

# AUC TODAY

Your Connection to Atlantic Union College

## Alumni Homecoming Edition

Vol. 2, No. 3 • Spring 2010

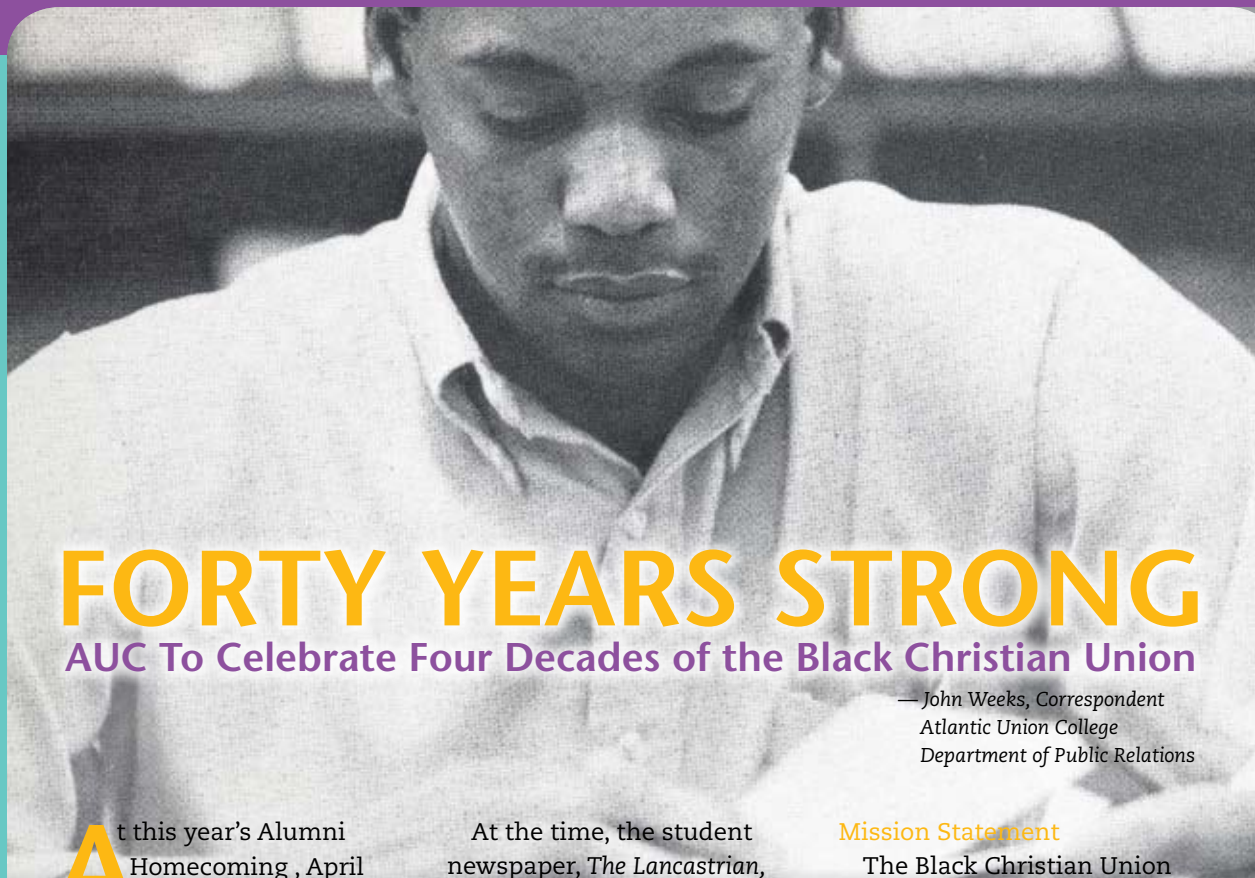
An Atlantic Union College student studies during the 1970 spring semester. Photo courtesy of the Minuteman.

*“The BCU works to blur the lines of race,” said current BCU President Reevney St. Luc, Class of 2010.*

*“We want to make everybody realize that we’re all brothers and sisters in Christ, regardless of race, color or creed. To me, the Christian part of the name has become more important than the Black part of the name.”*



THE CORNERSTONE OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION



## FORTY YEARS STRONG

AUC To Celebrate Four Decades of the Black Christian Union

— John Weeks, Correspondent  
Atlantic Union College  
Department of Public Relations

**A**t this year’s Alumni Homecoming, April 15-18, the Atlantic Union College (AUC) community celebrates the 40th Anniversary of the Black Christian Union (BCU). The BCU Choir, which consists of more than 150 members, will hold its 40th Anniversary Reunion Concert during Sabbath vespers, Saturday, April 17 from 6:00-8:00 p.m.

### Black Christian Union's Beginnings

The Black Christian Union began as a grassroots, student movement in 1969. The College embraced the BCU as an officially recognized student group in February of 1970.

At the time, the student newspaper, *The Lancastrian*, reported that AUC President William Nelson commended the BCU on its work to provide a sense of cultural identity, a base of support and a network of guidance for all black students. The BCU sought to include all students, faculty, staff, alumni, and members of the Central Massachusetts community in dialogue about race relations within the context of Christ’s love of mankind.

Nelson said the BCU was successfully “heightening and increasing the perception and levels of awareness of as wide a cross section of the student population as possible.”

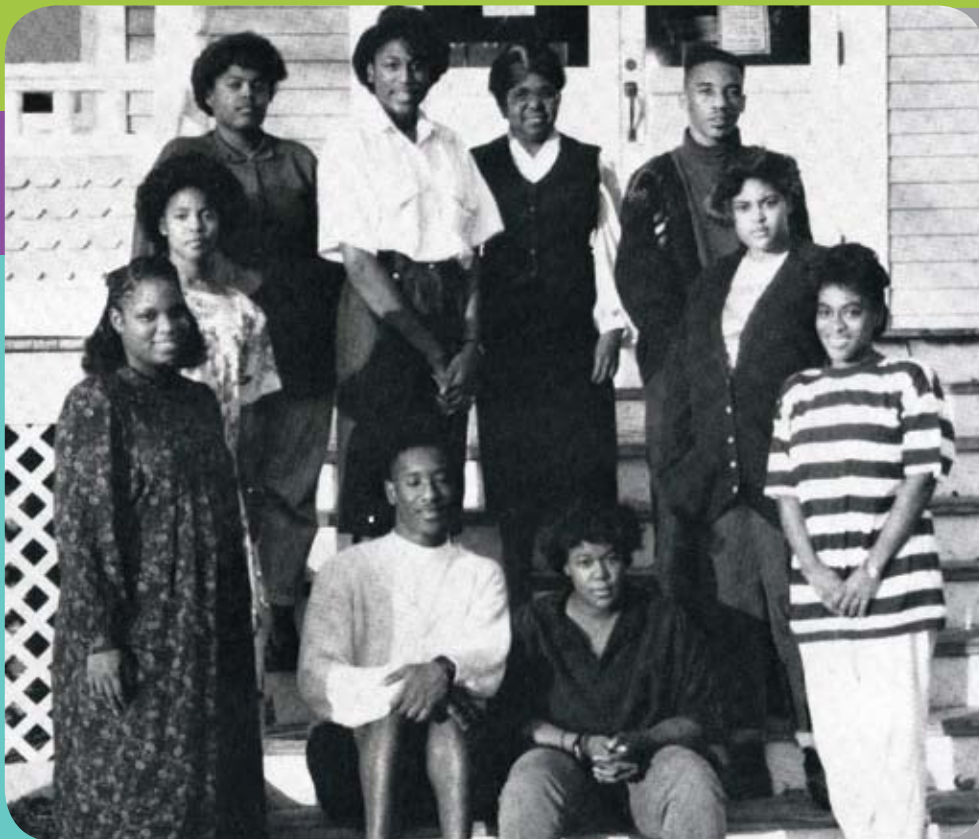
### Mission Statement

The Black Christian Union mission statement called for “bringing Christ in his true form of brotherhood” to all members of the AUC community. Gregory Allen, class of 1973, the first vice president of the BCU, said this focus on Christ’s love would complement religious activity on the campus. “The BCU is attempting to get the entire student body involved with Atlantic Union College,” Allen said in *The Lancastrian*. “This organization is not a separatist one, but rather, a complementary organization.”

“The BCU works to blur the lines of race,” said current BCU President Reevney St.

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Alumni and friends, please send your e-mail address to: [advancement@auc.edu](mailto:advancement@auc.edu).  
We also would appreciate your full name, address, and telephone number.



## Black Christian Union

### All Kindreds, Tongues, And Peoples . . . One

The 1990 *Minuteman* yearbook, "Headed for the Future," page 90.

This was the year that may be remembered as the year that the U in BCU stood for unity, with the Revivals performing more on campus and Claudie striving to really involve the whole school in BCU week. The officers have set a new agenda for the nineties.

*Pictured above are, clockwise from the top: Treas. Cathy Trott, Soc. Janice Holder, Dr. Susan Willoughby, Sen. Mark Matthews, Choir Dir. Ramona Channer, Sen. Verlina Lightbourne, Assoc. Sec. Mercedes Macdonald, Assoc. Ch. Dir. Anthony Head-Brooks, Pres. Claudie Denis-Toussaint, Sec. Sheena Williams.*

Luc, Class of 2010. "We want to make everybody realize that we're all brothers and sisters in Christ, regardless of race, color or creed. To me, the Christian part of the name has become more important than the Black part of the name."

### Mentoring Students

According to *The Lancastrian*, the BCU developed a special mentorship program for black students. Faculty members mentored black students in how to navigate the complexities of being black in America. By honoring the dignity of black heritage, and facing the realities of racism in America, the BCU helped black students overcome fear and go on to lead productive and fulfilled lives.

### The BCU Choir Developed Leadership Skills

The BCU brought guest speakers to the AUC campus, held panel discussions on race relations—affectionately known as "rap sessions"—and hosted soul feasts, according to *The Lancastrian*. The BCU also put together the Black Christian Union Choir to sing the praises of Christ. The Choir gained the love and support of residents throughout the area and still draws large crowds for its performances.

"Without the Choir, the BCU probably would not have succeeded," said Ralph Dawkins, Class of 1973. "The Choir was the glue that kept it together. It was our main means of financial support and it gave us an intimate sense of community."



*Minuteman 1970*

Dawkins, who has a tenor voice, said about 50 students sang in the first BCU Choir. "We sang a lot," he said. "We were very active in the College Church. We traveled to New York and Boston to sing. We were quite busy."

Dawkins said the BCU served as a beacon of light for black students. "If it hadn't been for the BCU and the BCU Choir, many of us would not have developed the relationship skills that we did. It was through BCU that we were allowed to take on those roles of leadership." ♦