I. A Look at Adventists in Modern-day Singapore

"Church in Singapore Focuses on Leadership Recruitment"
by Ansel Oliver, Adventist News Network, reporting from Singapore, July 12, 2012

"Chuen Rong is considering becoming a pastor, so last month, in order to gain perspective, the 19-year-old met with a majority of the full-time Seventh-day Adventist ministers in the country. Here in Singapore, that means five.

This tiny Southeast Asia nation has nine full-time Adventist ministers shepherding approximately 2,800 members. Chuen is one of less than a handful of candidates whom church officials here plan to mentor in hopes that they continue seeking a career in ministry.

Historically, it's been a challenge for the church in Singapore to employ a sufficient number of staff. Last year the denomination's work here became a self-supporting entity, and leaders say the transition could have happened even earlier had more staff been in place.

For a denominational unit to transition from "mission" status to self-sustaining "conference" status, it must demonstrate stability in two areas: leadership and finances. The latter is less of a problem in this modern city-state off the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula, where the average per-capita income is $59,711, the third-highest in the world, according to the International Monetary Fund.

But the issue of enough employees held up the process, delaying leaders until just two years ago to receive the nod from the denomination to apply to the Singaporean government for self-supporting status. Leaders hope recruiting and mentoring future pastoral candidates will keep the issue one of ancient history.

"We need to work hard on recruiting our young people," said Singapore Conference president Johnny Kan. The challenge is finding candidates who are fluent in both English and Mandarin Chinese, the language spoken by many older members. Of the country's 5.3 million people, about three fourths are of Chinese descent.

Chuen said he's fairly certain he'll pursue a career in ministry. Soon he'll enter two years of required national service-known as conscription-before likely heading to Asia-Pacific International University in Thailand to study theology.

"I feel God is leading me," Chuen said. "But you must be committed. It's a calling for life, so I want to make a good decision-and with, of course, much prayer."

Another candidate is James Tham, a management consultant in Australia now studying at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan. The 31-year-old plans to return to his native Singapore to work as a minister, with a focus on lay involvement.

Kan said recruiting works best when current pastors each personally disciple and train a few young people. "There must be a very personal relationship," he said. It's a standard he not only dishes out to local church pastors, but one he holds himself to, as well as the rest of the Singapore Conference staff. In Singapore conference officers and departmental directors also help minister at local congregations, something Kan wishes happened in more parts of the world.

"They don't lose touch with what it's like to still be a local pastor," Kan said.

The precise details of the Adventist Church's launch in Singapore are hazy. The Advent message arrived here circa 1890, likely with Asia's first Adventist missionary, Abram La Rue, according to the Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia.
Today it's the only self-sustaining unit in the denomination's Southeast Asia Union Mission, comprising seven countries. Singapore, a mere 270 square miles, has one of the world's most prosperous economies and is a powerhouse in global trade. Adventist churches draw many foreign visitors and sometimes an employee from a docked container ship.

Kan said evangelism here can be tough amid a wealthy society that is about 40 percent Buddhist, 15 percent Muslim, and 15 percent Christian. To serve the community, the church operates a nursing home, a stroke rehabilitation center, and two schools, as well as a radio station that broadcasts in four languages. Though Singapore has one of the world's most business-friendly environments, it has strict regulations on other aspects of society, such as littering, transportation, and speech. Chewing gum is banned, and possession carries a fine of hundreds of dollars. To contain traffic, the government imposes a nearly US$71,000 fee for the privilege of owning a car. And defaming other religions isn't tolerated, something Kan said he doesn't mind.

"That's actually a good thing for our pastors—it requires them to preach about why one should be a Seventh-day Adventist," Kan said.

And leaders continue to find reasons for why young Adventists should become ministers. Periodically leaders will find an opportunity to motivate candidates. Former mission president Danson Ng once told an executive committee meeting that Christian Choo was considering becoming a pastor, putting a bit of public pressure on him.

Choo, a 28-year-old school counselor, said he didn't mind. Not much, anyway. He earned his degree in psychology with the expectation in the back of his mind that he might one day become a pastor. On Sabbath, at the Jurong Adventist Church, it occurred to Choo that speaking with the Adventist News Network might build the expectation even more.

"Oh, great, now is the whole world going to know I'm thinking of becoming a pastor?" he quipped.

II. Prayer Request for Ben Davis of ADRA Cambodia

Ann Stickle <anns@adracambodia.org> July 15:

Ben Davis, ADRA worker in Cambodia is on life support in Bangkok Hospital, having been medivaced from Cambodia on Friday. About 15 days ago he came down with a high fever and other systems similar to a virus going around his local village in Preah Vihear province. After being treated locally for about 10 days, last Wednesday he took a turn for the worse and was brought down to Phnom Penh. Immediately he was given oxygen and diagnosed with pneumonia and sepsis with a grim prognosis. He was stabilized and as the disease progressed put on a respirator the next day. In attempts to keep Ben stabilized and find experts to identify and treat the underlying cause of his disease he was moved to Thailand. So far the different antibiotics given are not seeming to treat the disease or kill the damaging organisms and more and more medical crises continue to arise. People around the world have been continuously lifting up Ben in prayer as well as his wife Sharyn in children Amelie and Jarrah. As you know, Ben has survived bullets, a fall into a well and numerous medical challenges in his life and a little faith can do a lot, so we are also praising God that Ben is still here and for the small assurances of His presence. Sharyn and the girls are in Bangkok now along with Sharyn's parents and Ben's mom and a brother.

Please share this message so that more people can life up Ben and intercede with God for a miracle for His glory.

Sharyn's e-mail is <sharynd@adracambodia.org> if you would like to contact her directly.

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[ADRA Cambodia is dear to our hearts; after we retired from regular mission service, in 1991-02 we went to Cambodia to reopen Adventist work there after years of terror and mass murder; our very first successful project was to get ADRA recognized by the Cambodian government. One of ADRA Cambodia’s first highly successful restoration project was, by an Australian team, to get a centuries-old and long dysfunctional irrigation system started, putting hundreds of hectares (a very large acreage) of farm land back into functional use. Let us all pray for the recovery of this faithful, long-time worker for ADRA Cambodia. --CHT, Sr.] ~~~~~~~~~~~ III. The Two Drs. Hadley; Like Father, Like Son

Willard Hackett <whackett@yahoo.com> July 12:

I really enjoyed the history of Dr. G. Gordon Hadley. I had the great opportunity to meet his father, Dr. Henry Hadley. I was assigned the job of helping the Hadley Hospital come into the computer age by the installation of a computer system for that hospital in Washington, DC that was started by Dr. Henry. I met him in the hall one day and he took the time to speak to me. He was still seeing patients. I was told he was in his 80’s at the time.
A few days later I met a women large with child in the hallway. She was very happy to be a patient of Dr. Henry Hadley. She was proud to tell me that the good doctor had delivered her mother and also her and now he would deliver her child.

The people he served in the DC area loved him and had great respect for him. He had a true desire to help people. Very hard act to follow. I did not know his son but surely the son followed in the example of his father.

IV. Greg and Sue Lundquist Take PR from Thailand
Scott Griswold <prayersamongbuddhists@gmail.com>
--Prayers Among Buddhists eNewsletter, 1st of July, 2012
It is with genuine sadness and deep appreciation that our Center for East Asian Religions and Traditions says goodbye to Greg and Sue Lundquist.
They are returning to the USA to help care for Sue's father. Our whole staff and church planting team will miss them very much. For the last two years Greg has been the Associate for Administration. He has specifically worked hard on the financial aspects of our work. His careful handling of budgets and expenditures for projects in various Buddhist countries, training events, church plants, and regular office work has helped God's work go forward significantly. Sue's emphasis on prayer in these beautiful eNewsletters has helped all of us have more of God's hearts for these special people and enter into the work of intercession more effectively. In general their dedication to the Lord, His truth, and the Thai people nearby and in our house churches has warmed our hearts and inspired us. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your service. May God lead you forward as you serve your family.

V. Global Mission Work in China
"The Lost Boy"
"Du and Zho are a Global Mission couple who are planting a church in a city in China. They sell products from door to door in order to meet people and make friends for Christ. They focus on helping people with special needs such as the sick, the elderly, and the needy. Then they introduce their new friends to their Savior.
"Most of the people living in the region worship idols, so Du and Zho visit the temples to meet the people as well. They search for people who look lonely or sad and offer their sympathy and friendship. If the people are willing, the couple prays for their special needs. Thus, they have made many friends with whom they share God's love and some literature introducing their friends to God.
"One day as Du and Zho were walking along a road, they saw a teen-age boy. He looked dirty and lost and troubled, so they stopped to talk to him.
Du and Zho realized that he had mental problems and couldn't tell them where he lived. It was winter and bitterly cold; the boy's hands appeared to have been damaged by frostbite.
"Du and Zho asked the boy to come to their home. They gave him a bath, provided him with clean clothes, and fed him a simple, warm meal. Again they asked him where he lived. But the boy couldn't tell them.
"Du and Zho cared for the boy in their home while they contacted the police and the local television station for help in finding his family. Two weeks later the police called to tell them that they had located the boy's family some 200 miles away from where Du and Zho had found him.
"The couple took the boy back to his parents, who were grateful to have their lost son home again. When the family realized that Du and Zho were Christians, they invited the couple to stay with them and tell them about God. Du contacted the local elder in a nearby Seventh-day Adventist church and asked him to visit the family.
"Du and Zho returned home to continue their work. A few months later they learned that the lost boy's family had found Christ as their Lord and had joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church."
from the G. C. Office of Adventist Mission ~~~~~~~~~~~~~ VI. A SULADS Story, "Does God Do Computers?"
--by Shawna Vyhmeister, Professor at AIIAS
Have you ever prayed for your computer? Have you asked God to help you with technology purchases, repairs, or even just knowing how to use it?
Sometimes it seems like we are willing to pray for our health, or for some financial miracle, but when it comes to technology, we prefer to ask the experts. But why don't we ask God first? He knows about computers--did you know that?
Recently, my husband and I were involved in purchasing 10 laptop computers for the Sulads High School. Yes, for that school in the mountains, where the students work to grow their own food, and build their own huts and sleep in them. It
seems that the Philippine government has rules about school accreditation, and the rules say that Philippine high school students need to study computers. Doesn't matter where your high school is located, or what your background is--if you want government accreditation, you need to follow the rules, and the rules require computers.

This project had been "in the works" for several years, but it was not possible until there was a stable power source capable of running the computers, a place to store the machines, and a room to use them in. Praise the Lord, this year, Daryl Faminasaran contacted us to let us know that they were "preparing a place" for the computers, and it was time to put the plan into action.

The plan included a trip to the mountains to deliver the computers, as well as some training for the teachers on how to use computers as educational devices. It also included discussions of the potential dangers of computer usage, and how to limit the possible problems.

All was in order. The date for the training had been set. The computers had been ordered from the US, since they were much cheaper from there than from Manila, where we live, and my husband had arranged to pick them up from Guam. Then God decided to get involved.

The computers did not arrive on time. Not even close. Two weeks after they were supposed to arrive, my husband and I considered canceling the entire trip. After all, what good is training if you have no computers? My husband tried to change his trip to Guam, but could not get any seats.

Finally, he called and canceled the computer order, since it was clear they would not arrive in time. Since the machines still had not arrived, the company agreed to cancel everything without any problem.

Unfortunately, now we were at least a week before the scheduled training, and we had no computers, and no backup plan. But God ALWAYS has a backup plan! At my insistence, my husband checked once again to see what price computers could be gotten for in Manila. He called me immediately.

"They're on sale!" he said. "I can get nice laptops for even less money than the ones I ordered from the US." And so it was.

The sale had started around the time we canceled the original order. It had not been available before. We did not know it was possible to buy machines for that price. But God knew. He seemed to have things planned all along.

In 2 days the machines were delivered, and the trip to the mountain went as planned. The machines even got "baptized" on the way up the mountain, so they are now fully consecrated to mission service. The seminar with the teachers was inspiring to both those who gave, and those who received, and we have promised to stay in touch. Phase two of the installation will include an internet connection, but God has not worked out all the necessary technology for that to happen just yet.

Does God do computers? Yes. Just ask Him!

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