Church Leaders Study Why Members Leave

This week 100 attendees from six continents gathered at the Adventist world headquarters in Silver Spring, Md., for the Summit on Nurture and Retention. They examined data which offered a clearer picture of trends beyond long-held assumptions. It's the first time the matter has been spotlighted in such a major way, and for good reason. The Adventist world church, now with nearly 18 million members, has lost at least 1 in 3 members during the last 50 years, according to summit organizers. Also, in this century, the ratio of people lost versus new converts is 43 per 100. Read more about this summit from the Adventist News Network.
World Headquarters to Send $250,000 in Aid to Philippines

According to a report from the Adventist News Network, world church officials voted this week to contribute $250,000 to humanitarian relief efforts in the Philippines in the wake of one of the most devastating typhoons to make landfall in recorded history. Super Typhoon Haiyan tore through central Philippines last week, flattening entire towns with 195-mph sustained winds and a massive storm surge. The storm crippled communication and transportation in the region, hampering relief efforts for days. Church bulletin inserts with relief donation information are available online. Read more from the Adventist News Network.

Kellar is New WWGH VP

Walla Walla General Hospital (WWGH) is pleased to welcome Karen Kellar, RN, as vice president for patient care for Adventist Health services in Walla Walla. Kellar will assume her new role on Jan. 1, 2014. She comes from Tillamook Regional Medical Center, an Adventist Health hospital in Tillamook, Ore., where she has served as vice president for patient care since 2011. Prior to her experience at Tillamook, Karen lived in Southwest Washington for 16 years and served at hospitals in the Portland, Ore., metropolitan area. At Adventist Medical Center in Portland she served in the clinical decision unit and in recruitment. Read more about this new appointment at WWGH online.

New Cafeteria Opens at UCA

Upper Columbia Academy (UCA) students ate their last meal in the old cafeteria earlier this week even while trucks brought food supplies to the new dining building. Students are now enjoying the fresh new space. The building project, which broke ground on Oct. 3, 2012, has been completed with the help of more than $100,000 in donated labor by faithful UCA volunteers. Does the food taste even better in the updated spot? You’ll have to ask UCA pupils! For more information, check out UCA online or on Facebook.

Adventist Scholar is Special Invitee to Lewis Commemoration

Seventh-day Adventist scholar Debbie Higgens will be among the invited guests at a special ceremony in Westminster Abbey on Friday, Nov. 22, to celebrate the life of Christian apologist and author, C. S. Lewis. Exactly 50
years since his death, a memorial will be unveiled in Poets' Corner. A fan of Lewis since picking up his book *Mere Christianity* during her student days, Dr. Higgens is both the first Adventist and the first academic to serve as on-site director and warden for 'The Kilns,' the Oxford home where Lewis spent the last 20 years of his life. Read more on this story online.

Still Wondering About Adventist Education?
Recent Value Genesis results show that 81 percent of respondents feel that Adventist education was the single most important thing in developing their religious faith. There are many more elements to the findings of Value Genesis 3, including 29 different factors that influence students’ faith journeys. Watch this short video and consider these results for yourself.

Facts with Hope
The North American Division health ministries department has released a new website featuring evidence-based health videos. The messages are designed to be shared on social media, blogs and websites. There are currently five videos with up to 12 planned in the first month and then additional videos each month. Visit FactsWithHope.org for more information.
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Looking Ahead

November
22–24: Auburn Adventist Academy Family Weekend

December
14: Kirkland, WA Concert Series
14: Holiday Concert, Portland, OR

November

Since 1977, International Children’s Care, based in Vancouver, Wash., has provided safety, security and hope to young lives around the world. In the November GLEANER read how their unique village concept is radically different from average.
20: Sunnyside Church Musical Christmas Program

More Events

orphanages. Read more in the November GLEANER.

Forward to Friend

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At first retention summit, leaders look at reality of church exodus

Adventist Researcher Monte Sahlin speaks at the Summit on Nurture and Retention, Monday, November 18 at the Adventist Church's world headquarters. More than 100 attendees examined data on why members leave the church, as well as how a focus on discipleship is key to keep members from slipping out the back door. [photo: Ansel Oliver]

1 in 3 members lost over past 50 years; personal support is key way to help members

November 19, 2013 | Silver Spring, Maryland, United States | Author: Ansel Oliver/ANN

The first global summit focusing on Seventh-day Adventist Church membership retention is revealing the rate and reasons members slip out the back door. It’s the first time the matter has been spotlighted in such a major way, prompting church leaders to renew their emphasis on making fruitful and growing disciples of Christ.

The Adventist world church, now with nearly 18 million members, has lost at least 1 in 3 Seventh-day Adventist members in the last 50 years, according to summit organizers. Also, in this century, the ratio of people lost versus new converts is 43 per 100.

“These figures are too high,” said David Trim, director of the Office of Archives, Statistics and Research. “There’s a theological point to this and it’s that God’s mission is to seek the lost.”

For three days this week, 100 attendees from six continents have gathered at the denomination’s world headquarters for the Summit on Nurture and Retention to examine data, which is offering a clearer picture of trends beyond long-held assumptions gained from anecdotal evidence.

Veteran Adventist Church researcher Monte Sahlin said the reasons people drop out of church often have less to do with what the church does and its doctrines than with problems people experience in their personal lives—marital conflict or unemployment, for example. What the church does that contributes to the problem, he said, is not helping people through their tough life experiences.

“The notion of people dropping out because of something the church does or a doctrinal disagreement is not apparent in the data,” Sahlin said. “It’s been shown that a member of a church board is just as likely to disagree with one of the church’s 28 Fundamental Beliefs as someone who’s been disfellowshipped.”

Several presentations showed that the Adventist Church has learned how to better conduct more realistic outreach by learning from past examples. When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, many Adventist groups sponsored extravagant evangelism events—complete with mass choirs and large, multi-screen presentations. But while many sponsoring organizations were eager for the once-in-a-generation chance, many newly baptized converts joined the church thinking it was their ticket to gaining their own wealth. The church there lacked a long-term strategy and denominational infrastructure, and most of those new converts soon stopped attending church.

One presentation revealed that in South Africa, the rate of accession of new members had slowed, but membership had significantly increased due to retention. That fact prompted Harald Wollan, an associate executive secretary of the Adventist world church, to suggest to the group that future evangelism efforts should focus on nurturing members.

“What if the church used some evangelism funds for our own members’ care? We might see a similar increase in numbers,” Wollan said.

“We will have to do that,” responded Adventist world church Vice President Armando Miranda, who was chairing the afternoon session.
One delegate, Jimmy V. Adil, from the Philippines, asked why conferences feel pressure to increase membership, often from the parent unions, whom he said feel pressure from the divisions. He asked if the world headquarters was exerting pressure for growth.

Adventist Church Executive Secretary G. T. Ng replied, “There’s no pressure for growth. Do we pressure a papaya tree to produce? … If so, we may stunt its growth.”

Trim, the research director, said the problem, though, is common in some regions. On Tuesday, he revealed that 30 percent of church clerks in one particular division had been pressured to inflate baptismal numbers. “It’s a sin to lie about anything in the Adventist Church, but for some reason, too many people think it’s OK to lie about membership numbers,” Trim said.

Increasing membership audits by divisions are combating incidences of membership inflation in some regions. Trim said several regions have made the audits a priority, including South America, Southeast Asia and West Africa.

“Accurate membership records: that’s a secretary’s contribution to [the church’s current focus on] Revival and Reformation,” said Onalapo Ajibade, secretary for the West-Central Africa Division, based in Abidjan, Ivory Coast. “We must have accuracy. God cannot bless a lie.”

On the meeting sidelines, the youngest attendee, Cheryl Simpson, said she was encouraged by the summit because she said it showed church leaders wanted to encourage young adults like her.

Simpson, who is a senior psychology student at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan, United States, said she was glad that church leaders were willing to look at reality.

“For me, this is essential because it’s showing me that theologians aren’t afraid to face the facts,” Simpson said.

—See more photos, including presentation slides and statistics, in the ANN Flickr account.
North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists® : 11-13-13
Adventists Donating for Philippines Typhoon Haiyan Relief

11-13-13 Adventists Donating for Philippines Typhoon Haiyan Relief

Participate in donating to a special offering for the Philippines to assist our Adventist churches and members in need following the devastating super-storm, Typhoon Haiyan. 100% of these funds will be sent to assist Adventist members directly affected by the disaster. Churches can use the downloadable flyer/bulletin inserts in English, Spanish and French posted below.

Make checks payable to your local church and be sure to mark your envelope "Philippine Typhoon Relief."

ADRA Canada has received a one-to-one match fund from the government of Canada for donations received from individual Canadians by December 9 in response to Super Typhoon Haiyan. Donations must be specifically designated to this disaster. Use their dedicated Typhoon Haiyan donation page or call 888-274-2372 to donate. All the funds donated on this webpage will be used only for Typhoon Haiyan response. Connect with and share ADRA Canada news and updates:

If you wish to donate to the broader relief effort for Typhoon Haiyan where food, shelter and other assistance is provided to the general public affected by the disaster, mark your offering envelope “ADRA Typhoon Haiyan” or donate online at www.ADRA.org.

Members are asked not to collect and try to transport supplies to the island themselves.

Transportation and communication are difficult at best, and when many individuals or church groups flood the island with good intentions, it requires the use of more security, food, water, and space. Financial donations are more efficiently used in providing goods in bulk that are available to relief organizations at greatly reduced cost, and can be shipped from nearby ports to save money and time. Please pass this information on to your church members.

Haiyan, the strongest storm to ever make landfall, had claimed 2,344 lives as of Wednesday night, November 13, according to the Philippines’ National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, and that number is expected to rise. At this time, 79 are still missing. The storm affected 9.8 million people across the Philippines and Vietnam. Death is everywhere and hospitals are overwhelmed. With wind gusts exceeding 235 mph / 300km/h, storm surges two-stories high, and torrential rain, the super storm destroyed homes, schools, villages, and town centers and emergency shelters. In the northern part of Cebu Island, up to 97% of structures in the storm's path were destroyed. ADRA teams immediately went to work helping those affected to survive. An ADRA team has finally reached northern Cebu and succeeded in conducting a rapid assessment of Daanbantayan and Medellin towns.

Fliers/Bulletin Inserts:
Adventists are givers at heart, and we all want to help those overwhelmed by super-storm Typhoon Haiyan that has left the Philippine people devastated. Here are THREE ways to help:

Donate for Seventh-day Adventist members and missionaries: Make checks payable to your local church and place them in the offering envelope marked “Philippine Typhoon Relief” OR donate online at Hope4.Fundly.com/Typhoon-Haiyan. 100% of your donation will go to help Adventist members directly affected by the disaster.

Donate for all survivors in the Philippines: Make check payable to ADRA and mark your envelope, “ADRA Typhoon Haiyan.” OR donate online at www.ADRA.org.

Canadians: Please donate through ADRA/Canada where there is a matching fund available for Canadian donations, at www.ADRA.ca.
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Canadians: Please donate through ADRA/Canada where there is a matching fund available for Canadian donations, at www.ADRA.ca.

Thousands of our fellow church members, approximately 13 long-term missionaries from the North American Division, and thousands of the precious non-Adventists of the Philippines who are not Seventh-day Adventists - are in dire need of our help.
AYUDA PARA FILIPINAS

Los adventistas son personas que poseen un corazón generoso, y todos deseamos ayudar a quienes están agobiados por la destrucción que provocó la supertormenta del tifón Haiyan, el cual ha dejado al pueblo filipino sumido en la devastación. Éstas son TRES formas de ayudar:

Para ayudar a miembros y misioneros adventistas del séptimo día: Coloque su donación en el sobre de diezmos y ofrendas, a nombre de “Philippine Typhoon Relief”; o puede donar electrónicamente a través de Hope4.Fundly.com/Typhoon-Haiyan. 100% de su donación ayudará a miembros adventistas que han sido directamente afectados por el desastre.

Para ayudar al pueblo filipino en general: Coloque su donación en el sobre de diezmos y ofrendas, a nombre de “ADRA Typhoon Haiyan”, o puede donar electrónicamente a través de www.ADRA.org.

Canadienses: Favor de donar a través de ADRA/Canada, a través de www.ADRA.ca, y participar en el fondo de contrapartida donde igualan las donaciones canadienses.

Miles de nuestros miembros, aproximadamente 13 en el servicio misionero a largo plazo procedentes de la División Norteamericana y miles de preciosas vidas que no son adventistas del séptimo día—todos se encuentran en extrema necesidad de nuestra ayuda.
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Les Adventistes sont des donneurs de cœur, et nous voulons tous aider ceux qui sont submergés par la tempête Typhoon Haiyan, qui a laissé les gens de Philippines dévastés. Voici trois façons d’aider:

**Faites un don aux membres et missionnaires adventistes du septième jour:** Libellez vos chèques à l’ordre de votre église locale et placez-les sous les enveloppes marquées “Philippine Typhoon Relief”. Ou faites un don en ligne à Hope4.Fundly.com/Typhoon-Haiyan. 100% de votre don ira pour aider les membres adventistes directement touchés par la catastrophe.

**Faites un don pour aider le public en général:** Emettez votre chèque à ADRA et marquez votre enveloppe “ADRA Typhoon Haiyan” ou faites un don en ligne à www.ADRA.org.

Canadiens : S’il vous plaît faites un don par ADRA / Canada, là où il existe un fonds de contrepartie pour les dons canadiens, à www.ADRA.ca.
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Top officials of the Seventh-day Adventist world church will contribute $250,000 to relief efforts in the Philippines in the wake of Typhoon Haiyan. Here, ADRA volunteer distribute food packs in Bitoon in Iloilo City. [photo: ADRA International]

Worst natural disaster in country’s history displaces 11 million people

November 19, 2013 | Silver Spring, Maryland, United States | Author: ANN staff

Top officials of the Seventh-day Adventist world church today voted to contribute $250,000 to humanitarian relief efforts in the Philippines in the wake of one of the most devastating typhoons to make landfall in recorded history.

Super Typhoon Haiyan tore through central Philippines last week, flattening entire towns with 195-mph sustained winds and a massive storm surge. The storm crippled communication and transportation in the region, fettering relief efforts for days.

“We want to express to the Adventist Church in the Philippines our sensitivity to this enormous tragedy,” said Juan Prestol, undertreasurer for the Adventist world church.

“The amount of money is not the greatest in the world, but we want to demonstrate that we care, and we want to be an example for other church entities that will also contribute,” he said.

The donation comes from the Adventist Church’s World Budget Contingency Fund.

A statement voted by top church officers this morning said, “The assistance will be used, at the discretion of the [Southern Asia-Pacific] Division, to help restore normalcy to the lives of our members and people affected in the area, with consideration given to restoring the normal operations of schools, if advisable.”

Since initial emergency relief, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency has distributed more than 3,500 food packs and 5,000 shelter tarps. The humanitarian arm of the church has also partnered with other relief organizations to set up water purification systems in areas where clean drinking water is needed.

Adventist hospitals in Cebu, Calbayog and Bacolod are serving as hubs for medical outreach in affected areas, an update from the church’s Southern Asia-Pacific Division said. The church’s East Visayan Conference in Tacloban is also serving as a center for relief operations and medical assistance.

“The process is slow because Adventist members are also trying to save the remains of what were once their homes,” a statement from the conference said.

According to ADRA Philippines, needs remain “dire.” Most of the estimated 11 million people displaced by the storm remain in urgent need of food, water and shelter.

“Saving lives and relieving suffering are priorities of the Adventist Church,” said G. T. Ng, executive secretary of the Adventist world church. “The wonderful people of the Philippines have suffered much in this disaster and deserve all the help we can give.”
11/19/2014 - Karen Kellar Joins WWGH as Patient Care VP

*Kellar, an experienced nurse and leader, starts January 2014*

Walla Walla General Hospital is pleased to welcome Karen Kellar, RN, as vice president for patient care for Adventist Health services in Walla Walla. Kellar will assume her new role on January 1, 2014.

Karen comes to Walla Walla from Tillamook Regional Medical Center, an Adventist Health hospital in Tillamook, Ore. where she has served as vice president for patient care since 2011. Prior to her experience at Tillamook, Karen lived in Southwest Washington for 16 years and served at hospitals in the Portland metropolitan area. At Adventist Medical Center in Portland she served in the clinical decision unit and in recruitment. She then moved into a director role at Southwest Washington Medical Center in Vancouver, Wash., establishing the new outpatient Wound and Hyperbaric Medicine Center, which included oversight of the inpatient wound program. Most recently, she was a patient care executive resident for Adventist Health at the White Memorial Medical Center in Los Angeles, CA.

"We are looking forward to Karen joining our mission-focused team. Her clinical expertise will help us successfully navigate the changing health care environment while continuing to provide the highest quality care for the Walla Walla community," says Monty Knittel, president and CEO at WWGH.

Karen holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Washington State University and a Masters in Nursing Leadership and Management from the University of Southern Indiana. Her areas of clinical experience include cardiac, labor and delivery, post-anesthesia recovery, medical surgical, emergency and home care.

Karen and her husband, John, have two adult children and two grandsons.
IMPACTING FAITH 50 YEARS ON: CHRISTIAN APOLOGIST, C S LEWIS

20th November 2013

Seventh-day Adventist scholar, Dr Debbie Higgens will be among the invited guests at a special ceremony in Westminster Abbey on Friday, 22 November to celebrate the life of Christian apologist and author, C S Lewis. Exactly fifty years on from his death, a memorial will be unveiled in Poets’ Corner.

A fan of C S Lewis since picking up his book, *Mere Christianity* during her student days, Debbie is both the first Adventist and the first academic to serve as on-site director and warden for 'The Kilns', the Oxford home where Lewis spent the last twenty years of his life. It was the simplicity of *Mere Christianity* that appealed to Debbie and in a video interview released today, she says that his appeal is in his ability of "shredding away everything except Jesus Christ Himself."

His appeal is in his ability of ‘shredding away everything except Jesus Christ Himself’

As well as *Mere Christianity*, Lewis is best known for his children's series, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, and for *The Screwtape Letters*. All three, she says, are very powerful representations of the gospel. They are also a very approachable reintroduction, she says quoting Lewis, "Stealing past the watchful dragons", for those who have been turned off Christianity in the past. "He flips it and says, 'look at it in a different way'."

A researcher in both the writings of Lewis and J R R Tolkien, Debbie shares her views with candour in this video report. You can also watch a fuller interview with her and Rod Rosenquist in this week's edition of 'FaithTalks' on Revelation TV. In early 2014 Debbie will share her own personal faith journey from atheism to faith, and to the world of academia in a special edition of 'In Conversation' filmed on location at 'The Kilns'.

[Victor Hulbert]
Upcoming Events | GleanerOnline.org

Auburn Adventist Academy Family Weekend

Family Weekend is a time for families to join their students at Auburn Adventist Academy for special musical programs, spiritual moments, and good food of course. Visit Auburn’s website for more details.

Find out more »

Simply Cooking

Last “Simply Cooking” class at 6:30 p.m. This year of monthly plant-based cooking classes led by Ronni Reinecke has been fun and a wonderful learning experience. December topic is “Great Cakes” and the end of class potluck to share favorite vegan recipes and exchange recipes. Please call Wanda to reserve your place, at 360-967-2165.

Find out more »

Kirkland Concert Series

Second-annual concert presented at the Kirkland Church, Kirkland, Wash., at 4 p.m. A Christmas theme featuring an all men’s chorus, “Impact Ladies” of Puget Sound Adventist Academy, and full orchestra under the direction of Estyn Goss. In the spring, a full choral Easter concert, and finally a guest concert in the summer will finalize our concert series with the third and fourth concerts. For more information, call 425-828-7888.

Find out more »

Holiday Concert

A holiday concert featuring Craig King, Carl Parker and other local musicians. Call 503-232-6018 for more information.

Find out more »

Sunnyside Church’s 32nd annual Musical Christmas Program

Invite you friends to enjoy an evening listening to some of Portland’s finest musicians. Bring your music and join in singing the “Hallelujah Chorus” for the finale. An offering will be taken at the door for the ministry that feeds the hungry at O’Bryant Square. We hope to see you there.

Find out more »

Alvin Woodruff’s 96th Birthday

Alvin Woodruff, Falls City Church member, will turn 96 on Dec. 29. A celebration of his 96th birthday will be Jan. 5, 2014 at the Polk County Fairgrounds in the arts and crafts building, in Rickreall, Ore. There is an open invitation to all. Send your best wishes to Alvin by writing to 14595 Forest Hill Dr., Monmouth, OR 97361 or calling 503-623-5358.

Find out more »

Steve Green in Concert

Grandview Adventist School is hosting Steve Green in concert. The concert will be held at the Sunnyside High School Auditorium, 1801 E. Edison Ave., Sunnyside, WA. Tickets are $20 for adults and $10 for children 6–12. For more information, call the school at 509-882-3817.
or 509-439-1054. Come and enjoy an evening with Steve Green.

Find out more »