NAD Retreats on Conference President Policy

In a letter released Feb. 6, Dan Jackson, North American Division (NAD) president states that the NAD working policy 2011–2012 will now omit “commissioned minister” as a qualification for conference president. This is a dramatic switch from the affirmation voted Oct. 31, 2011, at the NAD year-end meeting. The North American leaders had been working under the assumption that the NAD had constituent authority. But, as a result of additional consultation with the General Conference office of general counsel, the NAD executive committee voted to ask Jackson to write a letter detailing the rationale for the policy revision. Read the full text of this letter HERE.

Alaska Conference Awarded

Ephraim Palmero, Alaska Conference Adventist Health Ministries director, received an award Jan. 28 on behalf of the conference for its active participation in the national Let’s Move Initiative. The award was presented during the InStep for Life Celebration at the North American Division (NAD) Health Summit in Lake Mary, Fla. Palmero is pictured here with Regina Benjamin, U.S. Surgeon General.

NRLA Testifies in Support of Oregon Problem Gambling Bill

Greg Hamilton, Northwest Religious Liberty Association (NRLA) president, testified Feb. 6 at the Oregon State Capitol before the House Human Services Committee in support of HB 4083. The bill is designed to address significant problems surrounding gambling within the state. Hamilton’s written and oral testimony drew not only from his observations as a pastor, but also from the Adventist world church statement on gambling available online HERE. Those who support this bill are opposed by the formidable strength of casino and lottery lobbyists.

Looking Ahead

February
11: Lents (Ore.) Church Centennial
23: April Ad/Article Deadline

March
11: SAGE (Wash.) St. Patrick’s Banquet
17: Ministry Fest South
22: May Ad/Article Deadline
24–25: Vegfest 2012
30–April 1: OR Conference Prayer Retreat

April
13–15: NW Prison Ministry Retreat
14: OAMC Spring Festival
19: June Ad/Article Deadline
26–29: ASI NW Convention

May
9–13: SAGE Creation Retreat
17: July Ad/Article Deadline
17–20: NPUC Regional Convocation
18–20: Tillamook (Ore.) Adv. School Alumni Weekend

June
12–16: Idaho Camp Meeting
13–16: UCC Camp Meeting
14–23: Washington Camp Meeting

July
17–21: Gladstone Camp Meeting

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AMC Physical Therapist is a KATU Everyday Hero

Tom Davis, Adventist Medical Center (Portland, Ore.) home care physical therapist, does more than treat the medical needs of his patients. On his own time, he also finds ways to meet some of their other needs as well. He was recently featured on an “Everyday Heroes” segment with Steve Dunn, KATU anchor. Watch this brief, two-minute video HERE.

Former GC President Receives Civilian Honor

Former world church President Jan Paulsen’s home country of Norway is recognizing the veteran church administrator for his “service for the good of humanity.” Paulsen was recently appointed Commander of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit, one of the country’s highest civilian honors. In an announcement, Norway’s Royal Palace stated that King Harald V appointed Paulsen for “meritorious” humanitarian work. “It warms my heart that the accolade came with the recognition, ‘service for the good of humanity,’ for that is what the life of Christian service is all about,” Paulsen says, noting the recognition came as a surprise. Paulsen will receive the insignia of the order at a presentation ceremony expected later this year. Read more from the Adventist News Network HERE.

Check out Adventist Finder App

Don’t forget about the cutting edge services available at Adventist Finder. This mobile directory app helps your members connect with churches and schools in your conference. Users can quickly locate Adventist organizations based on current location, zip code or North American Division (NAD) area conference selections. The app is available for free download in iTunes and the Android Market, NAD conference data is included in the app for a nominal annual subscription. For less than $10 a month, you can publish your organizations for Adventist Finder users in your area. Setup is easy. Ready to get started? Email Jay Wintermeyer today for an application and details.

Cindy’s Garden Blog

What happens when a business owner declares it God’s day and gives away profits? One would think homelessness and bankruptcy would ensue. However, just the opposite happened. Read this week’s new story in Cindy’s Garden Blog to see how you just can’t out give God.
Spam
Not spam
Forget previous vote
January 31, 2012

Members of the North American Division Executive Committee

Dear Fellow Committee Members,

I am writing this letter to you at the direction of and with the full support of the North American Division Administrative team. We believe that it is important for you to have a first-hand account of the outcome of the many discussions that have taken place on the E-60 Policy issue (Conference/Mission President) since the time of our meeting in October, 2011. I will summarize the observations and conclusions drawn and then make some suggestions for the future.

The North American Division (NAD) Administration has taken the initiative to carefully review, in great detail, the issues surrounding the serious discussion that has arisen over the action taken by the North American Division Executive Committee (NADCOM) on Oct. 31, 2011, to re-affirm the change made to the E-60 Policy that was voted by the NADCOM in both 2009 and 2010. This review has led us to the following observations:

1. We believe that all those who have participated in this discussion during the past three years have done so in good faith and with a good spirit.

2. In all of the discussions of the E-60 Policy there has been no attempt to hide the potential discussions, withhold information or to subvert any point of view. Two NAD administrations as well as three NADCOMS in Year-end Meetings (2009, 2010 and 2011) believed that they were taking up business that was appropriate to their delegated purview and were open in doing so.

3. Each action of the NADCOM throughout 2009 - 2011 was undertaken with the full knowledge of the two General Conference Presidents involved during this period of time and with the supervision of Officers and Vice-Presidents of the General Conference who were present at the time when the NADCOM actions were taken.

4. With specific reference to some of the concerns expressed to us in recent discussions, we strongly assert that neither the NAD Administration nor the NADCOM have “rebelled” against any the vote of the General Conference, nor has it been their intention to do so. The General Conference Executive Committee, meeting in its 2011 Annual Council, denied our
request for a variance to the Model Constitution. We have therefore not modified the Model Constitution.

The discussion and subsequent action of the 2011 NADCOM to re-affirm its previously voted E-60 Policy was not undertaken as a reaction to nor a rejection of the 2011 General Conference Annual Council’s denial of the NAD request for a variance from the Model Constitution. On the contrary, the matter was taken up out of consideration for the Annual Council action. The discussion was engaged in as a response to motions proposed by members of the NADCOM, and with respect for the General Conference and the unity in the worldwide church. The members of the NADCOM were asked to review their vote of 2010 within the broader context of the actions of the 2011 Annual Council.

5. At no point prior to or during the 2009 or 2010 NADCOM Year-end Meetings, nor prior to the 2011 Year-end Meeting, was any counsel given by anyone to the NAD Administration that the NADCOM "did not have the authority" to add the word “commissioned” to the NAD E-60 Policy.

6. In discussions held following the 2011 North American Division Year-end Meeting it was brought to the NAD Administration’s attention that Divisions do not have Constituencies, in that they are all (that is, the Divisions) parts of the same General Conference “whole” therefore they must act in harmony with the policies of the world church. In other words, Divisions do not have the independent right to develop policies which are out of harmony with the General Conference Model Constitution or voted General Conference Working Policy. While all Divisions have the authority to develop and implement policies related to their field, they may not act independently when it comes to voted General Conference policies.

7. The NAD Administration took this matter very seriously and requested legal counsel to undertake a review of the General Conference Constitution, General Conference Working Policy and the Church Manual in order to verify the governance role of the NAD in terms of its relationship to the General Conference. The results of this review were provided to us on January 3, 2012, and clearly support the opinion that the North American Division Executive Committee does not have the right to establish policies which are out of harmony with the General Conference Model Constitution or General Conference Working Policy.

The conclusions that NADCOM has come to are the following:

a) From 2009 through 2011 the North American Division Committee did not have the authority to vote a policy (E-60 – with the inclusion of the word “commissioned”) that was out of harmony with the General Conference E-60 Policy.

b) The editors will be directed to omit the word “commissioned” from the E-60 Policy contained in the 2011-2012 edition of the NAD Working Policy.

The Administration of the North American Division takes full responsibility for failing to do sufficient research into the constitutional issues that impacted our decisions. In bringing this matter to the floor in 2010 and 2011 we were doing so under the assumption that the North
American Division had a constituency separate and distinct from the General Conference. Unfortunately, we were wrong and we sincerely apologize. During our 2012 Year-end Meeting we will provide time for questions and further explanation of this matter, if requested.

LESSONS WE MAY LEARN

To say that we are perplexed regarding the outcome of the actions taken over the past three years would be a huge understatement. However, rather than throwing our hands up in despair we need to see what can be learned from this experience.

Having said all of this I believe that the clear commitment of the members of the NADCOM to strengthen the role of women in ministry within the North American Division has not changed. It is of vital importance that we affirm the women clergy presently serving in our Division, that we encourage women who may be called to gospel ministry in the future and that we enhance the understanding and unity of our membership regarding the role of women in the church.

We see this as a very significant matter that needs to be dealt with. In saying this, we need to view it in the light of the biblical and Spirit of Prophecy concepts of justice, equity, morality and the calling of God to individuals of both genders. As we move this matter forward and begin to consider new approaches there are lessons for us all to learn from this experience both in terms of history and in terms of presentation.

Lesson #1: We Need to Continue to Listen For God’s Voice

Firstly, it was apparent to the majority present at our Year-end Meetings in 2010 and 2011 that the discussions of the E-60 Policy were undertaken in a serious and spiritual manner. We faithfully and intentionally asked God for His guidance. We earnestly and fervently appealed for the presence of the Holy Spirit and believed and saw evidence that He was there with us. During our discussions we clarified the thinking and beliefs of the members of the Church in the North American Division on the role of women in ministry and leadership. The unity we experienced during those discussions was a blessing to all.

Now, in the midst of our present situation, some may be tempted to question if we truly were following God’s lead in the discussions on this matter. However, God has not deserted us nor left us in confusion. The words of Ellen White remind us that we have nothing to fear for the future except that we forget the way the Lord has led us and His teaching in the past.

Could it be that the E-60 matter was allowed to make the progress it did to clarify decisively, the thinking and beliefs of the members of the Church in North America on the role of women in ministry and leadership? Perhaps it has made the issue so obvious that we can now develop our thinking with far more clarity and power than ever before.
As we continue to wait on God, He will lead in ways that we haven’t anticipated to achieve a greater end than we had imagined. We must not allow our trust in His leading to be eroded, nor should we allow the convictions that were laid upon us as a collective group to dissipate. We must intensify, individually and collectively, our dependence on listening for His direction. He is the Leader of the Church and His direction is of supreme importance.

**Lesson #2: We Need to Strengthen Our Understanding**

We must also commit to the hard work of further research, study and prayer. We must have a thorough and well-demonstrated biblical/Spirit of Prophecy understanding of this matter. We must have a clearly defined foundation for all that we do. Nothing less will suffice.

I am not speaking about the ordination of women, as this related topic will be taken up by other groups as directed by the General Conference. I am however speaking of the development of a theology that demonstrates the basic biblical and Spirit of Prophecy foundations that emphasize not only the necessity of women in ministerial and leadership roles but also the theological mandate that they be active in specific roles. At the same time we must also study the biblical and Spirit of Prophecy understandings of related issues such as the calling of God, justice, and equity.

**Lesson #3: We Need to be More Intentional**

While we, as a Division family, have philosophically supported women in leadership at three successive Year-end Meetings, the time has now come for us to become practical in our application of philosophy and belief.

We are committed to the support and networking of our women clergy. Our Ministerial Department will be hosting the North American Division Women Clergy Conference in Berrien Springs, Michigan, April 23-26, 2012. We are encouraging every woman pastor, and every woman student at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary to attend.

The North American Division and its Unions and Conferences (as local circumstances permit) must become more intentional in the development of pathways to ministry for female pastors. We must also develop intentional methods of mentoring women who can take on executive leadership positions within our conferences.

The facts speak for themselves:

- Of the approximately 4,000 pastors employed in our division only 107 are women.
- Out of the 58 Conferences in our Division, currently 34 are being served by female pastors.

We must continue to move this matter forward throughout the North American Division in the belief that God will continue to guide His Church to the ultimate achievement of His mission on Earth. Let there be no misunderstanding of our resolve to make the
accomplishment of God’s mission in our Division territory our number one priority. However, let no one fail to recognize that in doing so we must fully enable, recognize and utilize all who are called by God to serve as pastors and leaders. To do otherwise would result in a failure to fully experience that measure of effectiveness that God envisioned when He said:

“And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and your daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.” — Joel 2:28, 29

Ellen White clearly supports this idea:

“When a great and decisive work is to be done, God chooses men and women to do this work, and it will feel the loss if the talents of both are not combined.”

— Evangelism, p. 469

Let us move together in the great anticipation of our Lord’s soon return. Let us anticipate that His work will conclude with even greater glory than it had in the beginning. May God’s Spirit be present with each one of you as you pray over and ponder these things. May He continue to guide and direct His Church.

I remain,

[Signature]

Your brother-in-Christ,
Dan Jackson
President
On behalf of the Administration of the North American Division,
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
A Seventh-day Adventist Statement on Gambling

Gambling-defined as a paid game of chance-increasingly impacts more and more people all over the world. The concept of winning at the expense of others has become a modern curse. Society pays the escalating cost of associated crime, victim support, and family breakdown which erodes the quality of life. Seventh-day Adventists have consistently opposed gambling as it is incompatible with Christian principles. It is not an appropriate form of entertainment or a legitimate means of raising funds.

Gambling violates Christian principles of stewardship. God identifies work as the appropriate method for gaining material benefit; not the playing of a game of chance while dreaming to gain at the expense of others. Gambling has a massive impact on society. Financial costs result from crime committed to pay for the gambling habit, increased policing, and legal expenses, as well as associated crimes involving drugs and prostitution. Gambling does not generate income; rather it takes from those who often can ill afford to lose and gives to a few winners, the greatest winner of course being the gambling operator. The idea that gambling operations can have a positive economic benefit is an illusion. In addition, gambling violates the Christian sense of responsibility for family, neighbors, the needy, and the Church.1

Gambling creates false hopes. The gambling dream of "winning big" replaces true hope with a false dream of a statistically-improbable chance of winning. Christians are not to put their hope in wealth. The Christian hope in a glorious future promised by God is "sure and certain"- unlike and opposite to the gambling dream. The great gain that the Bible points to is "godliness with contentment."2

Gambling is addictive. The addictive quality of gambling is clearly incompatible with a Christian lifestyle. The Church seeks to help, not blame, those suffering from gambling or other addictions. Christians recognize that they are responsible before God for their resources and lifestyle.3

The Seventh-day Adventist Church organization does not condone raffles or lotteries to raise funds and it urges members not to participate in any such activities, however well-intentioned. Neither does the Church condone state-sponsored gambling. The Seventh-day Adventist Church calls on all authorities to prevent the ever-increasing availability of gambling with its damaging effects on individuals and society.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church rejects gambling as defined above and will not solicit nor accept funding that is clearly derived from gambling.

1. 1 Thess 4:11; Gen 3:19; Matt 19:21; Acts 9:36; 2 Cor 9:8, 9
2. 1 Tim 6:17; Heb 11:1; 1 Tim 6:6
3. 1 Cor 6:19, 20

This statement was voted by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Administrative Committee (ADCOM), for release at the time of the General Conference Session in Toronto, Canada, June 29-July 9, 2000.
Everyday Heroes: Tom Davis customizes chairs for patients

By Steve Dunn KATU News February 3, 2012
Former Adventist world church President Jan Paulsen receives civilian honor

Feb. 03, 2012 Royse, Norway

Tor Tjeransen/ANN staff

Former world church President Jan Paulsen’s home country of Norway is recognizing the veteran church administrator for his “service for the good of humanity.”

Paulsen was recently appointed Commander of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit, one of the country’s highest civilian honors. In an announcement, Norway’s Royal Palace stated that King Harald V appointed Paulsen for “meritorious” humanitarian work.

Paulsen said the recognition came as a surprise. “It warms my heart that the accolade came with the recognition, ‘service for the good of humanity,’ for that is what the life of Christian service is all about,” he said.

Paulsen will receive the insignia of the order at a presentation ceremony expected later this year, officials said.

The Royal Norwegian Order of Merit was established by King Olav V in 1985 and is conferred on foreign and Norwegian nationals as a reward for “outstanding service in the interest of Norway.”
“It is a great honor for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Norway that the global service of Dr. Paulsen has been recognized in this way,” said Reidar Kvinge, president of the Adventist Church in Norway.

Paulsen served as Adventist world church president from 1999 until 2010. He began his ministerial service in 1953 in Norway and later held educational and leadership positions in Ghana and Nigeria. From 1976 to 1980, Paulsen served as principal of church-run Newbold College in England, which houses the main theological faculty of the church’s Trans-European Division. For twelve years, Paulsen helmed the church’s Trans-European Division, headquartered in St. Albans, England.

Throughout his career, Paulsen prioritized the furthering of higher education in Africa and was instrumental in shaping the humanitarian response of the Adventist Church to the AIDS pandemic.
God’s Day Brings Business Blessings

This story used by permission of our sister magazine the Pacific Union Recorder.

Giving is a blessing, and Eric and Sandra Manro have always been as generous as possible. But four years ago, their giving paradigm began to shift from what they thought to what they believe God thinks.

Eric inherited his father’s business, All American Muffler, when he was 26, and has owned it for the past 20 years. With his wife Sandra and their two sons, now 19 and 17 years old, it’s a family business.

As small business owners, the Manro’s never know how profitable the business is until the year ends.

“We always gave a little bit outside of tithe and offerings,” Sandra says. But with two sons in Adventist school, there wasn’t much left over.

Their giving paradigm began to shift on a Sabbath morning. A church member shared something he was doing to help fund their church-sponsored mission trip. “He had set aside the net income from his business on the last Friday of the month. Eric began doing that,” Sandra explains.

And business on that day began to grow. “God just kept blessing,” Eric says. “There is a fear if we give more we will have less, but that is not true. If you are giving from a generous heart, He is going to bless you.”

Reading in Proverbs

At the 2008 Soquel camp meeting, Eric suggested they double their evangelism offering pledge. “We had two teenage sons who were about to enter academy,” Sandra says. “I prayed and surrendered to the Lord. ‘Go for it, but I don’t see how this is going to happen,’” she said.

Ten months later, the school bills were paid and their evangelism offering pledge was completed early. “We knew God was doing something,” says Sandra, who was also dealing with a life-threatening health issue.

Reading in Proverbs, Eric discovered promises about honoring God with your wealth and the first fruits of all your crops (3:9-11). “The promise [to me] in that text was I would have plenty to pay my bills,” Eric says. He told Sandra that he wanted to give God the sales from the first business day of the month — the gross earnings.

“That translates into 100 percent of sales,” Eric explains. Sandra was troubled. Employee pay, parts, supplies and overhead were included in the gross. “Well, whatever,” she thought. “I still have my paycheck, so we would have groceries.”

God’s Day

When “God’s Day” started, customers grew dramatically. “How can we give this much away on faith before the end of the year?” Sandra thought. There was no need to worry — 2010 was their most prosperous year ever. By November 2011, income was 25 percent higher than the previous year.

“Our giving has increased 100 percent,” Eric reports. It’s a simple arrangement. God provides the blessings and then presents the giving opportunities. The latest one is playground equipment for a growing church. “This has really broken...”
the selfishness in my heart. Now, it’s just fun!” Sandra adds.

Others have been watching — their sons, employees, vendors, and nearby business owners. When the owner of a Shell station asked Eric how he was increasing his customer base, Eric told him about God’s Day. “He’s a Christian and is doing a God’s Day. And he is prospering,” Eric shares.

“It is a thrilling, joyous and humbling experience,” Eric says. “The climax for me is that Jesus has given me a testimony to share with others, especially business owners.”

Source:


This entry was posted on Thursday, February 9th, 2012 at 12:29 pm and is filed under Cindy's Garden Blog. You can follow any responses to this entry through the RSS 2.0 feed. You can skip to the end and leave a response. Pinging is currently not allowed.