Dear Fellow Servants,

Is it important for the church today to encourage, value, and support various kinds of professionals in its missionary enterprise? Should all Adventist missionaries be IDEs? Or is there a place for volunteers, tentmakers, short-term missionaries, self-supporting, contract and other types of workers? Should missionaries only be employed by the church or is there room for real missionaries to be employed by secular institutions?

When the Apostle Peter talks about the chosen people, the royal priesthood, the holy nation, the people that belong to God (1 Peter 2:9), I believe he is referring to all members of the body of Christ—those who have joined his church and follow Him as His disciples. Interestingly, the body is made up of different members, each one with its skills and abilities that adds to the proper functioning and life of the whole. Not only are they all different from each other, they also function and operate using various types of resources and rules that often differ from one another. Nevertheless all work for one purpose, with one accord, and in unity.

The great commission (Matthew 28:18-20) reads: "Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'" This passage tells us several things about the sending of missionaries.

Who sends? The risen Christ through His Church
On what basis are we sent? The authority and command of Christ
Who are sent? All disciples
Who are we sent to? All nations (peoples/ethnic groups)
What is to be done? Go--action is required
  Make disciples
  Baptize
  Teach them to obey Jesus' commands

What is the source of power for this mission? Jesus is with us always
How long does this mission last? Until the very end of the age

Indeed, Jesus “calls for volunteers who will cooperate with Him in the great work of sowing the world with truth. . . . in every place to which they can gain access. . . . His kingdom is to be enlarged” (1SM 112). "Christ is calling for volunteers. . . . The church is languishing for the help of young men [and women] who will bear a courageous testimony, who will with their ardent zeal stir up the sluggish energies of God's people, and so increase the power of the church in the world" (MYP 24, 25).

If that is so, then more than ever the church needs to encourage and support various types of mission platforms and activities. Here are some reasons why a multifaceted mission effort is so important and needed today.*

Entry into creative access countries. More than 75% of the world population, including most unreached people, live in countries that do not allow entry of Christian missionaries.
Natural contact with non-believers in both creative access and open countries is an essential for winning them. Volunteers and tentmakers can relate easily to their professional counterparts.


Cheryl Doss
IWM Newsletter

INSIDE. . .

One of the fastest growing phenomenon in mission today is the growth of short term and volunteer mission. Those of us in fulltime mission are often called upon to host or otherwise facilitate such mission activities. We hope this newsletter will spark your thinking on this current issue.

Please note two important changes at IWM. 1) Next year the re-entry seminars will be held in June. We are hoping this will prove to be a better time for many of you who are returning permanently. 2) Please register at the new IWM online forum (see pg. 2). We really hope to see these forums become a way of maintaining missionary fellowship across the miles.

Cheryl Doss

IWM Schedule of Events

July 10-15, 2007
Andrews Re-entry

July 24-August 11, 2007
Europe Institute

Oct. 22-Nov. 10, 2007
Andrews Institute

January 14– February 2, 2008
African Institute

April 14-May 3, 2008
Asia Institute

June 24-30, 2008
Andrews Re-entry

July 14– August 2, 2008
Andrews Institute
Focus On Spring Council, 2007

During the GC Spring meeting, April 10 and 11, many reports were given, policies voted, and discussions on other church matters engaged in. An item IDEs might find of interest focuses on the church’s evangelistic mission, reminding all of us of the church’s continual growth since its beginning in the mid-nineteenth century.

About 3,500 members worshiped in a few dozen churches in North America in 1863. Today the Adventist Church comprises more than fourteen million members worldwide.

In 1863 there was one Adventist for every 1,268; and last year, there was one Adventist for every 430 persons in the world.

It took the church 107 years (1848-1955) to grow to 1 million members; 14.7 years (1955-1970) to reach the 2 million mark; 3.3 years (1983-1986) to hit the 5 million mark. Since 1986, the church has grown by a million members every 12 to 14 months.

While membership growth is an important indication that we are reaching people around the world, Secretariat records indicate that a greater focus must be placed on member retention. Some suggestions mentioned included establishing an accountability process, aggressively focusing on designing a discipling-oriented church, and cultivating a spirit of true love and concern for all others.

“We have to have in our hearts a love for people,” President Paulsen said. “More than anything else . . . this will help us to retain our members.”

“Tentmakers”

There are hundreds of SDA’s who are working in cultures other than their home base. Many of these are interested in really being a witness for God where they are working. We call these “tentmakers.” They are not sponsored or sent by any church or parachurch organization, but are members of God’s family inviting others in a cross-cultural context to know God better.

Lester Merklin
Conserves scarce SDA church mission funds for missionaries that must have full support, at a time of rising costs worldwide and an often uncertain economy.

Multiples personnel. There will never be enough paid religious workers. Professional lay people who witness in the workplace add a great resource to world evangelism, which was initially a lay movement.

Supplements Christian media (radio, TV, etc) by incarnating the gospel for millions now able to hear it. The gospel must be seen as well as heard. Missionaries of various professions are able to fish out listeners, disciple them, and then establish fellowships/churches.

Proving ground for fulltime missionaries. Professionals who have supported themselves through the language and culture learning period are tried and proven. They are likely to last because they know the real life out there, where they have lived and worked.

The church gains favor with governments and communities when professionals through institutions and agencies like Loma Linda, ADRA, food Industries, etc. use their skills in helping to develop partnerships with secular institutions.

Volunteering and tentmaking offer ideal opportunities for missionaries from countries which cannot follow the Western model of donor support.

Volunteer and tentmaking opportunities make use of today's vast global job market which God has, perhaps, engineered to help us finish the work of preaching the Gospel to all nations, tribes, peoples, and languages.

All who want to commit to the task of witnessing cross-culturally will find that the opportunities are limitless. In addition to serving as fulltime missionaries we can be volunteers, tentmakers, short-termers or support those who are doing this important work. What is essential is that we all—as members of the body of Christ—be an integral part of the mission of the church. Your efforts and commitment to witnessing Christ’s gospel to as many people in as many countries as possible will be rewarded. May God help each one of us fulfill His mission!

Wagner Kuhn
**Resources for Volunteer Mission**

**Books**


*Passport to Mission.* Baumgartner, Dybdahl, Gustin, Moyer, Doss, eds. 2nd edition. Institute of World Mission, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI. 2002


**Journal of Adventist Mission Studies**

Are you looking for an Adventist publication dealing with current issues in mission? If so, subscribe for only $15(US) per year to the new journal of the International Fellowship of Adventist Mission Studies. For more information e-mail jams@andrews.edu.

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**You Know You’re an MK When. . .**

You still feel the urge to fill the tub when the electricity goes off, because you know the water is next.

From “You Know You’re an MK When” by Andy & Deborah Kerr

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**MK Corner**

Kids around the world love to play games. One of the best ways to make new friends or have a fun family time is to play games together. Here are a couple of games from different parts of the world you can try with your friends and your family.

**Crab Race**

*A Japanese Game*

**Materials:** None

**Play:** To play this game, follow these steps:

- **Step 1:** Form two relay teams of equal number of players
- **Step 2:** Set up a goal line for each team
- **Step 3:** The first player on each team leans backward and moves on all fours to look like a crab. The player must move in this position to the goal line and back.
- **Step 4:** The player touches the next player who continues in the same way until all players have gone to the goal line and back. First team to finish wins.

**Gorelki**

*Russian Line Tag*

**Materials:** Rope or masking tape

**Preparation:** Lay a 5 ft. (1.5 m) line or rope or masking tape in an open area

**Play:** Choose one player to be “It.” Rest of group lines up in two equal lines, about 10 ft. (3m) from the line. “It” stands behind the line. When “It” says, “Last ones run,” the last ones in each line run up the outside of their lines and join hands at the front of the lines before “It” can tag either one of them. If “It” tags a player before the pair can join hands, the tagged player becomes “It” and they switch places.
The wisest man in earth's history understood the value and mathematics of partnership. One may be good. One may have good ideas, skills and energy, but two—two have the potential to be great, because their individual ideas, skills and energy can combine and grow in new directions. Ultimately, Solomon’s conclusion is that “two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work” (Eccl. 4:9).

A good return for our work. Isn't that something we all want—especially in the mission field? More work done and more hands to do it. More people healed and taught and led. Yes, we all want a good return for our work. Fortunately, Solomon, in his God-given wisdom, has given us a very practical avenue through which to get this good return: partnership.

In the mission field, partnership is essential, as are good partners to help do the work that needs to be done. But where can fulltime missionaries find good partners to help them get a good return for their work? One answer to that question is in the men, women and young people who sign up with Adventist Volunteer Services. A small number of fulltime missionaries have already found great partners in Adventist volunteers. Some missionaries like Davonna Church, who runs the Cradle of Love Baby Home in Tanzania, have enlisted the help of volunteers to teach their children. Other missionaries like David Bell, an administrator at Chiangmai Adventist Academy in Thailand, have called volunteers to teach English to the students of the schools that they administer overseas.

No matter what task the volunteers do, however, the fulltime missionaries who work with them have found great value and lasting benefits in the partnership. Mack Tennyson, the Vice President of Finance at Mission College in Thailand, remarks, “Volunteers make all the difference in the world around here. In fact, I doubt we could survive without them!” He says that the volunteers, who hold both faculty and leadership positions at the college, contribute “expertise, enthusiasm and spiritual energy” to his team of “overworked and tired” missionaries and employees.

The words Tennyson uses to describe what volunteers bring to Mission College can be used to describe what volunteers in general bring to the mission field. Volunteers supply expertise; many of them are skilled workers and are educated in areas ranging from computer science to agricultural education to homiletics. Enthusiastic about sharing their expertise, many volunteers bring vitality and new ideas to the mission field. “Often when our own energy expires, we can look to [volunteers] for inspiration,” says J. Maxwell Dowling, an IDE who is director of SDA Language Schools in Thailand, of the enthusiasm of volunteers. Finally, since many volunteers sign up for AVS because they have a desire to serve God and go wherever He calls them, they often have a sizable dosage of spiritual energy to share.

Even after they go home volunteers can benefit IDEs and their work. David Bell says that volunteers who have good experiences overseas have “often taken a good report back to their home churches about the work going on in our area. Those people then become supporters” of the same mission and often give support both in terms of prayers and money.

With all the benefits that come along with calling volunteers, many fulltime missionaries attest to the fact that they are getting a good return for their work because of the partnership. In fact, John Thomas, principal of Maxwell Adventist Academy in Kenya, feels that the volunteers make such a positive impact at his school that he “would encourage any place using IDEs to gain the benefit of volunteers.” Mack Tennyson echoes his sentiment saying that, “IDEs need to have as many volunteers as they can get their hands on.”
Undoubtedly, the present partnership between IDEs and volunteers is good, but it has the potential to be even better. Currently the number of missionaries who call volunteers is few and though volunteers have a wide range of skills, missionaries call them almost solely to fill teaching, assistant teaching and dormitory dean positions. Things could be different. IDEs could take even more advantage of the volunteer program. They could call more volunteers to fill more—and more diverse—positions. Volunteers could very definitely help IDEs get an even better return for their work.

Imagine the possibilities. An IDE who runs a small clinic in Zimbabwe could call a newly graduated medical student from Loma Linda University. With the medical student’s help, the clinic may be able to help more patients than ever before. A union president who is an IDE might call a volunteer with a degree in computer science to do maintenance and upkeep on the computers in the union office. Because of the volunteer’s expertise, the union employees might be able to do their work with more efficiency. A missionary who is the pastor of a quickly growing church in Chile could call a theology student to work along side him as a youth pastor. An IDE who is in charge of a publishing house in Bulgaria could call a volunteer to help translate church documents into the natives’ mother tongue. By calling volunteers to work with them side by side, IDEs may be able to accomplish more tasks than they ever thought possible.

Volunteers are not limited, though, to working directly with IDEs. An IDE who is a conference director in SUD or ECD, for example, would surely benefit from calling volunteers to help in remote areas of the conference where there is a great need for workers, but not enough IDEs to fill that need. Perhaps this conference director needs Pathfinder directors or church pastors to fill positions in remote areas; maybe he needs people who could help teach worship orders and styles to a newly born church congregation. For these kinds of positions, volunteers with degrees in Education or Theology would be an asset for the conference director even though they would not be working directly with him.

Whether they call volunteers to work with them directly or indirectly, if missionaries were to really take advantage of all that volunteers have to offer, the possibilities would be endless and the return would be great. Yet, there seems to be one big obstacle to this beneficial partnership. Many institutions headed by IDEs simply do not have the money to pay for a volunteer’s rent, board, insurance and stipend. If only there was a way to host a volunteer for free!

Imagine for a moment that there is a way to host a volunteer free of charge. Imagine that there is a program through which an IDE can call a volunteer who has been fully funded by a church, organization or wealthy individual. For IDEs who cannot afford to call volunteers, such a program could make a huge difference. This program, however, need not be imagined; it is a reality! It is the HisHands program, and it is facilitated by the AVS office. The mission of the HisHands program is to encourage churches to fully sponsor volunteers who would like to serve overseas for a certain time period. In return, the same churches would also be able to host a fully funded volunteer. The program is designed to make hosting a volunteer possible for churches or institutions that could otherwise not afford to do so. Through HisHands a clinic director could call a volunteer as a medical aid without having to write a check. Through HisHands, a conference director could, without having to pay a dime, bring a Pathfinder director from overseas to an area in his country where there is a need. Through HisHands, missionaries could build an even better partnership with volunteers.

All that the AVS office needs from institutions, conferences, schools or churches that want a HisHands volunteer are calls. Regardless of the financial situation of their institutions/conference, IDEs can fill out Service Requests for the church leaders and pastors, Pathfinder directors and teachers, nurses and computer technicians that they need. On the Service Request itself, an IDE can mark that he or she needs a fully funded, or HisHands volunteer. While we cannot find volunteers for calls that we don't have, we can do everything in our power to fill the calls we do have, regardless of the funding that calling institutions can or cannot offer.

Perhaps it is time now to ask yourself, could HisHands help you have a better return for your work on the mission field? If the answer is yes, maybe it’s time to consider partnering with volunteers.