Editorial: "Truth that is not Afraid of Innovation" by Jose Cortes Jr.

Truth and Innovation are not enemies, I would even venture to say that Truth and Innovation must be best friends, and more so for people who are passionate about Reaching, Retaining, and Reclaiming North America with a lifestyle and a message of Compassion, Hope, and Wholeness.

I say this for the following reasons:

**God, the source of all truth, is an innovative God.** He created our universe, our world, and us, though there was a possibility for failure. He could have chosen not to innovate, but He used His innovative spirit combined with His love and came up with something new and beautiful. As sons and daughters of God, we have been given the ability and intelligence to be creative.

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Compassion Boston by Tom Murray
*A Historic Evangelistic Journey in the Northeast*
Compassion Boston

Over the past several months an army of mission focused lay evangelists have embarked on a multi-year, commitment to evangelize one of the most influential cities on the planet - Boston, MA. Our Greater Boston area churches are working together in their sphere of influence and in their strength for one common effort - Compassion Boston.

Compassion Boston ministers to practical needs and celebrates the joy, peace, and hope that is found in the gracious love of Jesus. Compassion Boston is fashioned after the example of Christ Himself because we recognize that "Christ's methods alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then he bade them, Follow Me."

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Interview with Pastor Debleaire Snell
In a special issue, Pastor Debleaire Snell joins Pastor Kymone Hinds of PELC Power Tools Podcast to share his passion for reaching the lost. He explains the decision making process behind having a worship service to reach people on Sunday mornings. This interview is taken from the PELC website.

To hear the interview, click on link:
http://www.pastorsleadership.org/media/

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How Millennials Perceive the Adventist Church
by YG University

What perceptions do Millennials have of the Adventist Church? If someone feels excluded, underestimated, stifled—if they perceive the church as superficial and simplistic—these experiences could leave a lasting impression on anyone. Especially for young people, experiences in church and perceptions about the church can have a significant impact.

In a Ministry Magazine interview with my friend and colleague, Dr. Roger Dudley, Professor Emeritus at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, he shared what his research revealed about the perceptions of next generations:

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A huge highlight of the Called Ministerial Convention in Austin is the Evangelism Shark Tank, which will take place at 9:00 PM every night of the Convention. During this late night program, Pastors from across North America, will be able to present their innovative Evangelism and Outreach initiatives for their churches, to a panel. A total of $120,000.00 will be awarded among for the top ideas and initiatives, as chosen by the panel. These funds will go to the churches for implementation of the initiatives presented by their Pastor at the Evangelism Shark Tank. For Guidelines and to fill out the application to participate in the Evangelism Shark Tank, please click here:

Transformational Evangelism Funds - Up to 50,000.00

Reaching out with Compassion in Hamilton, Bermuda

Transformational Evangelism Funding is available for innovative, grace-oriented, and incarnational initiatives which take into account the needs of the community and involve ways to address them with the Compassion of Jesus. The funding is for initiatives proposing a sustainable cycle, and a tangible transformation of lives, rather than a one-time evangelism event. Project proposals will need to be submitted
through the local Union. Applications will be accepted by NAD as long as funds are available.

For more info on Transformational Evangelism and to access grant application, please click here: Transformational Evangelism

Get Funding for Church Plant
Begin Applying now for 2016 Church Planting Funds

Church Planting Funding, also known as Global Mission Funding is available for the sole purpose of planting new churches in unentered communities. The funding could also apply to a different language or culture group church plant in an area where there may be other established churches. For more info and to access the application, click on this link: Global Mission Funding

North America Wants Your Articles, Photos, & Videos
Pastor Easton Marks conducts baptism at Kingsboro Adventist Church, Brooklyn

In the months to come we would like to publish, celebrate, pray for, and spread what God is doing through you. North America would love to see your evangelism and outreach stories, photos, and videos.

Send us articles, photos, and videos of your Best Practices in Evangelism & Outreach (traditional & innovative):

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The baptism of Tori Neet at Spartanburg Adventist Church, South Carolina

Stay connected through

Let's connect and interact

Through Instagram we get
Facebook and up to date with what is happening in Evangelism, Outreach, and Church Planting across North America. Like our Pages and share Posts, Videos, & Photos of your Best Practices on Best Practices for Adventist Evangelism and NAD Evangelism.

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to highlight our Evangelism, Outreach, and Church Growth Best Practices through photo and very short videos. Please tag us @NADEvangelism or @ReachNAmerica when posting your Best Practices photos. Remember to use the following hashtag nadevangelism nadministerial #compassion among others you may have chosen to highlight your local church or ministry.

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Read More...
By Jose Cortes, Jr., Truth that is not Afraid of Innovation! by Jose Cortes Jr.

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**Jesus, the truth in person, is innovative.** During His earthly ministry Jesus continuously came up with things that had not been done before by his contemporaries in ministry. He fed people after the sermon, touched lepers, talked to the children, used parables when preaching, ate with sinners, and defended a woman who was about to be stoned for adultery. It seems that every time He did something new and creative, He did it to bless someone in need. Jesus was innovative for the sake of the very people He wanted to save, not for innovation’s sake.

**Innovativeness is in the DNA of Adventism.** As we look at the history of our church, we realize that our predecessors were willing to do things that were new and different. These innovations helped to make a movement out of Adventism, to keep it alive, and to make it a global movement. If they had been afraid of doing things a bit different, and at times a lot different, had they not been innovative, and received God’s blessing, perhaps we would not be where we are today.

When I think of people like, James White and the creation of our church’s first papers and magazines, Adventist Review, the Youth Instructor, and Signs of the Times; John Nevins Andrews and his sacrificial travels to Europe; Anna Knight, the first black woman of any denomination to serve as a missionary to India; John Harvey Kellogg’s creativeness in the health field, which initially brought notoriety to Adventists, and the many declarations of Ellen G. White about coming up with new methods and ideas; I have to accept that no matter how I feel about change and new things, there has been an innovative spirit in the DNA of our church, from our very humble beginnings.

In 1902, Ellen G. White said: “New methods must be introduced. God’s people must awake to the necessities of the time in which they are living. God has men (and women ;) whom He will call into His service,—men who will not carry forward the work in the lifeless way in which it has been carried forward in the past…. In our large cities the message is to go forth as a lamp that burneth. God will raise up laborers for this work, and His angels will go before them. Let no one hinder these men of God’s appointment. Forbid them not. God has given them their work. Let the message be given with so much power that the hearers shall be convinced.”—The Review and Herald, September 30, 1902.

The same Holy Spirit that led our predecessors, is still alive and willing to guide us as we reach, retain, and reclaim North America. As we do so together, remember:
• Creatives and innovators have always had a place in God’s work, even “In the beginning…”
• Not one single method works for everybody or everywhere; fishermen can testify to this.
• Innovation is God’s answer to the needs of the people He wants to save through us.
• Don’t give up quickly. Some methods may take a while to produce fruits, effectiveness can be measured best over a period of time.
• When offering opinions about innovation or innovators, please make sure you are fully informed.
• The fact that someone does not agree with it does not mean that God cannot bless it, God blesses anything He wants to bless, regardless of human opinion, my opinion, or yours.
• Being an Innovator may hurt at times, yet you should not hinder what God has called you to do, it is for an awesome cause, people will be blessed and the church will grow.
• Don’t hesitate to utilize methods and tools, that may be different, for the sake of those you would like to see saved.

Oh, and one last thing, “by our fruits we will be known…”

*Pastor Jose Cortes Jr., is an Associate Ministerial Director and Leads Evangelism for the Adventist Church in North America.*
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Compassion Boston - A Historic Evangelistic Journey in the Northeast by Tom Murray

Over the past several months an army of mission focused lay evangelists have embarked on a multi-year, commitment to evangelize one of the most influential cities on the planet – Boston, MA. Our Greater Boston area churches are working together in their sphere of influence and in their strength for one common effort – Compassion Boston.

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It has been said that ‘people don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care’. Person-to-person interaction and community engagement create evangelistic opportunity. This is the hallmark of Compassion Boston. The people of Boston will be much more likely to hear Biblical truth in our churches when we have shared the love of Jesus in their community.

Boston offers a challenging and exciting evangelistic environment. There are approximately 4.5 million precious souls residing in the Greater Boston area. Boston is the largest and most culturally diverse city of the six New England states generating the strongest economic and cultural impact.

Boston is home to several globally recognized leaders in healthcare and medical research. Hospitals such as Massachusetts General Hospital, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, and Brigham and Women's Hospital and many others are at the forefront of medical innovation and patient care.

There are dozens of world renowned colleges and universities in the greater Boston area. Schools such as Boston College, Boston University, Harvard University, Northeastern University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the New England Conservatory of Music attract students from all over the world.

Boston is a vibrant and diverse city with a rich heritage. Because of the city's prominent role in the American Revolution, several historic sites relating to that period are preserved as part of the Boston National Historical Park System.
The city home to several well known museums, including the Museum of Fine Arts, the and the Institute of Contemporary Art. John F. Kennedy Library. The Boston Athenaeum , Boston Children's Museum, Museum of Science, and the New England Aquarium are also within the city.

Boston lies within the territory of the Southern New England Conference and the Northeastern Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists. There is a strong base of support from pastors, skilled bible workers and an energized laity.

Recently the American Bible Society and the Barna Research Group reported an assessment of the 100 most Bible-Minded cities in America. Boston was not in the top 10, or even the top 50. Boston was 98th out of the 100 major metropolitan areas in America. This is the mission field.

Every day there are new experiences in witnessing. Recently the Boston Temple hosted a block party for the Fenway neighborhood. Residents came out to enjoy food, friendship, singing and loving service offered by local organizations and agencies. One of our lay evangelists offered hand massages and paraffin dip treatments. She ministered in a unique, beautiful and powerful way through human touch. Others provided school supplies and backpacks to local area children.

An army of Compassion Boston lay evangelists were dispatched to local hospitals and universities to encourage, share hope and offer prayers. One thousand red roses were given as a gift of love. Others ministered similarly at train stations and on busy streets.

Several groups of Compassion Boston lay evangelists from more than twenty-five Boston area churches united efforts to deliver hundreds of hats, gloves, socks, coats and blankets to the homeless during our Winter Warmth Campaign. Many of us had the amazing experience of volunteering in local shelters and pantries preparing meals for those in need.

Hundreds of members across the conference have enthusiastically joined the movement. Christ is the energy and inspiration of Compassion Boston. This effort has ignited a passion among our members and has created an unprecedented unity of purpose among our Boston area churches across cultures and languages groups. This is good for us.

Enthusiasm and support are growing for our plans to reach into the city with a coordinated health and wellness initiative this winter and spring. We have a battalion of mission-focused medical evangelists in the Boston area. From cooking school instructors, to personal fitness trainers, to medical doctors, our people are fired up for service.

We have been particularly blessed by the enthusiastic support of volunteer ministries including Prayer Ministries, Women's Ministries and Adventist Community Services. We have enjoyed strong support from the Atlantic Union
and the dedication of local supporting ministries who have been placed in close proximity - perhaps for such a time as this.

STRIDE Ministries has been reaching out to the 300,000 students attending more than 100 colleges and universities in the area. STRIDE is marvelously positioned to introduce these young energized souls to the liberating truth of Jesus. Hundreds of students are being positively impacted for Christ through organized Bible-based and Christ-centered events on various campuses.

The Northeast Evangelism Training School (NETS) and Tekoa Missions have provided strong guidance and support. They will be focusing specifically on the Boston area beginning in January of 2015 providing laity training, Bible work, cooking schools, seminars, evangelistic meetings and much more.

Looking forward to 2016, the It Is Written team will be joining with us for a multi-church, unified reaping campaign. We couldn’t be more excited! Pastor John Bradshaw and his team bring a wealth of experience in major city evangelism. Their guidance, participation and leadership in this effort have been an inspiration.

We invite your prayerful involvement in sharing Jesus in the hospitals, universities, boardrooms, households, pantries, shelters, on the busy streets and in our churches.

*Tom Murray is the Manager for the Compassion Boston Evangelistic Initiative, which involves the Adventist Churches of the Southern New England and Northeastern Conferences in the city of Boston.*
How Millennials Perceive the Adventist Church

What perceptions do Millennials have of the Adventist Church? If someone feels excluded, underestimated, stifled—if they perceive the church as superficial and simplistic—these experiences could leave a lasting impression on anyone. Especially for young people, experiences in church and perceptions about the church can have a significant impact.

In a Ministry Magazine interview with my friend and colleague, Dr. Roger Dudley, Professor Emeritus at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, he shared what his research revealed about the perceptions of next generations:

"I really think that the congregational climate is perhaps the most important thing of all. Young people, when they think about Seventh-day Adventists, they don’t think about the denomination as a whole. To them, Adventism is that congregation. If that congregation is a warm, accepting place, then Seventh-day Adventism must be a good thing. If that congregation is a place that is struggling, then they wonder, What's the matter with Adventists? I guess adults do that too, but young people do it particularly."

I’m convinced that all youth ministry is local. I have story after story of that kind of thing—people who were offended because of the congregation, as well as stories of people who love their church because of the warm way they are accepted."

Young adults [those post high-school through pre-parenthood] have many perceptions and attitudes, and when asked to characterize the local Adventist church, there was no lack of responsiveness. In a recent study of Adventist Millennials, we took a look at their perceptions, and here’s what the research revealed, as summarized in Ministry Magazine:

Based on their responses to various questions in the survey, [Adventist young adult] respondents were categorized as either “engaged” or “disengaged” from their local congregations. Engaged respondents were those who attend services at least monthly and indicated that church is relevant for them. Disengaged did not meet one or both of those criteria. Then, key differences between these two groups were extracted from the data.

Compared to the engaged young adults within the Adventist Church. . . disengaged young adults have much stronger negative experiences with their childhood church. The largest differences were for the statements “leaders are repressive of ideas” and “the church is overprotective of its young people.” Disengaged respondents were also much more likely to agree with the ideas that their childhood church “seemed like an exclusive club” and “the teachings seem shallow.”

Both groups were later asked about similar experiences with their current church; if anything, the differences observed here became even more pronounced as they answered questions about their current church.
It would be easy enough to dismiss the "disengaged" Adventist young adults as "bad seed" stemming from their teen years—the one's whose behaviors clearly gave evidence to their not being with the church program. The easy assumption would be that "we knew all along," based on their behavior, who would leave the church. Presumptions would lean, "Good kids stay, bad behaving kids leave when they become young adults." Interestingly the research revealed some significant findings to challenge such notions [as cited in *Ministry Magazine*]:

"...There were no significant differences between the behaviors of the engaged and disengaged young adults when they were children and teenagers. In other words, we cannot look at the level of activity among the children and teens and then predict which ones will disengage from the church as young adults. But negative experiences with their childhood church (specifically with the leadership and adult members) are strong predictors of such disengagement."

Dr. Clint Jenkin summarizes well this finding in his interview with *Young Adult Life*:

Dr. Jenkin's nudge toward the importance of relationships is further endorsed by Dr. Dudley's *Ministry Magazine* comments:

"I'd like to help young people see that religion is not a list of don'ts—things you can't do. It's not some kind of behavioral code, some complex theoretical experience. I want them to see it as a relationship experience. I want them to see that it is first a relationship with God who is a friend, and a relationship with their fellow human beings where they help and support each other. At the center of true religion is this matter of relationship. I think they need help to see that."

Relationships offer us a peek into the heart of next generations. To the degree there are positive relationships for next generations could very well be a key to their engagement with their local congregation. Dr. Dudley summed up
well the challenge for local churches who wish to love young adults better:

"We have to develop the capacity to see beyond the outward shell, to look inside. I've seen all kinds of young people, some of whom apparently are very secular and have no religion at all, but if you really get to know these kids, they may be a little different from ours, but they have aspirations. I can hardly ever remember a time where I didn't find something good in them."

For more Adventist Millennial research commentary and suggested solutions, check out Best Practices for Adventist Ministry. For the complete interview with Dr. Roger L. Dudley, check out Ministry Magazine.
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North America Wants Your Articles, Photos, & Videos

By Jose Cortes, Jr., North America Wants Your Articles, Photos, & Videos

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Send us articles, photos, and videos of your Best Practices in Evangelism & Outreach (traditional & innovative): Small Groups, Compassion initiatives, Church Planting, Public Evangelism, outreach in public university campuses, life-changing stories of churches who love people and grow organically, youth and young adult outreach, health fairs, community outreach initiatives, and anything that has to do with Reaching, Retaining, and Reclaiming North America with a lifestyle and a message of Compassion, Hope, and Wholeness.

When writing, keep in mind that we are looking for practice more than theory. The Why, the What, the Who, and the How to, are vital for Pastors and Churches who will want to adapt and duplicate your initiatives and plans in their setting (keep articles between 300-700 words).