**Dear Colleagues in Mission Service,**

By the time most of you receive your copy of *Global Connections*, we will be well into the new year of 2007. It is hard to believe that the Christmas and New Year holidays have passed.

Speaking of holidays, Christmas is always the hardest time for missionaries to be away from home. The picture of the family at the dinner table enjoying the delicious meals prepared by Mama or Grandma is one that always sticks in our memories. I am sure you are dying even yet to receive those family photos taken this past Christmas to find out who was able to be there and who was not—like yourselves, for example.

Now that I have made you homesick, I invite you to focus once again on the event that the world just recently celebrated—the birth of Jesus. If you saw Christ only as a babe in a manger, you missed the significance of Christmas. This Christ-event includes not only the fact that God became flesh but also involves a life lived out in service, death on a cruel cross, and a glorious resurrection. All of these are in the declaration, "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14).

Think about it! Our Lord gave up everything and bent over backward to concern Himself with the needs of humanity. The Bible clearly declares that the One who was equal with God and was the ultimate object of praise in the universe voluntarily sacrificed His divine prerogatives in order to reach humanity (Philippians 2). He was, indeed, the first missionary to this world. And as Jesus gave up everything and Himself for the benefit of others, we are expected to do the same, even to the point of suffering and death, if need be.

So as we reflect upon the greatest gift that the world has ever received, right now, wherever we are, let us put the real meaning of the Incarnation into it. Let us make it a daily observance as we receive God’s daily gift and commit ourselves to Him.

**Heavenly Father, for all of the blessings that you have so abundantly bestowed upon us, we thank You. We thank You for the joy of this past season in which we celebrated the coming of Your Son, Jesus Christ, and for the present season wherein we look for His soon coming to take us home with Him to live forevermore. Matthew Bediako, General Conference Secretary**

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**Good-bye and Hello**

Once again IWM must say good-bye to a valued team member. Karin Weigley has served as our secretary for almost two years. Her cheerful, willing efficiency has been a blessing to us and to many missionaries. We wish Karin, and her husband Jon, God’s speed as they begin their ministry in Louisville, Kentucky.

Providentially, God has sent us another seminary wife, Vernieta Porras, to pick up the many tasks Karin has done. Welcome, Vern—and thanks for the great job on this newsletter!

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**IWM Newsletter**
**Global Connections**
**January 2007**

**INSIDE . . .**

In this issue of *Global Connections* you will find contributions from the Secretary and the Under-secretary of the General Conference. They represent the department of the church tasked with the care and administration of missionaries. All of us who have served as missionaries are blessed by the many policies they administer in our behalf. From time to time they will be using *Global Connections* to update you on policy changes and other initiatives from their office. In this issue you will learn more about the new annual leave policy. The Secretariat staff regularly pray for missionaries and we are glad that they will now be communicating with you through these pages.

For those of you who are contemplating permanent return this year, we offer a guide for re-entry and information about the *Welcome Home!* seminars. And, for all of us, the center article reminds us of the real goal of mission.

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**IWM Schedule of Events**

- **January 3-6, 2007**
  - Australia Re-entry

- **January 12-27, 2007**
  - Australia Institute

- **March 11-31, 2007**
  - Asia Institute

- **June 11-30, 2007**
  - Andrews Institute

- **July 10-15, 2007**
  - Andrews Re-entry

- **July 24-August 11, 2007**
  - Europe Institute

- **Oct. 22-Nov. 10, 2007**
  - Andrews Institute

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**Karin Weigley**

**Vernieta Porras**

**Cheryl Doss**
It’s the Right Thing to Do!

Taking time off from work to be with family is the right thing to do! It’s easy to get so caught up in the routine grind of things that we assume sacrificing family is a necessity. Not so! Of course, some people have the opposite problem. It has been said that for every mile of paved highway there are two miles of ditch. There will always be those who look for a way of getting out of putting in a full day’s work but now I am addressing the other extreme sometimes referred to as “workaholism.” Some who know me will be tempted to say “It’s the pot calling the kettle black!” Nevertheless we, who have a tendency to work too much, need to pause and ask ourselves if we are giving our families the time they deserve and need.

The new annual leave policy may help even workaholics take that time. While it certainly isn’t perfect, it does have some distinct advantages which you may not have thought of. Perhaps its greatest asset is the flexibility it offers. Have you ever thought how nice it would be if your family could come and see where you live and work instead of you going there? It’s possible with the annual leave. The money used to take you to your home division can now be used to bring family to you. Perhaps you would like to meet your family at some special exotic place for your annual leave instead of going to your home division. It’s now possible. The critical point in all of this is some quality time with family members from whom you’ve been separated.

Another personal advantage is that the whole thirty-six days (fifty-one in hardship areas) does not all have to be spent at one time or even in one country. After spending time with the extended family at the place of your own choosing you can come “home” and spend a few days unwinding from the “vacation.” This has not been possible with the furloughs. And while annual leaves may seem shorter, in the long run they are actually up to twelve days longer and much more flexible.

So, if you’ve needed a nudge to spend those special moments with the family you can do it in many different ways. Spend those moments. Cherish them. They can be a foretaste of the real Home awaiting us.

Larry R. Evans, General Conference Undersecretary

Andrews Institute
October 2006

Participants—listed alphabetically (placement): Joseph & Beryl Aseno Nyamwange (Sierra Leone); Paul Beattie (Tentmaker); Joseph & Tambra Bullock (Madagascar); Newton & Wayne Cleghorne (Jamaica); Oscar & Estelle Domato with Oscar Jr. (Vietnam); Trudy Eide (USA); Nancy Kyte (USA); Frederick & Jane Lee (Trinidad); Onn & Yit Sen Lim Liang (Taiwan); Hiskia & Ellen Missah (USA); Etzer & Lydie Obas (Congo); Joel & Kellie Tomplins (Egypt); Bern & Kim Yuot with Duany & Waragak (Cyprus).

Andrews Institute
Children’s Program
October 2006

Kristin Doss & Karin Weigley headed the Children’s program. They offered fun-filled activities to help the children get ready for their calling with their parents.
Preparing for Re-entry

Re-entry… Going “home”… I suppose we all dream about it from time to time—no matter how much we may love our work in the mission field. There’s just something special about the thought of “going home”.

Given that basic reality, it is quite surprising that so many people find “reentry” (returning to ones homeland after an extended absence) to be so painful and problematic. All indications are that this is true for people from all countries. Many multinational corporations have gathered statistics for the workers returning to Asian, South American, and European countries as well as to North America. The responses are similar—everyone faces serious adjustments when they are repatriated.

So, the question we face is not whether we as missionaries will face certain challenges when we return to our homelands, but how we will face them. In the following paragraphs I will outline a few simple steps to follow. We know that families, teens, children, and singles will benefit from taking these suggestions seriously. In fact, teens and pre-teens are the most vulnerable in this area—simply because no matter where they live, they will face major identity issues as they move from childhood to adulthood. Coping with re-entry only intensifies that challenge.

The following suggestions will guide you in building a RAFT to help you and your family cross these troubled waters:

R: Reconcile with those with whom there may have been misunderstandings, disagreements, etc. Don’t leave unfinished business to fester over the years.

A: Affirm those who have been special in your lives by consciously saying “thank you” to them in appropriate ways.

F: Farewells: Say proper “good bye’s” to:
   - People
   - Places
   - Pets
   - Possessions

Remember you are leaving these “forever” (in most cases) and especially for teens and children, they are leaving all (or most) of their life behind and need to officially farewell these parts of their life.

T: Think and Plan ahead. This includes talking openly and realistically, letting everyone in the family have input into the anticipated move. Remember: Children do not have “veto power”, but their ideas and feelings need to be heard and validated. And they need to be prepared for the new life they’ll be facing—a new life that can be very scary to a kid.

Last suggestion: By all means plan to attend a re-entry seminar. (See dates on page 1).

A: Affirm those who have been special in your lives by consciously saying “thank you” to them in appropriate ways.

You know the perennial joke told at missionary farewells—“It takes some people six (eight, ten, twenty—whatever) years to figure out that it is time to go home!” It always gets a laugh but going home is no joke. For one thing home has changed and you have changed and for your kids it isn’t home.

Recognizing that moving internationally is a complex process, IWM offers WELCOME HOME! Seminars to provide an opportunity for reflection, debriefing, and exploring the paradox that is the missionary experience. You will have the opportunity to share your story with others who can understand it and want to hear it and will leave feeling better prepared to make the necessary adjustments. Pre-teen children have their own special sessions.

You’re Invited!

Teens coming to the US for school, with or without their parents, are invited to attend HELLO, AMERICA! Seminars. At such an important juncture in the life of missionary kids, they need all the help we can give them, plus it’s lots of fun. As one teen said, “It was the best thing that ever happened to me!”

Arrangements to attend may be made through the GC Secretariat. WELCOME HOME! and HELLO, AMERICA! seminars are fully funded by the General Conference as a thank-you gift for your years of service. Be sure to take advantage of this enjoyable and worthwhile opportunity.

Re-entry participants enjoying a time of fun & relaxation.

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Re-entry participants enjoying a time of fun & relaxation.

Re-entry participants engrossed in small group discussions & activities.

Re-entry participants reflecting on Welcome Home! Seminars

“Wonderful group process; Great counselor—Dr. Hamel; excellent resource materials;...excellent touch to have GC administrator thanking missionaries.”

“Provides fellowship (I’m not alone!), especially for isolated missionaries. Welcome Home is an opportunity to debrief and process some critical issues. Thank you!”

I’m grateful for “the support and prayers of our concerned and responsible leaders. For creating a re-entry program with all the good things in it.”
"Glory of God" the Objective of Mission
Resources for Missionaries

The Bible
Psalms 67 & 96 Isaiah 42:6 & 49:3
John 17 Philippians 1:11
Ephesians 3 2 Corinthians 8:23

Ellen White comments on the “glory of God” concept
Acts of the Apostles pp. 9:1, 600:1
Christ Object Lesson pp. 296:3, 299, 415-416
Counsels to Parents, Teachers, & Students p. 321:1
Testimonies Vol. 9 p. 190

Practical Ministry & Mission
Spring, MD: Ministerial Department, General Conference of
Seventh-day Adventists

Merklin, Lester. The Remnant Mission: To Reveal and Pro-
claim the Glory of God. 2004. Forum presentation online
at: http://www.adventistmission.org/article.php?id=353

Piper, John. Let the Nations be Glad! The Supremacy of
God in Missions. 1993; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker.
This book will help you reflect on the relationship between
church and mission and on the role of every Christian in
going out into all the world.

Van Rheenen, Gailyn. Imagining Christ’s Church in the
City, in Monthly Missiological Reflection #[33]. 2004. (an
email newsletter, archived at
http://www.missiology.org/mmr/mmr33.htm)

More Academic Resources
Cook, W. Robert. “The ‘Glory’ motif in the Johannine Cor-
1984.

Strauss, Richard L. “The King of Glory,” in The Joy of
Knowing God from Biblical Studies Press (Chapter 24).
1997. Online www.bible.org/docs/theology/proper/joy/ joy-
24.htm

You Know You’re an MK When... You wince when people mispro-
nounce foreign words.

Kid Explorers activities, www.KidExplorers.com
— Copyright Eden Communications.
THE REMNANT MISSION:
TO REVEAL AND PROCLAIM GOD’S GLORY

By Lester Merklin
Director, Institute of World Mission

The remnant people of God have been commissioned by God to be partners with Him in mission. The three angels messages (Revelation 14: 6 – 12) outlines that mission of the remnant. We have often made verse 12 the central message—God’s people will be keeping His commandments and following Him. But is that really the core message? This would mean that the emphasis of the three angels’ messages is on the remnant—on human beings. But isn’t the loud cry calling us to true worship? Isn’t the focus of the message on the One who deserves our worship? What is the value of the remnant’s commandment-keeping and faithfulness other than it brings Glory to God? The messages of the second and third angel are in response to and in explanation of the first shout from the sky: “Give glory to God and worship Him.” The remnant are those who do that! Therefore, the ministry and mission of the remnant people of God is primarily to “reveal the glory of God” so that others will be motivated to truly worship their creator. Actually, this has always been the mission of God’s people—at least, it was supposed to have been. “It was God’s purpose that by the revelation of his character through Israel men should be drawn unto Him. (PK 19) But, “They forgot God, and lost sight of their high privilege as His representatives.” (COL 292)

Jesus, of course, was the perfect reflector of God’s glory. The purpose of the incarnation was to have God’s true character perfectly communicated to mankind. John 1:14 says, “So the Word became human and lived here on earth among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the only Son of the Father.” (NIV) He has now given that job to the Church through whom He will work: “so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places.” Phil 3:10

If revealing and proclaiming the Glory of God is the remnant commission, we need to make sure we are doing it. Are we? In many ways we have shared God’s glory with the nations. God has even revealed His glory when we did not do very well at our part of the plan! Just like He did through Israel. However, have we always made the glory of God a priority in our ministry and evangelism? As Adventists we have often done better at proclaiming what God wants His people to do as citizens of His kingdom, than we have in showing what the King is like.

We have often quoted the statement that “the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people” as if it were a goal to be reached in order to fulfill God’s expectations of a remnant people. We have quoted from memory the promise that “if we would humble ourselves before God, and be kind and courteous and tenderhearted and pitiful, there would be one hundred conversions to the truth where now there is only one” (9T, 190) as if it were another device for successful church growth. We are right, of course, in both regards; however, the important message of both is that God needs a people that reflect His glory so He can draw more people unto Himself!

If God needs disciples who can reveal His glory, then the obvious goal of our ministry and mission must be to make more of the same. The organized church throughout the centuries has often felt comfortable with the “baptizing” and “teaching them all things” parts of the Great Commission (Matthew 28). According to Jesus, though, these are only steps to making new “disciples.” It is really the only raison d’être for church. This is why we must be careful not to equate numbers of baptisms with success. Success, if we dare use that word for man’s endeavors, is only found in God’s kingdom as new believers become maturing disciples and disciplers—reaching out to a lost world in the glorious name of our God. Engel and Dyrness remind us that: "Numerical growth, if it occurs, is an outcome of a church that is pure and blameless, not a goal in and of itself."
The traditional form of church (and its mission) has been the Informational Model which teaches its members that they need to tell the truth “to as many people as you can as fast as you can.” Of course, we do have truth to share, and we have promoted many good ways to share those truths with the world. This is not bad; but when this is the primary model, we find the church failing to fulfill the mission of every disciple giving God glory. The illustration on the left shows how this model results in the “professionals” who have the gifts of evangelism, preaching, and teaching doing most of the evangelism since they can talk well and reap well. Their gifts are good gifts, but they have only a few of the gifts listed in Scripture. The result is that most members become spectators, cheering the evangelist from the sidelines. “Spectator” is not one of the definitions of a disciple!

The Glory of God model, on the other hand, emphasizes “building people who live God’s love.” The church working from this model reaches people through relationships. This requires every spiritual gift since different people are attracted to God’s glory in different ways. Since no one has every gift, everyone in the church is involved in “evangelism” (making relationships for God) since no one has every gift, everyone in the church is involved in “evangelism” (making relationships for God) which, of course, is the essence of discipleship. Thus, God’s glory is being revealed in this church more than in a church emphasizing programs for information distribution.

The Glory of God model of doing church does not exclude communicating information. If our mission is to bring glory to God, we will communicate information about God, about His plan, about His ways. But showing God’s glory will be the motivation! We must share truth—if by truth, we mean the truth about God and His revealed will—or we will share a false story about God. Truth, however, about God can only be communicated if it actually reveals His glory. Information about our God, given at the proper time in a relationship, which results in a person being drawn to worship His creator, is the kind of information sharing that the “Glory of God” model envisions.

We cannot claim to be God’s remnant if we aren’t letting Him use us in His mission to draw all men unto Himself. The three angels’ messages tell us that there is a special urgency to God’s mission in these last days. We must be people who are faithful to Jesus, follow Him completely, and reflect His character in and out of the church so that His name will be glorified as justified and sanctified people of all nations worship Him as their creator and redeemer. The challenge, then, is to make sure that our lives and the programs of our mission enterprise are assisting in this ministry and mission of glorifying God, and not hindering it.

“And I pray that Christ will be more and more at home in your hearts as you trust in him. May your roots go down deep into the soil of God’s marvelous love. And may you have the power to understand, as all God’s people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love really is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is so great you will never fully understand it. Then you will be filled with the fullness of life and power that comes from God. Now glory be to God! By his mighty power at work within us, he is able to accomplish infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask or hope. May he be given glory in the church and in Christ Jesus forever and ever through endless ages. Amen.” (Ephesians 3:17-20 NLT)
