion to teach people how to enjoy God's love and fellowship for more fulfilling life. Want more fulfilling life? Subscribe for free email updates today at <http://stepswithgod.com>.*

