

Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary
Doctor of Ministry Program
Leadership Concentration
The Doctoral Project

Overview

The Andrews doctoral project in the leadership concentration of the Doctor of Ministry program is designed to meet the following three goals: 1) to contribute to the student's continued learning and advanced competency in ministry, 2) to participate in the fulfillment of the mission of the global church, and 3) to enrich the professional life of others in ministry through a specific contribution to the practice of ministry.

The project responds to a challenge, question, or ministry need present within the church and/or community. The nature, focus, or subject is selected in consultation with your work group in your cohort of the leadership concentration and your concentration coordinator. Challenges for Doctor of Ministry students may be supplied by the church. Examples may be found in such areas as change dynamics, human resource development, church leadership in environmental issues, organizational change, domestic violence issues, mental health issues, youth issues, or global mission and ministry issues.

The Andrews University Standards for Written Work, 9th Edition (or more recent edition) will provide the standards for written work.

Three key words or phrases describe the philosophy of the project. They are: 1) partnership, 2) context-specific and practice-based, and 3) transformation.

Partnership The project is developed, refined, implemented, and evaluated in partnership with the specified context of ministry (a church, church/community organization, or other ministry organization approved by the advisor), a small group of colleagues from your cohort in the leadership concentration, and the project advisor.

Context-specific and Practice-Based The project must be embedded in professional ministry. It is to be context-specific and practice-based. The practice of ministry in context by an outstanding professional is seen as the richest environment for

research, reflection, and innovation. Theory, research, and practice are seen as one “whole.” The context of ministry defined in the project is the “lab.”

Transformation The project is oriented to change. Transformation for the good of ministry and the church/community must be the goal of the project. The project must seek to change a specific problematic or challenging environment presented by the context of ministry selected for the project. Results must be demonstrated.

Your project in the DMin program is supported in the following ways:

1. The project itself is defined as the professional ministry embedded activity during your doctoral program that specifically addresses the question or challenge presented within your project within your ministry context. This is the expression of integration of theory and ministry practice to your growth experience. Impact on the church, community, and ministry is of primary importance to your project.
2. During your first year you should discuss areas of interest for your project with your lead teacher.
3. GSEM730 Field Research for Ministry is taken in your first year and prepares you for effective research in your DMin project.
4. The written assignments in your modules will contribute to chapters in your project if you plan carefully.
5. The project proposal is a document required in GSEM790 in the second year of the concentration. A sample proposal is attached. The proposal is approved by the professor for GSEM790, reviewed by the DMin Project Writing Coach, presented to your advisor for review, and finally presented to the DMin program project proposal committee.
6. GSEM 790 will provide guidance in writing and other project issues.
7. An advisor reads your proposal and each chapter for content, also providing valuable editing feedback.
8. The DMin Project Writing Coach will review early chapters with you to assure you are interpreting the writing manuals correctly.
9. The “project article” is a document of 2000 to 4000 words. It is to be written and presented for publication to a professional or academic journal. This is an assignment of your fourth module, CHMN780, and helps you disseminate the recommendations of your project.
10. The project defense is scheduled no later than four weeks prior to the date of your graduation. The defense includes a verbal presentation of your project to your defense committee. The verbal presentation is generally 10 to 15 minutes in length. The project dissertation document will be bound

following successful defense. It generally contains approximately 120 pages and the chapters indicated in the sample. These chapters may generally be described as follows: 1) a description of your ministry situation and context of the project with statement of the ministry challenge, question, or need, 2) the theological implications of the challenge, question, or need, 3) a thorough literature review, 4) your research including method and analysis, 5) outcomes including the change theory applied, statement of the goals and objectives, the intervention that forms the project itself, and actual outcomes, and 6) significance for the world church. A bibliography, abstract, and other appendices will be attached. The project dissertation may contain other chapters, or be organized differently. Your defense committee spends time in dialogue and questioning regarding your project, primarily focused on your project dissertation.

Time schedules may be advanced in collaboration with your group. A one-year extension can be sought. Completion of the project fulfills the requirements for GSEM796 DMin Dissertation.

Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

RELATIONAL COMMUNITY AS A FACTOR IN ACTS OF JOINING THE TOKYO
CENTRAL SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

A Project Proposal
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by

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September 1996

I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The annual number of baptisms in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Japan has decreased from 426 in 1986 to 334 in 1995, despite significant increases in both the total membership and the number of churches. Evangelistic strategy continues to focus on public evangelistic programming initiated by conference organizations. During the same period, the number of pastors has declined from 118 in 1986 to 112 in 1995. Thus the average annual number of baptisms per pastor has decreased from 3.61 in 1986 to 2.98 in 1995.¹

II. STATEMENT OF THE TASK

The task of this project is to form and pilot programs at the local church level in the Tokyo Central Seventh-day Adventist Church that encourage primary relationships of church members with non-Christians. The project will then discover if and how those relationships contribute to church growth. Programs will be intentional, evaluated, reported, and intended for replication in other communities in Japan.

III. JUSTIFICATION FOR THE PROJECT

- A. For the past 50 years the church has shown no significant increase in the number of persons baptized each year. For the past decade the annual

¹Comprehensive statistics for the years 1975-1995 are found in a table in *Adventist Life* (Japan Union), May 1996, 9.

baptismal rate has actually been declining, although spending for public evangelism has significantly increased. The kingdom growth rate has decreased significantly in that period. This downturn needs to be investigated to determine, if possible, its cause.

- B. A tentative hypothesis to be investigated regarding the decrease of baptisms is that Japanese society has become increasingly secular, and church members have isolated themselves from relationships with non-Christians. Church members have depended on traditional public evangelism to pierce the cultural barriers, with decreasing effect.
- C. A further hypothesis is the tendency of pastors and church members to become care givers, maintaining the church, rather than engaging people outside the church for Christ.

IV. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT PROCESS

- A. Theological reflection will center on four biblical themes. First, the call to mission as integrated into the daily life and relationships of the individual believer in Christ will be examined. Second, church growth as faithfulness to God will be explored as a biblical teaching. Third, the view that a healthy church embraces multiplication of disciples as its core responsibility will be studied from a biblical perspective. Fourth, the role of pastor as equipper will be studied.
- B. Current literature will be reviewed. This will include books and articles on secular culture in Japan, the principles, strategies, and programs which help pastors to develop a mindset of evangelism in the local church, and

how community is formed in Japanese culture.

- C. Data of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Japan will be collected from the Japan Union Conference. Data about currently growing and declining Protestant Churches in Japan will also be obtained for comparison.
- D. An evaluation of the growth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Japan will be made.
- E. Two growing Protestant Churches in Japan will be studied to identify factors in their church growth.
- F. Strategies for forming primary Christian with non-Christian relationships will be developed and implemented in the Tokyo Central Church, including administration of a Tokyo Central Community Quality of Life Survey.
- G. Strategies for forming a mission focused congregation through a pastor's leadership and equipping skills must necessarily parallel this project and will be developed and implemented in the Tokyo Central Church.
- H. A report on the experience will be formed to provide for sharing with other Seventh-day Adventist Churches in Japan.
- I. This project should be completed before May 2000.

V. EXPECTATION FROM THIS PROJECT

- A. This project will advance the kingdom growth of the Tokyo Central

Church.

- B. This project will transform the church growth vision for the membership of the Tokyo Central Church.
- C. This project will provide a lasting new life of discipleship for members of the Tokyo Central Church.
- D. This project will help me develop my leadership and equipping skills as a pastor in Japan.
- E. This project will provide strategies for other pastors to lead their members to effective relational community and genuine discipling ministry.
- F. This project will help the Japan Union Conference, two local conferences and one local mission to attain sustained church growth in Japan by forming relational communities that further church growth.

VI. PROPOSED TITLE OF THE PROJECT

Relational Community as a Factor In Acts of Joining the Tokyo
Central Seventh-day Adventist Church.

VII. PROPOSED PROJECT OUTLINE

- A. Chapter 1: Introduction
 - 1. Purpose of the Project
 - 2. Justification for the Project
 - 3. Definition of Terms
 - 4. Limitations of the Project
 - 5. Methodology
- B. Chapter 2: Toward a Theology of Congregational Mission and

Community

1. Calling and Giftedness of the Christian
 2. Jesus' Relational Ministry As a Model for the Church
 3. Church Growth as Faithfulness to God
 4. Multiplication of Discipleship as Core to Local Church Mission
 5. A Biblical View of Equipping Pastoral Leadership
- C. Chapter 3: Literature Contributing Understanding to Current Challenges in Christian Mission in Japan
1. The Challenges of Secularism to Religious Faith in Japan
 2. Developing a Culture of Evangelism in the Local Church
 3. Patterns of Relational Community in Japanese Life
- D. Chapter 4: Analyses of Church Growth Patterns in Japan
1. SDA Church Growth for the Past Ten Years in Japan
 2. The Evangelistic Strategy Employed in Japan
 3. Two Growing Protestant Churches in Japan
 4. Needs and Objectives in the SDA Churches in Japan
- E. Chapter 5: Strategies for Forming Primary Christian with Non-Christian Relationships: Implementation and Evangelization
1. Teaching on the Nature of Christian Community in the Local Congregation
 2. Designing Effective Local Church Mission Structure
 3. Promoting Primary Friendship Connections with Non-Christians

4. Formation of Small Groups in the Neighborhood and Workplace
5. Meeting People's Needs in Small Groups: Survey and Programming
6. Engaging the Church in Community Issues
7. Belonging to the Church as Community Prior to a Membership

Decision

8. Parallel strategies to Equip Members for Church Growth
9. The Strategy for Calling Community Members to Church Membership

F. Chapter 6: Report, Evaluation, Conclusions, and Recommendations

G. Appendix

1. A Brief Project Report for Publication

2. The "Together in Christ: Friendship, Community, and Discipleship in Christian Mission" Seminar
3. Community Quality of Life Survey

H. Bibliography

I. Vita

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Note: This is a sample bibliography only. For your proposal to be officially accepted, you should have 60 books at least on your list.

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