“Saving the Children!”

“I can’t bear any more of this,” said one pastor, “it’s too much for me.” He was speaking about the four-hour seminar, which was held January 20, 2007 at Canada Christian College in Toronto by Cory Jewell Jensen, co-director of the Center for Behavioral Intervention in Oregon, USA. The pastor was referring to the information Jensen was sharing about the damage done to children who were victims of sexual abuse.

Close to 800 church officers and pastors in the Greater Toronto Area turned up at Canada Christian College to listen to Cory Jensen. The Ontario Conference had publicized the event for a number of weeks, encouraging all church members who worked with children to attend. Some might even have wondered why four hours was necessary, but they came anyway not knowing what to expect. They quickly discovered that four hours was hardly sufficient.

From the moment Pastor Antonio Bueno, executive secretary of the Ontario Conference, introduced her, Mrs. Jensen held the attention of the audience with her video clips of convicted paedophiles, describing their methods of targeting and seducing children. She carefully exposed the audience to the world of sexual predators and the suffering inflicted on their vulnerable young victims. Her intention was to show the audience how church leaders and officers can help to prevent sexual abuse in their homes and churches.

“Sexual predators view the church as an easy target,” said Jensen, “because it is a place where people feel safe. Some molesters infiltrate and affiliate with specific institutions in order to approach children and hide their crimes.” She described situations in churches of various denominations where young children were sexually molested by different predators. One predator described how he spent an entire year befriending a family at church just to get access to their young daughter. In another situation, after a child reported that she had been molested by a close family member, the offender expressed his sorrow and the church leadership sought to bring about reconciliation and forgiveness.

Camp meetings across Ontario in 2007 are changing. The year 2007 is a year for trying something different. For many years, the Ontario Conference ran one large multi-day meeting in Oshawa and three or four other localized meetings across the province. This year, more emphasis is being placed on building the regional camp meetings in Ottawa, Simcoe, Sudbury and Thunder Bay, while still holding the main meeting in or near Toronto.

Dwight Nelson, Camp Meeting 2007 Speaker

Pastor Dwight K. Nelson will be the speaker for camp meeting 2007. He is the senior pastor of Pioneer Memorial Church of Seventh-day Adventists on the campus of Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan. He began his pastorate there in 1983 and also serves as adjunct professor of homiletics at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary.
Editorial

Some years ago, I heard a story about a man who took his young son to the Empire State Building in New York. As they looked down from the 20th floor, he asked the boy, “What do you see, son?”

“A white man and a black man, daddy,” replied the boy. They climbed to further floors, the father repeating the question and receiving the same answer each time. Finally, they arrived at a floor so high that when the question was repeated, the boy responded, “I see two men, daddy.”

At last the father was satisfied and said, “Son, that’s what I was waiting to hear. I want you to see people as people.”

Martin Luther King Jr. had a dream that “one day men will be judged by the content of their heart and not by the colour of their skin.” The Christian church, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in particular, should be the place where all people are embraced and valued irrespective of ethnicity, race or gender, because we all belong to God. His loving sacrifice has made us one. Therefore, anything that keeps us apart or causes one or more groups to be marginalised should not have any place among God’s family on earth. Didn’t Jesus break down the walls of separation? Are we not one in Christ (Gal 3:28)?

Given that there is agreement that we are one in Christ, why then are we quick to celebrate our differences in ways that, sometimes, leaves others feeling excluded or could give the impression that some groups would rather be separate? For example, how do ethnic or language camp meetings contribute to the unity and well-being of the church? Or, with the exception of the two official languages of Canada, should we have churches that are established solely along language or ethnic considerations? Given that communities in Ontario tend to be multi-ethnic, how well does language - or ethnically-based churches serve the local community in which they are based?

Some new immigrants, not knowing French or English, find it very helpful initially to hear their own language in church; why not let this be part of the programme of a number of English or French-speaking churches as people learn the language and integrate? Small cell groups based on language could operate within a church. The Immanuel Church offers a pretty good model where different language groups are brought together as one congregation. The Bramalea Church, with a large percentage of Filipinos, offers Sabbath School class in English and Tagalog. Both Filipinos and non-Filipinos are able to worship as one congregation. The New Life African Church recently changed its name to All Nations when it recognised the need to be inclusive of all people in its local community.

Even the idea of a Black History Month - as noble as it is, born out of secular ideals of blacks in the USA, yet celebrated on Sabbath in some of our churches - could be seen as the celebration of one group to the exclusion of others. The impression could be given that some congregations place more emphasis on this than they do on teaching Adventist heritage to our children. This February, I was happy to learn that one congregation in Toronto, in its celebration of Black History Month, considered the contribution of blacks to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. They left the secular celebration to the schools and libraries or held it on a Sunday or weekday.

Someone once suggested as a world-wide, multi-ethnic church that we should have a heritage month when we can celebrate the contribution of all peoples to God’s church and the spread of the gospel into all the world.

Maybe we have been following the wrong model – the one provided by secular Canadian society. Rather than promoting a multi-cultural church where different groups maintain their separateness while (hopefully) working for one purpose, we should seek the inter-cultural model where we don’t see a Spanish or Filipino woman but simply, two women who belong to God, sisters belonging to one family, the family of heaven.

Halsey Peat
Editor
not realising that the problem was more complex than they thought and did not report the matter to the authorities. The man later went on to molest other children before being caught and convicted.

Jensen revealed that by the time a predator is caught, he has already sexually molested between 10 to 20 girls or 30 to 50 boys! She showed how some studies reveal that nearly one in every five adults were molested as children.

“Abusers,” she said, “could be anyone. You can’t tell by looking.” She gave examples of molesters who had been judges, lawyers, police officers, paediatricians, scout leaders, church camp counsellors, Sunday school teachers, pastors, school bus drivers, day care providers, construction workers, and teachers.

In light of the vulnerability of children, Jensen stressed the need for churches to have clear and tight policies to help keep their children safe from sexual predators. She cited one offender who said, “If a school or church had tight policies and talked openly about offenders and child abuse, I’ll probably move on.”

Jensen’s seminar is an indicator of the importance that the Ontario Conference places on the safety of its children. In addition to the January 20 meeting, others were held over the following two days when Jensen spoke to all teachers and pastors in the conference. She outlined some of the policies that could be adopted by churches and schools. The conference administration is now considering these, along with established policies, to determine the most effective measures that will help churches and schools. Meanwhile, parents and churches are able to follow some of the steps in prevention outlined by Jensen.

Some in the audience wanted to know if an offender could be cured. She replied, “Good sexual offender treatment helps reduce re-offence rates but can never cure anyone,” and that “treatment requires lifetime intervention and safety/behavioural rules.” It became clear that convicted offenders, having served their prison sentence, are likely to re-offend unless they receive treatment and placed under supervision.

1. The responsibility of parents and church leaders to teach children healthy values about sexuality, otherwise the predator will do his own teaching.
2. The willingness of parents and adults in church to listen to children and to assure them that they will always be listened to.
3. Adults assuming the responsibility of protecting children. Children should not be expected to take care of themselves.
4. Giving your child specific information about where on their body they should not be touched or touch others.
5. Getting to know your child’s friends and the homes in which your child plays.
6. Learning about the prevention programme that your child’s school uses and discuss it at home with your children. Have “safety talks” with your children several times a year.
7. Almost one quarter of children are exposed to “unwanted” pornography via the internet. Supervise your child’s computer use and block obscenity and pornography.

Reflecting on this, Children’s Ministry director, Debra Carby, commented: “It’s our responsibility to create a safe environment for our children...It’s really unfortunate that we have to deal with this.”

For over five years, the Ontario Conference has been urging churches to be more vigilant in helping to prevent the sexual abuse of their children. Police record checks and volunteer forms have been a requirement for all church officers. Many officers have taken the time to honour it, and some church boards have insisted on it. Unfortunately, others have not yet sensed the need. The conference has taken further steps through the action by the Board of Directors that police record checks be repeated every three years. Previously, no repeat was required. In addition, all employees of the Ontario Conference are now required to have the more extensive vulnerable sector screening done as...
Next to parents, teachers have the greatest impact on the future lives of their students. Teachers never teach from a moral vacuum but bring the sum total of their world views, their values, and their spirituality to the classroom. The question parents must ask is this: What values do we want for our children?

“Straight Talk – Part I” (Nov. 2006 Highlights) dealt primarily with the financial issues and challenges of Adventist education. Part 2 addresses commonly asked questions about teacher’s qualifications, curriculum, and support.

I’ve heard that the teachers in the Adventist system are unqualified. Is this true?

Of the 68 teachers currently teaching in our system, all have university degrees; all but a handful are fully certified; and 39.8% of our teachers have at least one graduate degree. All teachers are required to be denominationally certified (or in the process), and about 30% of our teachers also have provincial certification. Most supply teachers have university degrees. All teachers in our high school must be certified in the areas in which they teach.

What curriculum do Adventist schools use? Can my child transfer between an Adventist and a public school system?

Adventist schools follow both the North American Division (NAD) Seventh-day Adventist curriculum and the Ontario curriculum. In most cases, there is little difference between them. Where there is substantial difference in content—social studies, some math levels—the provincial curriculum is followed. The Bible curriculum understandably comes from the NAD. What is different is the Adventist teacher, teaching from an Adventist world view, who infuses that curriculum with Adventist values. It’s what we call “the integration of faith and learning,” and it makes all the difference.

Your child should have no difficulty transferring from a non-Adventist or public school to an Adventist one, all other factors being satisfactory.

What about professional upgrading for Adventist teachers?

Glad you asked. Our conference spent close to $30,000 this past August sending our teachers to Nashville, TN, for a North American Division Teachers’ Convention. These conventions are held every five years. Well-known educational gurus like William Glasser, William Daggett, Jerry Johns, Bernice McCarthy and many more presented.

Teachers don’t usually go to Tennessee; however, for in-serviceing, our conference holds an Ontario Teachers’ Retreat every fall and offers up to six professional development days annually because continued upgrading for teachers is important.
About 15 teachers attend CaUC in the summer for certification upgrading or to work on a graduate education degree through La Sierra University. In addition, about six to eight teachers attend other venues to enhance their learning.

The grade 4 class at College Park Elementary listens attentively to teacher, Adam Mohrs

During the school year, teachers take six scheduled professional development days when they are either in-serviced or asked to attend local offerings for upgrading. In addition, teachers receive two “floating” professional development days to attend specific seminars, etc. In many ways, education is a rapidly changing field and, as educators, teachers are expected to take advantage of continuous learning opportunities.

**Why don’t our schools do more for special needs children?**

We are making some progress on this front, though there is much more to do. Two of our schools now have either part-time or full-time reading specialist/learning resource teachers because the majority of “special needs” children need specialized, one-on-one help with reading, another six teachers have been trained in Orton-Gillingham reading techniques. This multi-sensory, repetitious, sequential programme is considered the most effective reading method for the 15% of the population who require additional help with reading. Since early intervention for a child who is behind in reading acquisition is far better than remediation later on, we are encouraging our kindergarten and early primary teachers to be much more vigilant in monitoring the reading progress.

Our hearts go out to parents – both Adventist and otherwise—whose children fall into the “special needs” category; however, we must say that it is important that our schools accept children that they can help. Accepting students whose needs cannot be appropriately met in our schools is immoral. However, our teachers should be able to meet the needs of most children with mild learning disabilities, provided there are no significant behavioural or other complicating issues.

Fortunately, today’s teacher training programmes must include one or more courses in teaching the exceptional child. Teachers who are well-trained in special education techniques are more effective teachers for ALL students.

**I hardly ever hear our pastor speak about Adventist education from the pulpit. Why?**

I believe that most Ontario pastors are committed to Adventist education. They understand its importance and its inherent value in nurturing our children in Adventism. But pastors live busy and complicated lives, just like the rest of us, and before they know it, items like church budget and church buildings nudge Adventist education from the radar screen.

But being a pastor-shepherd means being responsible for both the sheep and the lambs within the “fold”. Because Adventists consider Christian education vital in child rearing, pastors are expected to support Adventist education in every way. They must promote it often from the pulpit (either directly through sermons or by indirect references), be aware of which children in their churches are in our schools, and encourage parents within the church to consider Adventist education as a “given” rather than an “option.”

Pastors are also expected to support Adventist education by example – by sending their own children to a nearby Adventist school, if there is one within reasonable distance. If you feel Adventist education is being overlooked by your shepherd, please have friendly talk with him/her. They may need some encouragement from you in promoting Christian education.

You may need to enlist the help of your church’s Adventist Education Leader. And if your church doesn’t have one, encourage your church’s board or nominating committee to select one. This person maintains records about the church’s school-aged children (K through college), assists the pastor in promoting Adventist education, and much more.

**So, tell me again. Why is tuition in Adventist schools so costly?**

Really, it’s a bargain. Tuition currently covers less than one-half the cost of educating your child in an Adventist school. The real cost is about $6,500 – considerably more than the tuition you pay. The rest of the funding comes from a direct church subsidy to your school and from the conference (currently 40% of teacher costs for elementary).

And finally . . . Again, I need to say this: We must look at each child in our local church as one of our own, and it is our privilege and responsibility to provide Adventist education for them. Sound evangelism is keeping our children in our church, and then seeing them spread the Good News to others that Jesus is coming soon!

Strong school systems become excellent by intentionality, not by accident. As our conference moves toward a reasonable way to build our school system to one of strength and excellence, your prayers, best ideas, and financial support are needed.

Ontario Highlights

April 2007
Hilton Garnett Retires

After nearly 11 years since arriving in Ontario, Dr. Hilton Garnett has retired. He arrived in Ontario in the summer of 1996, after serving for many years in the Eastern Caribbean as a pastor, departmental director, conference president, union secretary and union president.

He began service in Ontario as pastor of the Scarborough Adventist Church before being elected in 2001 as the ministerial secretary of the Ontario Conference. After the constituency meeting of 2005, he assumed responsibility for the Hope Church in Toronto.

Pastor Garnett will be greatly missed by many, especially members of the two congregations he served, as well as his ministerial colleagues. His wide smile and friendly disposition won him many friends while his commitment to evangelism and the spread of the gospel earned him the on-going admiration and respect of many others.

The appreciation of the pastors and Bible instructors was clearly evident at a sumptuous retirement dinner, held in honour of Pastor and Sister Garnett at the Mississauga Adventist Church on Tuesday, March 13, 2007. Each speaker spoke glowingly of Pastor Garnett’s positive influence in his life. Ulysses Guarin, treasurer of the Ontario Conference said, “During the four years of working with Elder Garnett, I saw a man of God, up close.”

Pastor Derrick Nichols, president of the Ontario Conference, spoke of the significant contribution made to the church in Ontario and of his authenticity as a person. Dr. Errol Lawrence, successor to Dr. Garnett in the ministerial department, expressed his personal appreciation for the help he received as he assumed his role as ministerial director, “I thank Pastor Garnett for the tremendous work he did in this department and for laying a good foundation for me to follow. I wish him every success.”

Pastor Garnett, moved by the out-pouring of affection towards him, replied, “In my 39 years of ministry, the four years I served as the ministerial director of the Ontario Conference have been the most inspiring and encouraging.”

He was presented with plaques by both the Ontario Conference and the GTA Ministerium.

The dinner was organised by the Greater Toronto Area Ministerium and attended by its pastors, Bible instructors, officers of the conference and a number of directors.
How do you take a youth camp and make it an evangelistic tool to help grow your church? For many years, Camp Frenda has been a place where we have sent our young people for a week or two of summer fun and spiritual growth. For as long as I can remember, the primary use of the camp has been for the benefit of our own children. Recently, however, some of our churches have been using Camp Frenda as an evangelistic tool.

Two churches in particular, New Life Church in Oshawa and Kingsview Village Church in Etobicoke, have seen the camp in a totally different way. The New Life Church is very active in its immediate neighbourhood with its community centre and its outreach to local children. Last year, New Life Church sent nine children from its community to Camp Frenda. This is an amazing feat because they are among one of our smaller churches in our conference, and they do not have the financial base of many of our churches. They sacrifice in order to send community children to our camp. They correctly believe that when the children go to camp and make friends with our children, they will eventually come to church (Sabbath School) and will one day bring their families.

The Kingsview Village Church shares a similar evangelistic vision for the children of their community. Last summer, they sent six children to the camp and plan to double that number this year. They view it as part of reaching out to the youth in their communities to give them hope and purpose. They are actively raising funds so that more children and youth from the community will be able to go to Frenda and enjoy the great camp that we all have access too.

Would you like to make a difference in the lives of your own children and the lives of those children in the church community? You, or your church, can sponsor some children and send them to Camp Frenda. I really believe that if we are not changing the community in which our churches are located, we should close the church doors. God has placed our churches in communities in order to reach out and bring them into a relationship with Jesus Christ. Camp Frenda is an able tool for your church to evangelise your neighbourhoods. Join the New Life and Kingsview Village churches and let your church use Camp Frenda to reach your community.

Paul Llewellyn, Camp Frenda Director

The conference is growing! With over 27,000 members, new groups are emerging.

During 2006, the Belleville Church gave birth to the Flinton group in North Brook; the Brampton Church planted a group of over 60 members in North West Brampton; Good News Fellowship emerged from the Brantford congregation and a new Portuguese group was formed in Cambridge with strong support from the Brampton and Toronto Portuguese churches.

Two congregations have taken on new names. The former Abundant Life has both a new identity and new name, Bread of Life. The company meets at Crawford Adventist Academy.

New Life African’s new name is now All Nations Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Toronto Ukrainian Church has ten pews for sale, cushioned and in excellent condition. Each pew sits four. For more information, please call Igor at 416-833-2820.
There is no doubt about it, Maranatha is a must for many Adventist church officers and members in Ontario. For some, it has become an annual pilgrimage, returning for new or additional training, while for others, it’s always great to see old friends. It’s also a big event with good preaching and rich worship. Maranatha 2007 had all this and more.

Maranatha is all about training and developing church leaders to better serve their churches. With 13 different workshops, Maranatha 2007 offered more opportunities than ever before. There were the staples, such as family, children, health, prayer, and prison ministries, among others. These were joined by Church Planting, Mission Service and Praise & Worship. Returning participants were happy to discover that the workshops had totally new elements to them and were not simply a repeat of last year. Presenters such as Russell Burrill (Community Services), John Tolman (Worship) brought brand new concepts to their workshops that motivated the participants, left them with greater awareness, sharpened their skills and provided them with valuable resources.

“I just love Maranatha,” Chris Adap, of the Mississauga Filipino Church, told the 1000-strong congregation during the morning worship. “It was here I learned about Sabbath School as a new superintendent.”

“It’s my first time,” exclaimed Pascal Kasereka from St. Catharines, “I learned so many things that I want to take back to my church.”

When asked what brought her back for a second year, Lilly, from the Toronto Japanese Church, replied, “A candy room full of knowledge that I wish that it was physically possible to join every single one of these (workshops) so that we could hasten Christ’s coming.”

Pastor Oyeman Mitchell of the Ebenezer and Toronto Heritage churches was one of two pastors who attended the worship workshop. “Maranatha was excellent,” he said, “I attended the praise and worship workshop, and the key thing that I’m taking from it is that in order to have the kind of worship God desires, we must intentionally prepare and give our best.”

Then there was the worship itself. Before Friday’s opening service, hardly anyone outside of the Guelph Adventist Church had heard of a praise team in Guelph. Now they have become the standard by which all praise teams are evaluated. Led by Michael Harris, they led the Friday night and Sabbath morning services with such joy, vitality and carefully chosen songs and words.
The strengthening of the regional camp meetings will involve more financial support and participation of conference officers and departmental directors. In some cases, there will also be a Maranatha-style training on the Sabbath afternoon and/or Sunday. It is anticipated that these regional meetings will benefit many more members and visitors.

The main camp meeting, with Pastor Dwight Nelson, will be held on June 23 at the International Centre, Mississauga, the same venue as in 2005. It was recognized that camp meeting has essentially become a one-day event so the decision was made to restrict it to one day during 2007. The International Centre also has the added advantage of providing better security for children.

While many, in 2005, liked the air conditioned facilities of the International Centre, some missed the grounds of Kingsway College which provided them with a picnic atmosphere. They will be happy to learn that they will still have the picnic atmosphere in 2007. Just five minutes away from the International Centre there is a large, beautiful picnic area in the Wildwood Park, 3430 Derry Rd., that has been reserved for church use.

Eastern Ontario Camp Meeting

The first camp meeting for the year will take place in Ottawa over the weekend of May 8-20, 2007 at the Ottawa West Church (Friday night and Sunday morning) and Lansdowne Park Exhibition Hall (Sabbath).

The speaker will be Dr. Ganoune Diop, professor of Theology, Biblical languages and Exegesis, at Oakwood College, Huntsville, AL. He is a much sought-after multi-gifted speaker and concert flutist.

South Western Ontario Camp Meeting

Theme: Peering into the Heart of God

The South Western Ontario Camp Meeting will be held at the county fairgrounds next to the Simcoe Adventist Church over the weekend of June 8-10, 2007. Elder Don Jacobson, former president of Adventist World Radio, will be the main speaker. He will be accompanied by his wife, Ruth, who will lead workshops on prayer.

Alden Ho of Wheel Salt Ministry, Berrien Springs, Michigan, will be the speaker the youth meetings. He is a passionate youth speaker who loves to share his love for Jesus and to encourage others in their spiritual journey. He has been televised on 3ABN and also featured in the Adventist Review.

The next edition of Ontario Highlights will provide information on the Sudbury and Thunder Bay camp meetings.

Spanish Women’s Retreat – Reflecting Jesus – will be held at Camp Frenda on May 11-13 and will feature Pamela Richards as key note presenter.

Retiro de Mujeres Hispanas-Reflejando a Jesus- se llevara a cabo en Camp Frenda del 11 al 13 de mayo con Pamela Richards como presentadora principal.
Youth Activities

Youth & Children’s Ministries Leadership Convention 2007

Canada Christian College was the place to be for all church leaders that work with children and youth during January 19-20, 2007. Hosted by the Ontario Conference, the annual Youth Leadership Convention had something for everyone, especially with the addition of training for leaders in Children’s Ministry.

Over 350 leaders, from across the province, took the opportunity to receive training that was tailored to meet the needs of children and youth in Ontario.

The challenge of working with today’s youth was highlighted by Pastor Cyril Millett’s presentation, “Understanding Today’s Youth Culture,” on Friday evening. He outlined the basics of postmodernism and its implications for young people growing up in a world fundamentally different from that of their parents.

World Youth Prayer Conference, Texas

The timing wasn’t great because it was in the middle of school, but the location was just perfect. Leaving a wintery Canada during February 28 to March 3, 2007 and going to balmy Texas was, possibly, one of the factors that motivated 24 young people from Ontario to attend the very first World Youth Prayer Conference.

Vacation in winter. Great, eh?

Youth Activities

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Pathfinder chaplain, Pastor Gerardo Oudri

Pastor Kenton Perrin: “Leading the youth is a privilege”

Dr. Ermine Leader

New things to learn about youth leadership

The word was central

Alex Rowe, executive director, Ontario pathfinder council

“Working with children is just wonderful”

Answered prayers

Ontario Highlights

April 2007
World Youth Prayer Conference, Texas

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In the afternoons, some delegates spent time working with the homeless, putting into practice what they learned.

Many delegates loved the worships and the devotionals. Some liked the idea of having youth and young adults as the speakers. Others loved hearing the testimonies of young people and how God had moved in their lives and moved them to reach others for Jesus.

Ontario delegates returned from Dallas with the collective opinion, “It was just great!”
Apple Creek Matriarch Celebrates “99” Years

On March 3, 2007, Mabel Williams, of the Apple Creek Church, celebrated her 99th birthday. Aunt May, as she’s affectionately known, was joined by the church family of over 1000 members in her celebration. She is among the 50 charter members of the Apple Creek Church, dating back to April 2, 1977 at Norbert Road, Scarborough. Since then, Aunt May has always been active in ministry, especially with the youth and in the community. Her home is always open for prayer. “There have been many prayer vigils and all night fasting sessions held there. Everyone considers her home as the central gathering place for members of Apple Creek and other congregations to pray for each other,” recalled one member.

It was significant that her birthday coincided with the dedication of the church. Pastor Dan Jackson, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada, and Pastor Derrick Nichols, president of the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, along with Aunt May seated with: L-R: Mrs. E. Ivkov, J. Guarin, A. Nichols & L. Bueno

On Sabbath, March 17, 2007, nearly 300 members and guests attended the organizing ceremony of the Ajax Seventh-day Adventist Community Church at the Forest Brook Community Church in Ajax. They were welcomed by Elder Charles Leader, pastor of the newly-formed church.

Among the guests were several church and civil dignitaries. These included the officers of the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, President Nichols, Secretary Bueno and Treasurer Guarin. The local community was represented by Mayor Steve Parrish, Chief Vern White of Durham Regional Police and Pastor Lance Brown of Refuge City Pentecostal Church.

Pastor Leader introduced each dignitary and expressed his deep appreciation for their attendance. He also praised the leaders of the congregation for their hard work and consistent efforts in making this church what it is. He invited everyone to rejoice with him on the achievement of the congregation. “This is indeed the day that the Lord has made,” he said, “let us rejoice and be glad in it.”

The town of Ajax has long been the home of a number of Adventist families attending various Adventist congregations across the Greater Toronto Area. In 2004, four of these families began holding prayer meetings at one of their homes. These quickly expanded as other families attended and the desire to meet on Sabbaths was felt. On January 1, 2005, 97 worshippers met to worship at the Refuge City Pentecostal Church at 545 Kingston Road, Ajax. With the assistance of retired pastor, Manley Coleman, they quickly grew into a vibrant congregation. A year later, in January 2006, Pastor Charles Leader was appointed as the first pastor of the congregation.

The Ajax Church welcomes everyone each Sabbath at 9:15 a.m. or at their website: www.ajaxsda.com.

Elder Derrick Nichols, reflecting on the theme, ‘Ajax: A Lighthouse in the Community,’ spoke about the spiritual darkness of the world and how the newly-formed church “must be visible in its influence on the community and its benevolent activities.” He went on to say, “This is how the church must operate – as a lighthouse, with its members as a bunch of individual lights, but together, making one huge bright light for all to see.”

Elder Marcellin & the praise team

Aunt May seated with: L-R: Mrs. E. Ivkov, J. Guarin, A. Nichols & L. Bueno

It was significant that her birthday coincided with the dedication of the church. Pastor Dan Jackson, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada, and Pastor Derrick Nichols, president of the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, along with
other conference officers, joined in the celebration and acknowledged her years of contribution. Senior pastor, Dr. Mansfield Edwards, led the entire congregation in singing “Happy birthday,” to her.

“I was so happy to hear everyone singing happy birthday to me. It felt good to be acknowledged in such a unique way,” exclaimed Aunt May, “I happily shared the beautiful flowers with some of my family and friends. Thank you Apple Creek!”

Collette Forrestor
Communication Secretary

Belleville

On November 18th, 2006 at the Belleville Seventh-day Adventist Church, four souls were given in baptism to the Lord. Pastor Sereivudh Ly baptized Barb Purchase, Carol Scott, Margo Liddle and Christine McDermott. Phyliss Vallieres, Pastor Sekulic and Pastor Ly prepared the candidates for baptism.

Raymond Kennedy

Miracles of Healing at Belleville Church

Roger’s hip had been getting worse. The pain shot right down his leg and he could hardly walk down the stairs to his Sabbath School class. He decided to lay his hand on his hip and leg and asked God to heal him for His own glory. Within two hours his pain was gone! He could walk easily, run and jump. God had healed him.

Sixteen years ago, Annie Ryan was diagnosed with arthritis and fibromyalgia. She suffered extreme pain in inflamed joints as her immune system attacked her own body causing disfigurement of hands, knees, and feet. Just touching her heels to the ground caused her to cringe with pain.

She only had use of two fingers and a thumb on her right hand. For a time custom-made hand splints allowed her to continue to work as a lab technician but even that had to be given up.

Annie was led to the Belleville Adventist Church the first Sabbath of 2005. The only thing she knew about the church was they kept the Sabbath which she also believed. There, she learned the health message and began following the eight laws of health. She also prayed and fasted and adopted vegetarian life style. She woke up one morning in March 2006 and discovered that she was able to spread her fingers without any pain.

Annie is now a baptized member of the Belleville Church and a firm believer in the health message.

Ivan Vallieres,
Communications

Downsvie Morningstar Pathfinder Club Investiture Ceremony 2006

Pathfinders… “Still Believe” was the theme for the day, as the Morningstar Pathfinder Club celebrated its Pathfinder Day and investiture of 22 pathfinders.

The 54-member club includes nine male and six female staff. Pastor Charles Leader, Ontario Conference pathfinder specialist, said that he was “impressed with the dominant presence of male leaders in the club.”

Among the highlights was a mini orchestra from the Morningstar Club which performed musical items throughout the day.

Other participants included Chris Grant, executive co-ordinator of the Ontario Pathfinder Council, Donovan Gibson, area co-ordinator and the church pastors, Dr. Kenneth Campbell and David Thompson.

Hazel Delpeche

Hamilton East

Hamilton East Church was blessed to have Dr. E. Lawrence, Ministerial director and Church Growth coordinator at the Ontario Conference, present “The Good News” Evangelist Series from November 3-11, 2006.

The last day of the series was definitely a high day for the audience at Hamilton East. Ronald Knight, Romeche Knight, Melisa Mazhandu, Lorna Howell, and Minhar Mazhandu gave their lives and hearts to Jesus.

Ronald and Romeche Knight’s mother, sister and two brothers sang praises to the Lord on their special day.

Margaret (Sandy) Komhyr
The Revelation Speaks series was led by It Is Written speaker, Bill Santos, and supported by the city’s Filipino churches and Kingsview Village Church. The joint effort was blessed by more than 45 baptisms.

Nikki Rampersad

Kitchener-Waterloo “Eden’s Gate”

The Kitchener-Waterloo Seventh-day Adventist Church looks forward to the long-awaited opening of their community garden this Spring. Eden’s Gate, the name chosen by Roger Griffith of the Kitchener Church, will be situated on church property and open to church members and the community alike. The land has been marked out and tilled and will be prepared as soon as the warm weather approaches. This is a great opportunity for the church members to get to know the community neighbours and also to help in other ways. The church plans to donate some of the produce to a local soup kitchen, along with flowers to grace the tables of the soup kitchen.

Andrea Kaddour, Communications

“Unlocking the Signs” Satellite Evangelism Leads to Baptisms at Lincoln Pioneer

“Gripping”, “Informative”, “Captivating”, and “Life-changing” were just some of the words used by participants of the “Unlocking the Signs-Revelation Speaks Peace” satellite evangelistic programme by Shawn Boonstra, sponsored by the Lincoln Pioneer Seventh-day Adventist Church, March 10-April 8, 2006.

A few weeks before the seminar began, one of the members, Gloria Lawson, was able to help a distressed woman by offering to say a prayer for her. The lady was so happy that she asked for immediate prayer. Afterwards, conversation led to Bible topics, and Gloria had a Bible study contact. The woman, Eleanor Bell, also accepted Gloria’s invitation to attend the “Unlocking the Signs” satellite event.

After the first meeting, Eleanor was so impressed that she determined to attend the entire series. However, on her way home, she had an accident that shook her up. Her husband, Ron, was very concerned about her driving alone to the meetings and decided to accompany her. It was not long before he too became enthralled and excited with the amazing truths that were being shared.

Ron, 80, and Eleanor, 74, are now baptized members of the Lincoln Pioneer Seventh-day Adventist Church, following their baptism on May 07, 2006.

What makes this story even more incredible is the fact that Gloria had a message from God, saying she would have a “divine appointment” on the very day she met Eleanor in distress. Ron and Eleanor feel so happy that they lived long enough to find peace and happiness in God’s remnant church.

North Bay

The Revelation Speaks series was led by It Is Written speaker, Bill Santos, and supported by the city’s Filipino churches and Kingsview Village Church. The joint effort was blessed by more than 45 baptisms.

Nikki Rampersad

Front row from L-R: Pastor Irish, Rich Pearce, Monique Pearce and Jim Bucci
Back row: Elizabeth & family

Having become disenchanted with the church to which they belonged, Rick and Monique Pearce began their quest to find the church that taught the scriptural truth for this time in history.

Ontario Highlights 14 April 2007
After visiting a number of churches, they came to North Bay Seventh-day Adventist Church and began studying its teachings. Led by the Holy Spirit, they were convicted that they had found that for which they had been searching.

Before their baptism, on September 16, 2006, they gave a testimony of how God had performed miracles throughout their lives, leading eventually to the waters of baptism. Those in attendance were deeply moved and inspired.

Pastor Fred Irish

Willowdale Church and Project Light Africa

Heri Adventist Hospital (HAH) is a Seventh-day Adventist health care institution established in Western Tanzania in 1948. Since its beginning HAH has cared for thousands of people. More importantly, it helped to establish many Adventist churches in the region. Today, there are more than 26,000 baptized members in 500 churches and companies in the West Tanzania field, and the Willowdale Church in Toronto is actively involved in the work of the hospital.

In 2001, members of the Willowdale congregation, in cooperation with Maranatha, traveled to India to help build a church and win souls for the Lord. It was the result of their Project Light mission initiative. The project received a further boost in 2005 when Dr. Valtere Krym, a physician with experience in overseas work, who had visited HAH, shared their great need and proposed HAH as a long-term mission project for Willowdale.

In less than two years, the congregation at Willowdale has embraced the new mission project, and Project Light Africa was born. The hospital staff is committed to doing God’s work in a remote part of Africa, and Willowdale shares its mission. Dr. Niels Oster, recently retired hospital chief of staff after many years at HAH, visited Willowdale in the summer of 2005 and shared his vision for the hospital. He explained that in order to grow, the hospital needed to buy a land. At $50 per acre, the cost was beyond what HAH could afford.

In 1900, members of the Willowdale congregation, in cooperation with Maranatha, traveled to India to help build a church and win souls for the Lord. It was the result of their Project Light mission initiative. The project received a further boost in 2005 when Dr. Valtere Krym, a physician with experience in overseas work, shared their great need and proposed HAH as a long-term mission project for Willowdale.

In less than six months, the congregation raised over $20,000 enough to purchase 400 acres of land. On behalf of Willowdale, Peter Landolt traveled to Tanzania and presented Heri with the money to purchase the land. The purchase secured land on either side of the river providing Heri with hydroelectric power, fields to grow crops, trees for timber, and land on which to build. By the summer of 2006, the congregation raised a further $50,000 to purchase a machine to produce building blocks for use in constructing new buildings.

Dr. Alvin Rocero, Heri’s new chief of staff, spent a weekend in Toronto last September, and brought news of the progress taking place. The congregation was especially happy to hear that the first step in the hospital’s development plan is to build a church on the newly purchased land, using blocks from the block-making machine. Previously, worship could only take place in temporary locations.

Willowdale is presently fund-raising for an additional $50,000 to help build and furnish a 250-seat church with baptistry, offices for pastors and deacons, and a second building for church departments and ministries.

In late summer of this year, a group from the congregation will travel to Tanzania to help in building a church, conduct Bible studies, and become involved in various ministries. Members of the congregation are committed to this mission partnership. Willowdale’s abundant generosity demonstrates its commitment to mission work in Africa. However, the work has only begun.
**Ontario Highlights**

**New Worker**

We welcome Nikolay (Nick) Velinov to the Ontario Conference. He comes from a strong technical background in web development, multimedia and business. He will join Raveen Pal in the Information Technology Department.

Nikolay is a member of the Immanuel Church where he and his wife, Zornica, worship with their three children, 7-year old Evelyn, 4-year old Jordy and 2-year old Celeste.

We are glad to have him join the team in the office.

**Seven in ‘07**

Seven in ‘07 is an inclusive ministry initiative of the North American Division that was initiated by NAD President Don Schneider. The goal is for every church member in 2007 to reach seven more people than they originally planned or ordinarily would with a ministry of their own choice. Members could hand out seven more booklets or tracts; invite seven more people to church or outreach events; visit seven more people in prison or hospitals than they would ordinarily. The choice of ministry is up to them.

**Crawford Adventist Academy Celebrates Black History Month at Queens Park**

Crawford Adventist Academy was invited to participate, for the second consecutive year, at a high profile event “Celebrating Blacks in Politics and Leadership”.

The event was hosted by the Honourable John Tory and was held at the Queens Park Legislative Building. Several black leaders shared their life lessons with the youth who attended the event.

The Crawford Academy High School Jazz Band, three of the vocal female groups, along with a duet of elementary students, were thrilled to be included amongst the distinguished roster of celebrities and to have the opportunity to share their musical and vocal talents. It was a grand gesture to culminate this year’s celebration of Black History Month.

*Edwin Mansook  
Band Teacher*

**Scarborough**

On February 25, 2007, Sis. Pearl Harris, who is one of the oldest members at Scarborough Church, celebrated her 95th Birthday.

“Led by the Spirit”-Scarborough Filipino Celebrates 15 Years of Evangelism

On Sabbath, November 18, 2006, the Scarborough Filipino Seventh-day Adventist Church celebrated its 15th anniversary and a fruitful year of evangelism. Pastor Antonio Bueno, executive secretary of the Ontario Conference, joined the pastor and members of the church in their worship and preached the sermon.

The celebration continued in the afternoon with a musical programme and a message by Pastor Daniel Catangay of the Filipino Canadian congregation. The theme, Led by the Spirit, was most appropriate as 2006 resulted in 17 precious souls being baptized. The 17 baptized are the result of home Bible studies.

Founded 15 years ago, with a membership of just 57, the Scarborough Filipino Church has more than doubled its membership, and it is still growing. God has opened many opportunities for Bible studies in the neighbourhood and with a vibrant and united group of young people, the church is searching for a larger place of worship. The entire congregation is excited about winning the community for God’s kingdom.

**We Need You!**

Your participation as a volunteer will contribute enormously to the success of the annual Toronto Adventist District School Board’s Walk-a-Thon.  

**WHEN**  
Sunday, May 27, 2007  

Act now to be part of a winning team and this worthwhile event! To volunteer (in any area), please send your name and phone number to: svizely@adventistontario.org
More Investors Needed for CBIF

There is no doubt more investors are needed for the Church Building Investment Fund (CBIF). Perhaps it’s because it seems to be one of the best kept secrets. As I’ve presented the programme to churches, members would approach me afterwards and say, “It’s a great programme; why don’t we hear more often about it in our church?”

True. The CBIF is a great programme. Just think, each member giving $2.00 weekly, towards one goal—to assist every church to own its own building.

The CBIF programme is now in its 6th year. In 2006, $90,000 was given by church members. The Ontario Conference gave an additional $50,000. This enabled another four churches to receive $25,000 each in order to pay off their mortgages or lower the payments. Every other church and company received $300-$400 towards their church building programme.

We have reached the time when the CBIF programme should no longer be a secret. I cannot be in every church to share this information, but if it is periodically placed in your bulletin, you will be reminded of its great value. The result will be immeasurable. There is a church in Ontario Conference that does this. In 2006 the 50 members of the Toronto Yugoslavian congregation gave $3,706 to the CBIF, the highest figure across the entire province. CBIF information is provided in the bulletin each week.

Dear church member, do not forget to put your $2 every Sabbath or $8-$10 at the end of each month in the tithe envelope under “Ontario Special Offerings” in the line: Church Building Investment Fund. What you give will definitely return to you.

George T. Ivkov
CBIF Field Representative

New Pulpits for Long-Serving Toronto Pastors

From May 1, 2007, two Toronto pastors will have new pulpits. Dr. Kenneth Campbell leaves Downsview, after 12 years, to be the pastor of the Mount Olive Church.

After 11 years at Mount Olive, Pastor Ledford Morris leaves to become the pastor of theDownsview Church.

These are the pastoral changes recently voted by the Board of Directors of the Ontario Conference.

Pastor Wayne Williams is the new pastor for the Hope Church, replacing Pastor Hilton Garnett. For the past five years, he has been the pastor of the Smyrna congregation. He assumed his new responsibility on March 1. A new pastor will shortly be appointed for the Smyrna Church.

Pastor Omar Palmer has returned from the seminary and is now an assistant pastor at Apple Creek Church. Since his arrival on January 1, 2007, he has quickly won a place in the hearts of the membership.

The Ontario Conference also welcomes Pastor Edvard Miler (pronounced Miller), his wife, Sabrina, and their two children, Larissa (12) and Edvin (9), to Ontario. Pastor Miler will be the pastor of the Niagara and St. Catherine Churches from June 1, 2007. He replaces Pastor Rodolfo Alvir who will be leaving for the seminary. Pastor Miler and his family are from Croatia.

Young Women’s Retreat

Ages 13-21

May 4-6, 2007 @ Camp Frenda

Sponsored by the Ontario Conference Women’s Ministries Department
905-571-1022 ext. 203 or 204 - www.adventistontario.org
Member’s Profile: Patrick Griffiths

Patrick Griffiths has a smile that is almost as wide as his heart is large. At Apple Creek Adventist Church in Markham, he is known by the entire 1,000-member congregation because he takes time to greet everyone and to offer a hearty word of encouragement. Since last year, however, he has become known for his involvement in helping the Bustamante Hospital for Children in his homeland, Jamaica.

On a trip to Jamaica in 2005, he visited the hospital in Kingston and was horrified to discover that in one ward there were insufficient cribs for the number of infants. Returning to Canada, he used his business, Rochelle Clearwater, to purchase six cribs with the intention of sending them to the hospital as a gift. When the shipping agent learned of his intention, he offered to ship the cribs free of charge.

Having completed his project, Bro. Griffiths felt motivated to call Beverly Needham, CEO of the Bustamante Hospital, to enquire if there was anything else he could do. “She gave me a list that surprised me,” he said, “because it seemed as if she needed an entire hospital.” With a group of friends, he launched a successful fund-raising banquet that was able to furnish an entire ward with nine cribs, seven beds and thirty wheelchairs, plus various items of medical equipment, medicines and other supplies.

The fund-raising gala created an awareness of the needs of the hospital, and his leadership role became evident, but Patrick was quick to acknowledge the involvement of others. ‘I was not alone;’ he said, “I had a great committee, and we also got tremendous help from Universal Healthcare Trust after I approached them. Rahul Singh, trustee of Universal Healthcare Trust, was able to obtain over $2.5 million in medicine for the hospital. I really applaud him for that.”

Patrick does not consider his work as finished. Another hospital in Jamaica has since approached him for similar help. He is also raising funds for a CAT scan machine for the Bustamante Hospital. “I’ve seen how a few people can make a difference,” he said, “just imagine if the entire church could come together. There’s nothing, we couldn’t do.” He invites others to join him in trying to buy the CAT scan machine by sending funds directly to the Bustamante Hospital marked specifically for the ‘CAT scan machine.’

When Patrick is not fund-raising, he is busy trying to run his 6-year old business, Rochelle Clearwater. Even in this, the largeness of his heart is clearly seen as he donates water to churches and to one of his favourite schools, Crawford Adventist Academy in North York.

One of the most admirable things about this gentleman is that he gives without seeking any recognition or reward. He says that he is “just happy to do whatever will bring some joy to the life of his brothers and sisters in Christ.”

Ellen G. White Tour

Long weekend getaway tour to Ellen G. White historical landmark at Battle Creek, Michigan, on May 18-21, 2007. Come and enjoy the heritage miles of Battle Creek, underground railroad monument, the exciting historic Adventist village, Kellog’s Discovery Centre first time tour in the Sanatorium via Andrews University. Potential students are welcome to travel with us. Shopping included. Book early. Seats are going fast.

Please call Sister C. Taylor at: 416-269-6897

From Prostate Cancer to Doctor of Science

In 1996, Matthew McLaren’s doctor sat him down and broke the news that no man wants to hear. He had prostate cancer. The good news was that surgery could help him. While that gave him hope, his greatest hope lay in God, and he gave himself to prayer.

After a successful surgery, Matthew felt the need to learn more about prostate cancer and began to research the topic. He soon discovered a wealth of information and decided to make his research more productive. His decision led him to pursue a Bachelor’s degree. This led to a Masters and finally a Doctorate from Westbrook University in Virginia, U.S.A. The entire process took nine years. He will attend his graduation during the summer of 2007.

“It wasn’t easy,” he said, “but the more I researched, the more I wanted to continue.” So, ten years after his surgery, Dr. McLaren plans to write, offer consultation and do more research. While his business will be consultation, he has committed himself to offer free services to the church through seminars and counselling. Reflecting on his journey from the prostate cancer to his doctorate, he said, “Most men do not think about their health until something goes wrong. Women think about their health and their men’s health, but the men only take second thought about their health. We (men) need to think more about our health and especially our prostate.”

Matthew McLaren is a member of the Agape Temple Adventist Church in Pickering and a member of the Board of Directors of the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.
New Adventist Search Engine

AdventSource, the official ministry resource distribution centre for the NAD has developed the church’s first comprehensive targeted search engine. The AdventSource engine searches websites created and maintained by Seventh-day Adventist members and organizations. Instead of searching the entire Internet, users can limit their search to Adventist sites.

The search engine includes Adventist ministries, businesses and organizations. The engine can also help locate Adventist schools, churches, health care information, summer camps, speakers, musicians and more.

Seventh-day Adventist organizations, supporting ministries and ASI members with businesses may submit their website information to be included in this customized search engine. Individual member sites may also be submitted. All site submissions are individually reviewed for inclusion.

AdventSource will continue adding websites to the search engine. Visit http://search.adventsource.org to see if a ministry, business or organization is listed.

Websites may be added by clicking on “submit your site.” This powerful search engine is available for Adventist Church and School Connect websites and will appear on www.adventsource.org. A tool allowing any site to include the AdventSource search engine will be available in 2007.
Oakville Group’s New Location & Direction

The new location of Oakville Group as of January 1, 2007 is:
1250 McCraney Street, Oakville (Trinity United Church)

Directions: From the QEW exit Trafalgar Road North, and turn Left at the 2nd Light onto McCraney St. Trinity United is on the Left.

Attention: Pastors, Boards, Sound Staff!!!

INVEST in training your sound people and expect a difference by attending the "TECHNOLOGIES IN WORSHIP" Workshop at Canada Christian College.

Tuesday, May 8, 2007, at 7-10 p.m. (7 weeks).
Duration: 21 total teaching and hands-on hours. Cost: $390.00 per student. One time Registration: $50.00
Teacher: Prof. John Clarke

What is sound? Cabling, microphones, pick-up patterns, wireless, microphone techniques, dealing with singers, preachers, congregation, mixers, amplifiers and speakers, monitors, setting up a pa, avoiding feedback, troubleshooting, budgets, forming a team, dealing with deacons / elders boards, (lighting, projection systems and PowerPoint time permitting).

Call John Tolman to get your spot 905-305-9165. Deadline: April 27.
Limited space