We apologize for this week’s bulletin being a day late. We have addressed the technical error with our system and look forward to again bringing you the bulletin each week on Tuesday at noon U.S. Eastern Time.

- **ADRA heading to devastated areas in Philippines in wake of typhoon**
  Food, medical supplies part of initial response; more than 500 dead

- **Committee members identified for study of theology of ordination**
  Chairman Stele says members represent ‘wide range of thought, opinions’

- **Card-writing campaign latest move in effort to release imprisoned Adventists**
  Church leaders hope to encourage two members detained in Togo since March
The Adventist Development and Relief Agency in the Philippines is coordinating relief efforts following Typhoon Bopha’s slam Tuesday on the southern island of Mindanao.

More than 500 people have died and an estimated 310,000 people have lost their homes, The Associated Press reported today. The number keeps rising as destroyed roads to isolated towns and villages reopen for rescue vehicles.

One Adventist church member is confirmed dead. Nearly 20 Adventist churches sustained severe damage. Local church officials in the Davao Mission are still awaiting reports on the extent of casualties from areas where vehicles have yet to reach.

ADRA and personnel from the Davao Adventist Hospital began distribution of clothing, drinking water and food on Wednesday. An extensive response is scheduled to begin today in one the hardest hit areas – New Bataan, in the province of Davao Del Norte.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church’s Southern Philippines Union Conference is launching a campaign to help fund relief efforts. ADRA International is also receiving donations to its Emergency Response Fund for the effort.

Committee members identified for study of theology of ordination
Dec. 06, 2012
Silver Spring, Maryland, United States
ANN staff

The Chairman of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's Theology of Ordination Study Committee this week announced the names of committee members, the final step in the group’s formation. (click HERE to see a PDF of the committee’s guidelines and list of members)

Church officials said committee membership “represents a wide range of thought and opinions” on the subject.

Committee Chairman Artur Stele said the key reason for releasing the names is to invite every member of the Adventist Church to pray for the committee members.

“We are in need of God’s guidance and leading in this study process,” said Stele, who serves as a vice president of the Adventist world church and head of the denomination’s Biblical Research Institute.

The committee was formed in September, following a pledge by church officials at General Conference Session in 2010 to examine the theology of ordination. The Adventist world church allows women to be commissioned as ministers in some world fields, but does not allow or recognize the ordination of women.

Stele said steps are being taken to “ensure that the process will be open, fair and transparent.” He outlined the committee’s four tasks:

- Review the history of the study of ordination in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
- Develop a Seventh-day Adventist theology of ordination.
- Study the subject of ordination of women to the gospel ministry.
- In areas of disagreement, focus on potential solutions that support the message, mission and unity of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The committee’s steering committee has already met twice, and the first full meeting is set for next month, Stele said.

The committee’s drafts of documents for each task will be sent to local Biblical Research committees in each of the denomination’s 13 world divisions. Each local division committee will make recommendations and return their suggestions.

The committee will likely complete its work in summer of 2014, Stele said.

The denomination’s Executive Committee at the 2014 Annual Council may decide to recommend action to the 2015 General Conference Session.

“The Theology of Ordination Study Committee starts its work in total reliance on God’s guidance,” Stele said. “Please pray for the right spirit and openness for God’s leadership.”
Adventist Church leaders are urging members worldwide to send Christmas greeting cards to two church members detained in Togo on what they say are false charges. They say holiday greetings will encourage the men as they spend the holiday season awaiting release. [photo: Megan Brauner]

Seventh-day Adventist human rights advocates are encouraging church members worldwide to send Christmas cards to two Adventists imprisoned in the West African country of Togo.

The card-writing campaign is the latest step in efforts by the Adventist Church to secure the two men’s release. Adventist pastor Antonio Monteiro and church member Bruno Amah were detained in March for conspiracy to commit murder after a Togolese man implicated them as conspirators in an alleged blood trafficking network.

Since then, millions of Adventists worldwide have rallied their support for the two men by responding to a social media campaign calling for a Day of Prayer for their release. Facebook followers interacted with Pray for Togo content more than 50,000 times, while the event hashtag reached more than 7 million Twitter users.

Meanwhile, nearly 15,000 people signed an online pledge at change.org, where they committed to participating in the December 1 Day of Prayer.

Now, church leaders hope the Christmas cards encourage the two men as they spend the holiday season in prison awaiting release.

“We would like cards to come from as many countries as possible,” said John Graz, director of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty for the Adventist world church. Graz is leading diplomatic efforts to release the men, which is being conducted alongside the public awareness campaign.

“Imagine the surprise of our brothers when hundreds or thousands of cards are brought to them in the prison,” Graz said. “This will certainly brighten their Christmas.”

Monteiro, a native of Cape Verde, has served as the church’s Sabbath School and Personal Ministries director for the Sahal Union Mission, headquartered in Lome, Togo, since 2009. Amah is an Adventist lay member and businessman in Lome.

Church leaders are requesting that members send their greetings to Monteiro’s office at regional church headquarters in Lome, Togo.

Pasteur Antonio dos Anjos Monteiro
Union du Sahal
B.P. 2157
Lomé, Togo

Church leaders said Monteiro and Amah will best understand cards written in English and French.

Click here for sample greetings in English and French.

The ANN news bulletin is a weekly recap of news and information from the Communication department of the Seventh-day Adventist world church headquarters and is distributed by Adventist News Network.

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INTRODUCTION AND GUIDELINES

The Theology of Ordination Study Committee is the result of a request made from the floor by a delegate at the 2010 General Conference Session. The General Conference administration later took that request to the General Conference Administrative Committee for approval of the theology of ordination study process on September 20, 2011.

The objective of the Theology of Ordination Study Committee should be to carefully and prayerfully follow the terms of reference with an aim of reaching consensus on as many points as possible.

The Theology of Ordination Study Committee will provide for a committee membership with a broad base of perspectives to allow the Holy Spirit to help bring about consensus as much as possible.

Since this is to be a “study committee,” the normal “voting” process will not be used to place positions or representatives against each other. Rather, the study approach will provide opportunity for one consensus report on items accepted by consensus. On items on which it will be impossible to reach consensus, various reports should be prepared which present the different viewpoints and their appropriate responses. Through strong prayer sessions, study of the Bible, study of the Spirit of Prophecy, and the resulting careful discussion, the Theology of Ordination Study Committee should focus on solutions that would support the message, mission, and unity of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In its study, the Theology of Ordination Study Committee will collaborate with the established division Biblical Research Committees (BRCs) and provide assistance to the BRCs with the comprehensive agenda to be reviewed. The Theology of Ordination Study Committee will receive reports from the division BRCs and can assign research papers and presentations to committee members and nonmembers to be reviewed by the Theology of Ordination Study Committee.

The Theology of Ordination Study Committee will meet approximately four times, concluding its work in June 2014. A Theology of Ordination Study Committee Steering Committee will provide for supervision of the process. The work of the study committee will be to provide as much complete information on its assigned topic as is possible to be reviewed by General Conference administration in June 2014, and then the complete report provided to the General Conference Executive Committee to be reviewed and discussed at the 2014 Annual Council. The 2014 Annual Council will decide on any items to be referred to the 2015 General Conference Session.
THEOLOGY OF ORDINATION STUDY COMMITTEE
(TOSC) (ADCOM-A) - 2

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Supervise the worldwide study of the theology of ordination and its implications, reviewing and analyzing data from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy.

2. Review the history of the study of ordination in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

3. Develop a comprehensive agenda on the subject of theology of ordination and its implications for practices in the Seventh-day Adventist Church including the subject of ordination of women to the gospel ministry.

4. Receive (not later than December 31, 2013) and discuss reports from the division Biblical Research Committees concerning their division-wide studies and conclusions ensuring that division Biblical Research Committees address the comprehensive study agenda.

5. Request studies or solicit papers from committee members and/or non-members when further study is deemed necessary.

6. Develop a Seventh-day Adventist theology of ordination to recommend to the 2014 Annual Council for consideration.

AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

1. Power to act.

2. Power to act.

3. Power to act.

4. Power to act in consultation with division Biblical Research Committees.

5. Power to act.

6. Power to act.

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7. Submit to the 2014 Annual Council, through General Conference administration, the full report of the worldwide study indicating areas of consensus and areas where consensus has not been obtained with respect to the theology of ordination and its implications for practices in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

8. In areas of disagreement, focus on potential solutions that support the message, mission, and unity of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

7. Power to act.

8. Recommend to the General Conference Administrative Committee (ADCOM) (GCC-S).

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Mbwana, Geoffrey G, Vice-chair
Porter, Karen J, Secretary

Damsteegt, Gerard
Davidson, Richard
Fagal, William A
Rodriguez, Angel M

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Revised 11-29-12tkb
Dear Pastor Monteiro and Brother Amah,

Both of you and your families are in our thoughts and prayers during this Christmas season. We pray God and our Lord Jesus will protect you and give you peace and freedom.

Name ... country

French:

Cher Pasteur Monteiro et cher frère Bruno Amah,

Par cette carte nous voulons vous exprimer toute notre affection fraternelle. Vous êtes dans nos pensées et prières durant cette période de Noel.
Que notre Seigneur de paix et de Liberté vous donne la paix et la liberté.

Nom ... Eglise ...