Leviticus 10:1: And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not.

Ministry magazine: During the time the SDA Church was promoting the Celebration movement, the October 1991 issue of Ministry magazine, by the SDA Ministerial Association, included the following.

1. Recommended reading
   a. Participating in Worship by Craig Douglas Erickson (a pastor for a non-SDA theological seminary): He promotes the charismatic movement and meditations, including the silence of centering.
   b. Touch Holiness: Resources for Worship, by Ruth C. Duck and Maren C. Tirabassi: This book includes a variety of liturgical perspectives and provides readings and prayers for different services, including the “liturgical year” and “sacraments and rites.” Ministry suggested that with “occasional modifications,” any church could use the material, that it could add “freshness and a touch of elegance” to worship services.
   c. Acting Out the Gospels With Mimes, Puppets, and Clowns by William DeAngelis: Instructions for 19 plays are included. Ministry stated that it was written for Catholics but could be “easily adapted to any church.”

2. Articles on how to infiltrate the Celebration worship style into the churches.
   a. “Selling Change” by Darryl Comstock: This author promotes the Celebration services as a way to reclaim former members; states that those type of services are “warm, lively, and markedly less traditional” with an “exciting growth in membership”; and mentions changes such as moving the pulpit closer to the congregation, singing livelier songs from a screen and sometimes accompanied with guitars and drums (stating that it was too bad they bought all those new hymnals), using more drama, clapping and raising of hands, changing the order of service and the forms of public prayer, possibly doing away with parts of the Sabbath school program, and shorter sermons with less emphasis on doctrine and more emphasis on the gospel, relationships, praise, and social issues.
Celebration movement

Comstock goes on to explain how pastors are trying to rejuvenate their sometimes “lackluster services” but that “the changes have upset some people” and that it would be tragic to “adopt a liturgy” that “weakens the unity” which is a “prerequisite for the latter rain” and the “gift of the Spirit.” He recommends that those promoting Celebration should not move so fast as to “cause undue distress,” otherwise it would create disunity which is not compatible with Pentecost. He states that to “make sudden changes” in the area of music would cause too much opposition, that a slow process [creeping compromise] gives members “more time to adjust to the new ideas” and allows change without division. He expresses his belief that the church in 1991 was “experiencing the stirrings of the Holy Spirit” that would grow into that “long-awaited explosion of love known as the latter rain.” That was 20 years ago. The latter rain never came. It cannot come in the midst of infiltrating the celebration ideas into the SDA organization. http://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1991/October/selling-change

b. “101 ideas for better worship services” (Reprint from WORSHIP, a publication of the Department of Church Ministries, South Pacific Division of the SDA Church in Australia): Ministry stated that the following suggestions were “designed to add life and vigor” to worship services. While many ideas were good, those that are questionable or do not agree with God’s instructions are included below.

- Try a role play (acting out) a sermon, involving some of the younger members or dramatize a Scripture passage.
- A staged interruption as an attention-getter.
- Have a “rousing praise service.”
- Use of an overhead projector to see the words of the songs. Unfortunately, this has allowed for the raising of hands.
- Use of a written prayer such as from a prayer book. However, not only are many authored prayers not doctrinally correct, but prayer should come from the heart and through the Holy Spirit.
- Use drama or a mime to highlight the Scripture reading.
- A suggestion is made for the congregation to read the Scripture responsively and that if Bible translations is a problem, to put the verse on an overhead screen. Yet if everyone had kept to the King James Version, there would not be a translation problem.
During the welcome, allow time for members to greet visitors next to them. Is this the right time and place for visiting? It certainly disrupts the reverence and sends a message to children and visitors that it is all right to visit with each other in the sanctuary. The social time should be reserved for outside the sanctuary.

During children’s story, use a little sleight of hand to get the children’s attention and show that “things aren’t always what they appear to be.” Is this why magic tricks are performed in the schools and churches? Certainly a point can be made and interest held without using tricks.

Have the children act out charades.

Invite the adults to go to a child and tell him or her that they are happy the child is “part of the church family and how much they love having children in the church.” Again, this is not the right time and place.

Invite the children to spontaneously dramatize a well-known Bible story. Besides the fact that drama should not be done, it leaves plenty of room for hilarity, since the children are not prepared.

Take advantage of the public’s interest in Easter (such as Latin American SDA churches do). Hold a Sunday celebration of the Resurrection (drama could be used). [http://ministrymagazine.org/archive/1991/October/101-ideas-for-better-worship-services](http://ministrymagazine.org/archive/1991/October/101-ideas-for-better-worship-services)

Many of these suggestions have been accepted in SDA churches. The leaders told the members that they did not know the outcome of the celebration worship style but that they should try it and then wait to see what would happen. A true Christian will never experiment with something that cannot be supported by Scripture.


A February 2000 Ministry magazine featured an article entitled “Worship and Praise: One Model for Change in the Worship Hour” by John Solomon, who at the time was the associate pastor at the Yakima SDA Church in the state of Washington. He explained a plan that is “flexible, simple, and yet effective,” that “starts from the small group and works out informally into the congregation as a whole.” The following steps were suggested to help transition a church into more contemporary music in order to help it grow:

- “Start by educating a small group of leaders.” If they are convinced, they can help “initiate changes gradually,” such as bringing a guitar and introducing praise music with “words coming straight from the Bible.”
- The leaders can then begin “introducing these songs to small groups in the congregation,” such as Sabbath School classes. Once they become “accustomed
to the music,” the pastor can meet with the leaders to “plan for a Sabbath when some of the music may be introduced to the larger setting of worship.”

- After that first Sabbath, the pastor can make these changes:
  
  o “Add a praise song at the end of the sermon” or “just before or after the greeting time.”
  o In the call to worship, use a “more traditional hymn and a praise song based on a biblical text.”
  o Include a sermon or a series of sermons on music and have the musicians “pull out the stops on some of the great hymns and biblical songs,” and “authentically focus on Christ and on worship, rather than on the music itself. The Bible is full of instances in which a worship gathering is marked with singing and praising, along with the sharing of the Word.” However, the praising by Christians in the Bible was far from the “praise” of today.
  o “Add more musicians to the music time” for variety.
  o Continue offering “lively renditions of hymn music along with praise music.”
  o Have each small group take charge of the music on a Sabbath, using the same songs the small groups use and rotating the leadership of the music groups.

The article concluded that “modern music in worship is crucial if we are going to keep in touch with many important sectors of contemporary culture. We need to pray, fully seeking the direction of the Holy Spirit as we contemplate reaching people. We must be sure we are following the guiding of the Holy Spirit. Through a willingness to work within culture, we can, like Paul, be all things to all people so as to win the unchurched to Christ and to the power of the gospel.” The author also quoted George Barna, Bill Hybels, and other emergents and promoted the Maranatha! Music Praise Chorus Book. Maranatha! Music was started in 1971 by Chuck Smith, Sr. of Calvary Chapel to promote the “Jesus Music” his young hippie followers were writing and singing.

Again we can see in the steps above a way to gradually infiltrate the SDA Church with modern ways of worshiping, especially through a change in music. That is not how the Holy Spirit works.

**Following are some observations again from the book The Road to Rome by Colin and Russell Standish:**

*Celebration movement*
• Celebration-style worship services are introducing irreverent worship forms; encouraging popular religious songs, bodily attitudes and gestures; teaching to accept all just as they are; preaching “loving” sermons; and stating to not be "negative.” These services lack vital present truth, yet it is claimed that these will be “a savior of our church” to “reunite the backslidden with God’s church and make it more acceptable and attractive to nonbelievers.” It is an insult to Bible truth and faithful SDAs to hear that the problems in the SDA Church can be corrected by changing the worship services. The only way to escape the spiritual decline is through confession and repentance.

• Introducing Catholic terminology is desensitizing our people to Roman Catholicism. Examples include the words “celebration,” “liturgy,” and “canticles” (as seen in the latest SDA hymnal).

• One SDA church (Dundas, New South Wales, Australia) announced the Lord’s Supper in its bulletin as the “Celebration of the Eucharist.”

• This is no time to “sing with false joy” as many “journey down that road” to Rome.

The celebration-type churches are not feeding the congregations with the “meat of the Word” but with “party cake.” It is all about having fun and getting along as one big, happy, loving family regardless of the beliefs. This is not the type of celebration God’s faithful are to be involved with. True celebration is calm, not full of excitement. Yes, we are to have enjoyment in life, but when it is all about fun, we miss the seriousness of sin and being reverent to God. How does God ask us to celebrate?

Last Day Events, p. 93: We must go to the people with the solid Word of God, and when they receive that Word, the Holy Spirit may come, but it always comes, as I have stated before, in a way that commends itself to the judgment of the people. In our speaking, our singing, and in all our spiritual exercises, we are to reveal that calmness and dignity and godly fear that actuates every true child of God.

It is through the Word--not feeling, not excitement--that we want to influence the people to obey the truth. On the platform of God's Word we can stand with safety.

This Day With God, p. 368: Last night the Christmas [Eve] celebration was held in the [Battle Creek] Tabernacle, and it passed off well--modestly, solemnly, and with gratitude expressed in everything done and said, because Jesus the Prince of Life had come to our world a babe in Bethlehem to be an offering for sin.