Kherian Wins North American Distinguished Youth Award

Kherian Kirton, 15, is the Ontario recipient of the North American Division’s Distinguished Youth Award for 2008.

Kheri, as she is commonly known, received the award during an all-expenses-paid trip to the North American Division Youth Ministries Summit in Dallas, Texas, during February 14-16.

She was among six winners nominated from conferences across North America. Each conference is able to select one candidate for the award of outstanding leadership in one of four categories: Youth Evangelism, Pathfinders, Community Services and Academics. Although Kheri was nominated for her leadership in Pathfinders, she displayed leadership in all four categories. However, she did not expect to win.

“I was shocked when I heard that I was chosen,” she said, “I couldn’t believe that I’d won it! But once I arrived in Dallas, I was very excited.”

Conference youth director, Pastor Cyril Millett, was very pleased with the outstanding quality of the nominees and noted that Kheri is a worthy recipient.

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“Protect Your Family” Says the President

Elder Derrick Nichols, president of the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, is urging all adults to protect their families by making a Will. In a recent interview with Halsey Peat, Ontario Conference Communications and PARL director, Elder Nichols pointed out the need for all adults “to do what is right.” In light of the certainty of unexpected death, he said that making a Will is “considering your loved ones by protecting them spiritually, emotionally and financially.”

The financial protection of the family is easily understood because parents are aware of the hardship that would occur if no provision is made. How would the rent or mortgage be paid? What about school or university fees for the children? No Christian would willingly leave his or her family unprotected. Yet, neglect yields the same result. God has given us the responsibility.

Spiritual and emotional protection is not so obvious until the death of both parents takes place, such as in an automobile accident. Who is left to care and provide for children who are still minors?

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Beyond the Symptoms

As a child, I sinned without remorse. The only worry I had was being found out. Whenever that happened, I was extremely remorseful as I attempted to avert a beating. Later, as a teenager, learning the social mores of the church, I developed a sense of guilt. I still performed acts of sin but would later pay for them with crushing guilt. Once I had paid the necessary penance of fasting, begging God to forgive me and made sincere promises never to sin again, I felt okay and could get on with life again until the next sin (usually the same one), and my guilt would return, heralding the cycle of sin, guilt and repentance.

I soon discovered that if I committed the same sin fairly often, the guilt wouldn’t be as bad. I became immune to the guilt and could enjoy sin without looking over my shoulder. My conscience troubled me though because I really wanted to be good. To compensate for my wrongs, I did lots of good works to balance things out. When I realized it wasn’t working, I decided to try and stop doing wrong, thinking that if I weren’t doing anything wrong, I’d be right with God.

I actually thought, like so many Christians, that the absence of wrongdoing meant I was right with God. It’s a strange concept to suppose that a person is righteous by not doing wrong, as if righteousness describes the natural, true condition. In order to maintain this inherent righteousness, all a person needs to do is refrain from doing wrong.

It’s really a foolish idea because the Bible is very clear that our natural condition is sinful, ‘Surely I was sinful at birth...’ (Psalm 51:5). ‘The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked’ (Jeremiah 19:10). So, even in the absence of sinful acts, our natural state is total corruption. ‘From the sole of your foot to the top of your head there is no soundness - only wounds and welts and open sores, not cleansed or bandaged or soothed with oil’ (Isaiah 1:6). The sins of my childhood reflected my true condition. My impulse was to do wrong without any sense of remorse.

The mistake we often make is to view sin as a series of actions. So, to lie, cheat, steal, kill, etc., is to sin. Viewed this way, we differentiate between ‘little sins’, such as stealing a paper clip from the office and ‘big sins’, such as robbing a bank of a million dollars! This gives us a sense of false security and leads us into the trap of becoming judgmental. Since I don’t do the big sins, or better yet, I cannot even think of any wrong that I’ve done, then I’m OK. Because I’m ‘not doing wrong’, I’m outraged when a ‘big sin’, such as the treasurer stealing from the offering takes place. We forget that ‘all have sinned’ and ‘there is no one righteous’ (Romans 3:10).

Sin is first and foremost rebellion against God. It is an attitude that says, “I am my own God. I am the centre of my universe, and I am not subject to anyone or anything.” We don’t consciously mean to have this attitude towards God; it’s just our sinful nature. However, it’s an attitude that results in sinful acts—both big and small. All sinful acts are the result of rebellion against God. The absence of sinful acts does not mean that I am righteous! No, sin is primarily an attitude towards God. It takes place even when there are no visible sinful actions. That’s what Jesus means in Matthew 5:21,22 when He says that if I’m angry with my brother without cause, I’m already a murderer.

To deal with sinful acts is to deal only with the symptoms, not the cause. The cause is rebellion against God. When this is corrected, then the sinful acts are dealt with. That’s why we need to look again at how we view church discipline. When a member comes under church discipline and is suspended (censured) or even had membership withdrawn, what has been achieved? Does that make everything right? Has the member really been helped? Remember, church discipline is supposed to be corrective and restorative, not punitive. It seems to me that, if left at that, we are only dealing with the symptom. Perhaps church discipline should be approached, not so much that this brother has ‘broken commandment 4, 5 or 6 etc.’, but that he is in rebellion against God, and how can we as a church help him to be restored to a loyal, trusting, faith-filled relationship with God? Let’s treat the cause, not just the symptom of sin.

Halsey Peat
Editor
Two thousand six was a bumper year for evangelism in the Ontario Conference. The figure of 1,473 baptisms reflected the numerous evangelistic outreach activities held by local churches across the province. Last year, many churches engaged in evangelistic activities resulting in 937 baptized souls. For all these, we are thankful to God, but our rejoicing should be tempered by the news that we are under-achieving.

In a presentation to the pastors in the Greater Toronto Area on February 12, Dr. Errol Lawrence, Evangelism and Church Growth coordinator for the Ontario Conference, revealed that only 105 churches and companies posted results of at least one person baptized. The deduction is that 40 churches or companies did not baptize anyone during 2007. In some of the larger churches, having hundreds of members, the number of those baptized last year was less than 40. Clearly we are under-achieving.

To improve evangelism results and to address long-term and cutting edge issues in Ontario, we need to perform much better in terms of our evangelistic strategies. After all, our purpose for existing is to reach the people of Ontario with the Gospel. We should be baptizing and nurturing many more hundreds or even thousands than we are presently doing. Consider the following two quotes from Ellen White:

“The Lord requires that far greater personal effort be put forth by the members of the church . . . . The Master has appointed to every man his work.” (Review and Herald, August 13, 1889).

“Success can only attend order and harmonious action” (Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 379).

The first quote speaks of the need for every church and every member to become involved in evangelism. This has been mentioned so often that it is frequently overlooked. Very few seem to pay attention to it. It appears that in nearly all our churches, only a small minority of members is engaged in any form of active soul-winning. Maybe we are so caught up in our own concerns and problems that we find it difficult to look outside our own situation to offer the hope of eternal life to someone else.

The second quote is perhaps more relevant to what is currently taking place. Do we actually follow clearly outlined evangelistic strategies? How do we approach evangelism? Do we have an outcome in mind when we hold a satellite event or a series with a live preacher? Is it really enough to cast a net hoping that fish will bite?

Someone has said, “when you don’t know what you’re looking for, you’ll probably never find it. When you don’t know what you’re doing, you probably won’t do it well. When you don’t know where you are going, you probably won’t get there.”

It is not enough to simply throw money into evangelism by having meetings and hoping for the best. Fishermen are wise. They study fish and learn the best ways to catch them. They do not simply drop a net into the sea and hope for the best.

Strategic planning

Strategic planning is very essential to success in evangelism. This involves having very clear and measurable objectives in mind and making relevant plans to reach those objectives. Perhaps one of the first steps is to map out the territory under consideration and diligently work it for success. Too often, evangelistic series are conducted with little or no planning whatsoever. There are no house-to-house visits in the community, no involvement of the church in community events, no relationship with the community at all. We spend a lot of money advertising, thinking that people will simply show up at our meetings. In Toronto, we even saturate other Adventist churches with flyers advertising the meetings. It is no wonder many meetings are full of Adventists cheering their preachers and a significant number of baptisms reflect recycled Adventists. A public evangelistic series should be a culmination of work that has previously been done in the church territory.

Evangelism must be considered as the heartbeat of the church, something that is constantly taking place. To view it as an annual event or even as a stand-alone event reduces its impact. As mentioned above, we need to approach it strategically and be far more organized. The example of how city planners operate is helpful.

Toronto comprises forty-four wards or districts. These wards are carefully studied by the city planners regarding ethnic composition, population, housing, business, education, religion and much more. Armed with relevant information, city planners are able to provide the appropriate services to each ward.
Meeting the needs of people in the community and leading them from a life of sin into a new-birth experience in Christ is to see happy people rejoicing in the Lord. Such people make the best Adventists. They have a willing, cooperative spirit and are on fire for God.

As a church, we have a surplus of materials and tools to do a great work for God, but our greatest need is for people with a discipline approach to getting the work done.

Dr. Kenneth Campbell and Halsey Peat

Kenneth Campbell, pastor of Mount Olive Adventist Church, is committed to full-time evangelism in the local church. His previous congregation, Downsview Adventist Church, rapidly grew through a strategic evangelistic programme that involved both outreach and nurture as the lifestyle of the church.

Distinguished Youth Award

Continued from page 1

“I was elated that she was the recipient,” he said, “she is an outstanding young woman who is going to go on to do amazing things for the Lord.”

When Elder Derrick Nichols, Ontario Conference president, heard of Kheri’s success, he said, “We are so proud of Kherian. She demonstrates the qualities of Christian virtues that all parents want to see in their children. She is a credit to her parents, her church family and the entire conference.”

Kheri comes from a strong Adventist family and accepted Jesus as her personal Saviour at age nine. She was baptized shortly after. Since then she has been very involved in her home church, Philadelphia Adventist Church in Scarborough, as a Sabbath School secretary and an assistant in the Cradle Roll division. When the Philadelphia Patriots Pathfinder Club began in 2002, she immediately joined and embraced the principles and values of the association. Presently, she is the Drill Master for the Philadelphia Patriots Club.

Being involved in church life is important to Kheri. She is a member of a signing group called Hands of Blessings and sings with a group called Lifted Up Voices.

At school, Grade 10 Kheri has been volunteering since her elementary years. She is an honour student who also involves herself in athletics and other sports. Basketball and volleyball are among her favourite activities.

Kheri is the second young person in two successive years from the Philadelphia Adventist Church in Scarborough to receive this award. Last year’s winner, Simone Samuels, was beaming with joy when she learned that the 2008 winner is from her own church and Pathfinder club.

“Kherian has always shown the characteristics of dedication and leadership that this award seeks to honour;” said Simone, “we’re all proud of her.”

Kheri’s advice to other young people: “Even though you do little things that you don’t think people recognise, keep doing them because you never know what will happen.”

Adventist Urban Legends

From time to time, we receive phone calls or emails from anxious members who have received emails regarding legislation for Sunday laws in the USA and news affecting Adventists.

Recently, I received a spate of emails requesting urgent prayer for Faith for Today’s Pastor Mike Tucker, who was supposedly in India, where he and his team were trapped in a hotel with a raging mob outside trying to kill them. The next email spoke about the hotel being burnt.

These are the Adventist versions of urban legends, or rumours, that take on a life of their own and have all the appearance of being true because of how they are written. However, they are usually just a legend having little or no truth. If there is significant news regarding prophetic fulfilment, such as legislation regarding Sunday laws, or impending danger or death to our church members or missionaries, the church will always issue an official statement through official channels.

Pastor Tucker is presently preparing for a retreat in Portland, Oregon, during May 2-4, 2008.

Halsey Peat, editor
Ministries Leaders Grow by Praying Together

Approximately 250 Men’s, Women’s, Family and Single’s Ministries leaders gathered at Canada Christian College on March 1, 2008 to learn more about their ministries and the secrets of tapping into God’s power and direction.

“This training has really opened my eyes to how much you can do in Men’s Ministry!” Reported one new Men’s Ministries leader. Other highly effective presenters and facilitators included Pastor Wesley Torres, Patricia Bulgin, Hilton & Maxine Rivers, and Sandra Silva.

A popular networking feature of the day - Meet the Presenters – showcased over 30 Ontario Adventist presenters, giving a brief synopsis of what they would be willing to share with a local congregation on a wide variety of topics (such as health, finances, family, youth, and many more). Turn Your Heart Toward Home, a new joint initiative of three conference departments, was introduced. Expect to hear more about this in the future!

Many reported being inspired by the deeply spiritual messages of keynote speaker Winston Ferris, PhD, of Berrien Springs, Michigan. The various leadership workshops provided the participants with further insights and inspiration. For example, the Men’s Ministries workshop, Stepping Up to Priesthood, presented by Paul Llewellyn, Ontario Conference Men’s Ministries director, had an enthusiastic group of over 50 men.

Without a Will stating who is responsible for the children, Children’s Aid could put them into ‘temporary society wardship’ while determining who should care for them. “Parents are stewards and have an obligation to their family,” says Nichols. “To make a Will is the fulfilment of that obligation.”

When asked about the provision made by the conference to assist members to prepare a Will, Nichols said that it is offered for the benefit of each family. He also cleared up the misconception that when the conference assists in making a Will, there is a demand that the conference should benefit. “There is no demand,” says Nichols. “Some people choose to leave something for the conference, while some do not. Having said that, however, I think that leaving something for the conference is one way of supporting God’s kingdom. It is a brilliant idea and everyone should consider doing it, especially as they have the privilege of leaving it to specific ministries within the conference, such as Evangelism, Community Services, Education and Youth.”

He added that the conference and its work should not be confused with the work of ADRA, AWR, It Is Written, 3ABN, The VOP, and other entities. Nichols concludes, “It was not the mission of Jesus to accumulate wealth. He has left that to us, so we in turn can use our wealth to benefit His kingdom.”

For information on protecting your family and supporting God’s work, contact the Planned Giving and Trust Services Department at the Ontario Conference 905-571-1022, ext. 206.

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Sponsored by the Ontario Conference Office of Education
Your Letters

Highlights is pleased to include, for the first time, a page dedicated to readers’ letters. This is in response to repeated requests during 2007. Please note that the editor reserves the right to edit, abbreviate and not print letters. However, submissions are welcomed.

Special Days

I read with interest your article in the Winter 2007 edition of the Ontario Highlights. I am in agreement with you about these ‘special days.’ The Sabbath itself is such a wonderful gift, and I have often thought that we have lost sight of the purpose of Sabbath. In some of our congregations, it has become a day for individual recognition, departmental promotions, programmes, ‘show and tell ministries’ and asking for money for every conceivable initiative. This results in worship getting tacked onto all of this as though it is an imperative, rather than a heartfelt desire. Sabbath for me is ALL about worship, fellowship and witness. In it we recognize God’s gift, the Gift of His Son. It’s all about Him, not us. It should bring us together in worship and fellowship and allow time for adults and children to fully participate and to share their gifts, testimonies of God’s grace and should be thoughtfully planned and executed by a worship committee.

Moreover, the ‘special days’ you refer to in your article have become competitive and often nobody seems to take ownership for the morning Sabbath service on these days. Everything we do on Sabbath doesn’t need to be programme-driven. We should be more people-oriented and enquire of the Lord how we can reach people where they are, first outside and also inside our congregations. Jesus exemplified that relationships with others are the most effective way to build His kingdom, not programmes. Programmes can help, but they come and go. ‘Forever relationships’ can last a lifetime. Thank you again for this thought-provoking article. Keep them coming!

John Tolman

I want to thank you for having the courage to write this editorial. I have been fighting this ‘Special Day’ battle for some time now as the head of a department at my church. Today we had a meeting planned, and I knew the subject would come up, and so it did. It was a pleasure and an honour to be able to ask the participants of the meeting right then and there to read your editorial. It enlightened them that I was not the only one who had these views.

In my opinion, it is a privilege for us to live in a free society where we can go to church each Sabbath; that should be special to us. Instead, we are caught up in the competition game, trying to outdo each other instead of trying to bring sinners to repentance.

I am hoping that your fine article does not die as an editorial, but that it would become a part of the agenda for the future, and that it will be passed on to our churches reminding us that any day we can serve God in humility is a ‘special day’.

Glen Baker

Funerals: Learning from Muslims

While attending the funeral of my Muslim friend’s son, I was enlightened about their organization and a committee that is formed to make funeral arrangements and prepare the ceremony. I think a similar system could be customized to suit our church.

In their organization, each family or single person voluntarily contributes approximately $60 annually towards the funeral expenses of loved ones. The committee in each mosque manages the fund, deals with one funeral home and makes all arrangements when there is a death. Consequently, upon a death, the family is not required to find any money towards the funeral.

Additionally, costs are minimized because a standard coffin is used (not expensive caskets), and the body is wrapped in a sheet for burial. There is a standard funeral ceremony that eliminates anyone trying to outperform others.

We could learn from some of their customs. For example, promoting the voluntarily contribution of a small annual fund and using a specific funeral home with whom we can have a special business arrangement. Of course, this would be a “hard sell” in the beginning. No one likes change, but the ease and reduced expenses afforded by such a venture would be a great start.

I’m convinced that this is something that could really benefit our membership. I would love to see this organized in our church.

Laura Stump-Henry, Mississauga

Your article on Special Days has been referred to at our church many times. One of our goals in planning for 2008 was to reduce the number of “departmental days” (yes, we agreed every Sabbath is a special day). So, it’s funny every time it’s discussed someone says, ‘did you read the article?’

Now, if only we could get rid of the terms “shut-ins” like they are locked up and “lower divisions” as if our children (future leaders) are somehow beneath us.

Patrick Griffiths, Scarborough

Available at your local ABC
What to Do When Required to Work on Sabbath

The announcement of a new manager or supervisor is always met with trepidation by workers. Sabbath-keepers are especially concerned because some new supervisors fail to honour Sabbath accommodations made by the former supervisor or manager. When this occurs, the Adventist worker suddenly discovers that Sabbath work has become mandatory, giving rise to the fear of losing employment or potential conflict with managers.

It is important that all church members become aware of their rights under provisions made by the Ontario Human Rights Code (Ontario Human Rights Commission, www.ohrc.on.ca/).

Employers cannot simply demand that an employee must work on Sabbath, especially if accommodation had previously been granted. Some will attempt to bully employees, but they do not have any legal grounds on which to make such demands. The Code provides for the employment of a worker without any discrimination because of religious creed.

When Sabbath-keepers are faced with work requirements, skills upgrading, educational improvement or university examinations on a Sabbath, the following steps should be immediately taken:

1. Seek the help of the religious liberty leader and pastor of your local church.
2. Write a letter requesting accommodation for your religious beliefs and hand it to your supervisor or person in charge (sample copies of letters may be found on the Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL) page of the conference website, www.adventistontario.org. Your pastor also has copies). The letter must be written and submitted before the arrival of the first Sabbath for which work is required.
3. If your request for accommodation is rejected, immediately request that your pastor write one on your behalf. If that is also rejected, immediately inform the conference PARL director. You will receive legal help to correct a violation of your human rights.
4. Do not resign! If told not to return to work on the Monday unless you turn up for work on Sabbath, turn up for work on Monday, anyway. Let them fire you if necessary. Your case will be resolved.

Adventists are Christians! Christians must always seek to represent the spirit of Christ in the work place. As such, Adventists display an attitude of industriousness, commitment, helpfulness, humility, peace, and a level of graciousness that evokes a strong sense of support from an employer. The Adventist worker should be the most valuable employee in the organization.

Sadly, some Adventist workers make life difficult for themselves when they work on Friday nights but ask for Sabbaths off, and then later ask for Friday nights also. Others ask for accommodation but are unwilling to offer to work at other occasions to compensate the employer. Others do not readily disclose the fact that they are Sabbath-keepers until they are asked to work or take an examination on a Sabbath. In areas where the disclosure of one’s identity as a Seventh-day Adventist does not invite discrimination, there should be no fear in doing so.

There is no question that all Sabbath-keepers will, at some time or another, have to face discrimination because of their beliefs. It is a test, not for God to see if His people are faithful to Him, but for His people to see how much they trust Him to provide for them. He is able to provide even when it seems impossible. In Ontario the impossible has not yet arrived because of the provisions made in the Human Rights Code. Until then, members who find themselves facing Sabbath challenges are able to seek the support of the provisions made in the Code by following the steps outlined above.

Halsey Peat, PARL Director
Ontario Conference
Ontario Conference to Partner with It Is Written Canada for Evangelism

Ontario Conference is set to partner with It Is Written (IIW) Canada, to evangelize Ontario for Jesus, according to Dr. Errol Lawrence, Church Growth and Evangelism coordinator for the Conference.

During February, a series of meetings took place between representatives of the Ontario Conference and Pastor Bill Santos, speaker/director of IIW Canada. “Pastor Eustace Williams, Personal Ministries director of the Ontario Conference, and I have been having some very interesting meetings with the It Is Written team,” said Lawrence. “We are excited about the discussions so far, and we believe that as pastors and church leaders, we can achieve great things for God as we partner with It Is Written Canada to Tell Ontario about Jesus who is coming soon.”

Pastor Santos was equally excited about the discussions and the doors he sees God opening for spreading the Gospel. In a letter to pastors, he spoke of the potential of partnership with churches in the conference.

“For too long, there has appeared to be a separation between the work of It Is Written Canada and the work at the local church - this is not conducive to us getting the work done so Jesus can return! You have my pledge that we will do what we can to be an extension to your ministry at the local church.” IIW Canada is hoping to share shortly some of the plans that are under consideration. Meanwhile, it is offering various DVDs that can be used for small group study in churches and/or as outreach materials in communities. One of these is the 2-DVD set on the life of the disciples called ‘All the King’s Men’. This is an 8-episode, 2-DVD set that comes with a study guide strives to answer the question “What kind of people can God use?”

“We have found this to be a good tool to use with the church when preparing for an evangelistic series,” said Santos.

The 2-DVD set, with the study guide, can be purchased for $4.00 for each set (minimum of 10 sets). Another great resource for sharing with interests is the 1-DVD set with Santos in two interviews with Dr. Ben Carson. “Every church that is using this DVD raves about it,” said Santos.

It is available for $2.00 for each set (minimum order of 10). For a full listing of DVDs, visit the IIW website http://www.itiswrittencanada.ca under the “Resources” tab.

IIW Canada is able to help promote church evangelistic series. They can send a letter of invitation to all their viewers in the catchment area of the church (by postal code) to invite them, on behalf of IIW Canada, to attend the meetings. They can also run a “crawl” on the bottom of the screen during the weekly IIW telecast.

There is a number of other initiatives that are under discussion, and it is hoped that these will be shared in the upcoming months.

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The North American Division Youth Ministries Summit in Dallas, Texas, February 14-16, squarely faced the issue of young adults leaving the Adventist Church in North America and its present-day failure to attract significant numbers into its membership.

Prior to the summit, discussion papers had been circulated to all conference and union youth directors. The papers addressed studies that showed the median age of Adventists in North America to be 57, compared to 37 for the rest of society. The discussion papers served as a reference for a number of presenters who sought to provide appropriate strategies and solutions to help prevent the loss of young adults in the Adventist Church in North America.

The focus of the 2008 summit, as with previous ones, was intentional. Given the issues of the loss of young adults and an aging church, organizers focused on young adults and their involvement in the life and outreach of the church. The target participants were those involved in Youth Ministries, especially at the leadership level but welcomed anyone who simply attends church and has an interest in youth and young adults.

Several workshops dealt with how young adults are engaged in ministry and outreach to their peers. Others were designed to help leaders who work in specific areas of Youth Ministries, such as Pathfinders, Adventurers and Campus Ministries.

Pastor Cyril Millett, Ontario Conference youth director, was among those who attended the workshops. Earlier, he attended some pre-summit committee meetings and was cautious about the outcome of the summit.

"Initially, I thought that it was much of the same old thing," he explained, "but once the actual summit began, I heard presentations by people, such as George Barna and other young adult presenters, speak about what young adults are doing for Christ. I heard about young adults who recognize that we are living in the end time and who have real concern for their peers and are reaching out to them. I recognized that our young adults, our young people are on fire for Christ."

He went on to express the need for youth leaders, and the church on a whole, to do as much as they are able “to encourage youth and young adults who are involved in ministry to keep on doing what they are doing and to harness the energy of other young people as well.”

Apple Creek’s Naudia Larrow was equally happy.

“It was amazing to hear young people say that they don’t want to be entertained, they just want to be led to Christ through applicable and life-changing method,” she said. “Dallas, brought a real sense of direction which sent a reminder that the only way is through Christ.”

The summit also helped leaders become aware of the changing attitudes of youth and young adults in North America. Participants learned that youth and young adults are not content with simply maintaining traditional ways of doing church and evangelism. Young people are very much involved in conversation evangelism. That is evangelism that occurs through friendship, dialogue and conversation.
For example, in Europe and some places in the USA, young adults are using Christian cafes to engage other young people in conversation. These are intentional Christian cafes that are set up by Adventists.

Participants also learned that young adults are looking for transparency and authenticity in their peers, seniors and leaders. Young people are leaving the church or choosing not to become members of the Adventist Church or even to delay baptism because they see hypocrisy in the church. They see a disconnection between what members in the church and individuals in leadership say and what they actually do. While this is not a new argument, it is not simply stated as an excuse. There is a real desire for transparency. They have high expectations of adults and those in leadership and will not sit by and simply watch hypocritical behaviour. Since they are often financially independent from their parents, they vote with their feet and walk away from church.

Millett is of the opinion that youth and young adults are more concerned with practical Christian living and not so much with theology. He sees young adults as having problems with the church’s approach to lifestyle practices and worship rather than to fundamental beliefs. The questions young adults are asking are: “How are we going to do church differently?” And “How are we going to cut out the fat in our worship?”

“Our young people today are into worship,” says Millett, “they want to praise God. They are also into feelings and expressing their senses regarding our holy God. If the church is going to engage these young people and turn them loose for service, then one of the areas we will have to look at is our worship services. We will need to ask ourselves, ‘What is essential? What is worship? ‘And How are we going to express ourselves before God?’”

Millett returned from Dallas convinced that what young adults want is to see truth lived out in the lives of God’s people.

For those who wish they could have attended, Greg Rampersad from Immanuel sums up the experience:

“The Youth Leadership summit in Dallas was spiritually uplifting, groundbreaking and fun. The summit was a great opportunity to learn, share and experience the power of God.”

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God Finds Kayla at Camp Frenda

_The following is a portion of a letter sent to Paul Llewellyn, Camp Frenda director, by staff member, Sharon._

“Dear Paul,

I had to write you. I just got off the phone with Kayla’s mom. Thirteen-year-old Kayla is the little girl Rachel brought to camp last summer from her public school in Toronto. Kayla loved Camp Frenda. This year at school, Kayla has been recruiting for Camp Frenda. She has even convinced several other girls to go.

“Kayla’s mom told me that Camp Frenda transformed Kayla last summer. She said that after Kayla returned home, she ate differently, read her Bible, and sang all the praise and worship songs she had learned. She said that although Kayla slowly crept back into her old ways, it was in a different way. She says that the new Kayla is a gentler, kinder Kayla and says it’s the direct result of Camp Frenda.

“Among Kayla’s joy at Frenda last summer was her love for her guitar class and her guitar teacher, Max. She got a guitar for Christmas and is now learning how to play it. “Kayla’s mom is so impressed that she’s even sending Kayla’s friends’ parents to visit Camp Frenda’s booth at The Sportsman Show this week. Isn’t it amazing how the Lord acted on this little girl, and in turn, she’s recruiting for camp. She’s not even an Adventist, but she learned a lot about Christians last summer, and she wants to learn more. Kayla’s mom says that Kayla’s goal is to work at Camp Frenda when she grows up! Her family has a cottage on Skeleton Bay, but they are trying to influence the rest of the cousins to attend Frenda this summer as well. Kayla’s mom says that if Kayla wants to become an Adventist in the future, she will support that decision 100% based on how much Frenda has influenced Kayla’s life thus far.

“Timing is everything. One thing Kayla’s parents noticed about Frenda was the mix of races, both in staff and campers—something that’s not so apparent at other camps in the area. Being from the Caribbean, her family never knew that there was a camp so close to their cottage where so many cultures were represented. Their opinion is that if a church organization can embrace all cultures, then that organization is worth investing in.

I am amazed.”

Sharon
Grandview Celebrates Good Things!

Grandview Adventist Academy (GAA), located just outside Hamilton in Mount Hope, is having an exceptional year. "We're庆祝ing the many good things happening there," says Kathleen Mitchell, principal for the past three years. GAA employs five full-time teachers, all of whom are provincially and denominational certified. Two of the teachers hold master's degrees.

Recently, the K-8 school, with its 54 students, won the Digital Photography in a Box pilot program sponsored by the North American Division (NAD). GAA received five digital cameras, one photo printer, and a number of student how-to books which will be implemented across the curriculum on a trial basis, rather than in an individual photography course. The NAD paid for half the cost for one school in each union ($550) and the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada (SDACC) paid the remainder. Grandview, which wrote the successful application in the SDACC, is planning to have digital scavenger hunts, make counting and ABC books, integrate pictures and videos in class presentations, and produce how-to books.

GAA has been a winner in other ways as well. "Grandview was the first school in the Conference to fully implement Pathways," says Frances Schander, superintendent of education. Valaine Urriss, first and second grade teacher who began using the program in September 2006, adds that her first and second graders have already "published their own book on salamanders to go with the reading unit on a book by a similar name."

Urriss, one of two GAA teachers trained in Wilson Phonics, has been using Wilson Fundations, which includes phonics, spelling, and handwriting, as part of Pathways instruction. "Wilson Phonics is known across North America as an effective Orton-Gillingham based method of teaching phonics using multisensory, sequential instruction."

GAA staff and students have a strong interest in technology. Computers are all networked using a server, with students having their own account for their own files. Two SMART products have been added to the upper grades classrooms. SMART's Notebook software is installed on all the school's computers, allowing students and staff to make and participate in active demonstrations and activities. Student computer ratio is 3:1, making GAA one of the most technologically-equipped schools in the Conference.

Reading is important at Grandview, but so is physical activity. In keeping with the new Ontario Daily Physical Activity Initiative, last year GAA students walked, ran, or "Marched to Madagascar," for a total of 3,000 miles. To celebrate their annual 5K, they ate popcorn, drank hot chocolate, and watched the movie Madagascar. This year students are completing a cross-Canada challenge, beginning in St. John's, NF, and ending in Winnipeg, MB. The students watched Anne of Green Gables as they "passed through" PEI. Next year the students will complete the "walk" from Winnipeg to Vancouver and the NWT/Kuton.

Students are also raising funds for their school. A February 2 Fun Fair raised $1,200 (toward new playground equipment. The fair included fun for the criminally, stocks for the really bad), a middle zone with inflatable bounce, balloon dart, an electric maze, go-karts, and much more. Prizes, which included handmade electronic games and tech deck boards, were donated by Mike Dubczuk Homes.

Helping the needy of the non-Adventist community is also important. In past years GAA has helped Operation Christmas Child, collected canned goods, and collected donations for the local Martha House Shelter. This year the school raised $1,200 for the Adventist Development and Relief
College Park Students Reach Out

College Park Elementary School (CPES) has a long tradition of reaching out to the local community and the wider world by sharing blessings that are often taken for granted. One example is that many of our students may have the tendency to assume that wonderful gifts will come their way during the Christmas season and forget that many children around the world have no such expectations because their very survival is foremost in their minds. Our children are blessed with plenty to eat, adequate clothing, comfortable shelter, and many luxuries not even dreamed about in some parts of the world. An important part of our education program is to remind our students of how privileged they are and encourage them to share.

One program that CPES has been involved in for the past several years is Operation Christmas Child. Students fill a shoe box sized cardboard container with new gifts for a child in desperate need somewhere in the world. During the first week of November, Samaritan's Purse collects these boxes from all of the groups participating in the program. The shoe box gifts are then delivered to children suffering from war, poverty, famine, disease and disaster, regardless of race, religion or gender. In each country that receives shoe boxes, Operation Christmas Child works with a volunteer team of local pastors, charities, and civic leaders, which represent several different denominations and organizations. This team identifies the children of greatest need and coordinates the distributions.

The distribution of the boxes is filmed, and a DVD is compiled that is then included with the materials given to participating groups the following year. At CPES we show the DVD to our students in early October, and they get to see children actually receiving boxes from Canada. The joy that is expressed by children receiving the small gifts packed by our students has a powerful impact that motivates many to ask if there is a limit on the number of boxes that they can contribute. Each year between 130 and 180 boxes are filled by the 140 families who have students in our school. Information on this worthy program is available at www.samaritanspurse.ca.

Another way of “reaching out” is in the way we treat each other. One of our parents, Sue Barlow, created a program called Friendships Forever which was designed to help forge positive relationships among our students and play a role in preventing bullying at our school. The program includes a 3 inch binder full of curriculum materials, resources, and lesson plans for all grade levels K through 12. The CPES Board voted to incorporate this...
program into the curriculum beginning with the 2007/2008 school year. The mission statement of this program is as follows:

**Friendships Forever** encourages students to become good citizens and to serve their community. This begins in the classroom. Christian acts of Kindness will be celebrated on a daily basis at College Park Elementary School. Students will take these Christian acts of kindness and mission out into the community. This is a powerful way to help develop strong leaders and teach students to see that being kind to others not only brings happiness to others, but it also brings them closer to God.

Each new student to our school this year was presented with a wooden keepsake box, filled with school supplies and letters of welcome from the parents of our constituent churches and the Friendship Forever team. The boxes were custom designed and supplied by a former CPES student, Roland Kiebundaewycz, general manager of College Woodwork. Student volunteers personally welcomed each new student and gave them a tour of the school and provided them with inside information from a student’s perspective.

At a recent Principal’s Council, Baxter shared the Friendship Forever program. Copies of her binder have been distributed to all Conference schools for principals and teachers to use.

An integral part of Friendship Forever program includes community outreach activities. The first community outreach activity of this year was an innovative challenge put to our students and families. The challenge was to completely fill a Chevy Avalanche truck with non-perishable food items and then deliver the food to St. Vincent’s Kitchen, which provides meals for the homeless. The shiny black Avalanche was graciously donated to us by a local car dealership to use for one week. During that week, our school families easily rose to the challenge and a truck packed full of food was delivered to St. Vincent’s Kitchen before the week was over.

But the students did not stop there. Another load of food was delivered to the food bank operated by one of our constituent churches, the New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church, and more was delivered to a local family in dire need. The concept of sharing has proven to be very important to many of our students who asked to participate in food drives on a regular basis, even when there is no truck to fill.

If all of our students can fully internalize an attitude of thinking about others and sharing, not only will the local school community develop into a safe environment for all, but each student will become a valued member of his/hers community at large. This is truly spreading the Gospel in a tangible way.

Dan Carley, principal at CPES

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**St. Thomas Students Help Their Community**

Students from the quilt they made for the women’s shelter in St. Thomas. Left to right: Nate Herrenrodeo, Chase Fenton, Kenny, Jessica Moore, Chelsea Ouna, and Kelsee Clarke

Seven years ago, following a devastating hurricane in the southern United States, I was searching for a way to make helping others meaningful to my students. I wanted them to understand that what happened elsewhere in the world should also impact them. We decided we would make a quilt to send to help the relief effort through ADRA.

St. Thomas Church member Lorene Hechele graciously donated her time to help the students choose fabric, cut squares and lay out the design. She did the actual sewing, and then the students did the finish work on the quilt. This quilt was the start of the quilting program currently run by the church.

Last year the students completed a rag quilt which was donated to the local women’s shelter in St. Thomas. Currently they are working on a quilt with hand coloured designs on the squares depicting the different holidays. The students take great pride in their work. It is especially nice to know that we are meeting a need right in our own city.

Maureen Westhaver, principal at St. Thomas

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**Weddings**

TracyAnn Wayburn (teacher at CAV) and
Flavio Ward Samaunts were married on December 27, 2007

Wedding of Paula Cape (teacher at CAV) and
Andy Marshall on December 28, 2007
When the Community Comes Together

For many years, the elementary students of Crawford Adventist Academy (CAA) often wondered about when the new promised special play facility would become a reality. Day after day they looked at the area that was off-limits since the jungle apparatus and the slides were deemed hazardous for play. They recalled the wonderful times that they had enjoyed and the skills they had developed while climbing, crawling or swinging on the structures. Now they just stared and hoped that somehow the situation would be remedied soon.

Meanwhile, administration, staff and parents were keenly aware of the need. The financial challenge, however, was a source of frustration. Simply put, the estimated cost could not be accommodated in the school budget. It is often said, though, that “where there is a will there is a way,” so the decision was made to explore avenues to acquire the necessary funds. CAA conducted an annual Walkathon that is well supported, so it was felt that this event, if marketed astutely, could generate the projected goal of $6000.

A committee of enthusiastic and determined parents and staff was formed to tackle the daunting challenge. Sponsors were canvassed to secure waists, t-shirts, promotional materials and other incentives. The event itself was marketed as one that the whole family could enjoy while contributing to a worthy cause.

Judy Burgin-Hall, principal JK-8,
Crawford Adventist Academy

CAA Grade 8 Students Launch Food Drive

Crawford Adventist Academy’s (CAA) grade eight students, responding to news articles and reports chronicling the dwindling food levels at Toronto’s largest food bank – the Daily Bread Food Bank – over the Thanksgiving holiday started a food drive to get cans, bags or pieces of non-perishable food product. The intent was to collect 2017 pieces during the drive to supplement the Christmas hampers.

Sponsored by CAA grade eight teacher Morris Beckford and Lucilla Naidoo and co-coordinated by students from Grades 10 and 11, CAA Grade 8 Students Launch Food Drive.

For a Good Cause – a slogan coined by the students- is an initiative launched to generate food that will help to feed many needy families. To ensure the campaign’s success, students met after school on their own time to create flyers and other promotional materials as well as bring in boxes, faithfully expecting that they would be filled. The students also created a website: autom.tripod.com - to generate support.

Statistics on hunger in the GTA from the Daily Bread in 2007, show that nearly one million people, almost a quarter of the city’s population, used food banks on a regular basis during last year. The students are heading the Bible’s teaching to help others. Deuteronomy 15:5 states: “If there is a poor man among you, one of your brothers, in any of the towns of the land which the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart nor close your hand to your poor brother; but you shall freely open your hand to him and generously lend him sufficient for his need in whatever he lacks.” This principle of our being our brother’s keeper is further underlined in Luke 10:33: “I was a stranger and you welcomed me.”

Although they did not achieve their set goal of 2017 pieces, they were lauded for their effort and initiative. On January 2, 2008, the Daily Bread arrived at Crawford to collect all 653 pieces of non-perishable food items. The students of CAA proudly packed the boxes onto the crane and sent them off. On January 15, 2008, the Daily Bread sent a thank you letter to the classes to thank them for “collecting 653 lbs of food!”

Ron Robinson
CAA parent
Thunder Bay Camp Meeting, May 2-4
Speaker: Pastor Stephen P. Bohr and Paul Llewellyn

Stephen P. Bohr was born in Wisconsin but grew up in Venezuela and Colombia where his parents served as missionaries for more than thirty years.

He has dedicated years to the study of the prophetic message of the Bible and is best known for his groundbreaking video series, “Cracking the Genesis Code.” He presented the series “New Perspectives on the Spirit of Prophecy” on 3ABN and also the Spanish evangelistic satellite series “Felicidad sin Limites” which was broadcast from Chicago to a worldwide audience. He will speak to the adults.

Paul Llewellyn is the Men’s Ministries director and an associate youth director for the Ontario Conference. One of his great joys is to see young people accept Jesus as their personal Saviour.

Meetings will be held at Thunder Bay Adventist Church (Sabbath and Sunday mornings) and at Oliver Road Community Centre, 563 Oliver Road, on Friday and Saturday nights (7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.).

Eastern Ontario Camp Meeting, Ottawa, May 16-18
Speakers: Chaplain Tim Nixon and Pastor Fred Nichols

For the second successive year, the Eastern Ontario Camp Meeting will take place in Ottawa over the weekend of May 16-18. The Friday and Sunday morning meetings will be held at Ottawa West Church. The Sabbath services will again be held at Lansdowne Park Exhibition Hall.

The adults’ speaker will be Tim Nixon, administrative chaplain at Andrews University. He began his pastoral ministry in the Northeastern Conference but has pastored many churches across the United States. Highlights of his pastoral ministry include developing small group ministries and taking part in more than 500 baptisms.

For 2008, there will be separate meetings for youth and young adults.

Fred Nichols, pastor of Agape Temple Seventh-day Adventist Church in Pickering, will be the speaker. He is known for his gift of relating to youth and young adults and has a passion for helping young people experience fulfilment in Jesus.

Western Ontario Camp Meeting, Chatham, May 30 - June 1
Speakers: Bill Santos and Daniel Saugh

Western Ontario will have its own camp meeting this year. Adventist churches from London to Sarnia will meet at Kinsmen Auditorium, Chatham Community Centre Complex, 80 Tweedsmuir Ave. West, to worship, fellowship and to learn.

The adults’ speaker will be Bill Santos, speaker-director for It Is Written Canada.

Pastor Santos loves the Gospel and is an exciting preacher of the Word of God. In addition to his television broadcasts, he has conducted a number of public evangelistic meetings across Canada.

Daniel Saugh, pastor of Meadowvale Church, will be the youth’s speaker. He easily identifies with youth and is often seen giving presentations or preaching at youth events. Pastor Saugh is a popular week of prayer speaker at Adventist colleges and universities, including Canadian University College in Alberta and Helderberg College in South Africa.

Regional Camp Meeting News

Seven out of ten adults in Canada die without a valid Will, leaving a tremendous burden for their loved ones. Are you one of them?

To find out more information on how you can protect your family, contact the Planned Giving and Trust Services Department of the Ontario Conference, 905-571-1022; 905-686-5757 ext. 206 or email: dputt@adventistontario.org

Upcoming Camp Meeting Dates


Northern Ontario Camp Meeting: Sudbury, August 29-31.
Pastoral Changes

Retirement

Pastor Carlos Perrone retired from full-time ministry on March 1, 2008. He was, most recently, the pastor of Lily of the Valley Group and Ottawa Spanish Company. We wish him and his wife, Ana Maria, God’s richest blessings as they move to a new phase of their lives.

At the end of April, Pastor Young-Suk Moon leaves full-time ministry after forty years of service. Before coming to Ontario, he served in Korea and the United States. For the past four years, he has been the senior pastor of Toronto Korean Adventist Church. We wish Pastor and Sister Chi Joo Moon, God’s richest blessings as they enter a well-deserved retirement.

Transfers

Joseph Batiancia is the new associate pastor at Mt. Zion Filipino. He remains the pastor for Blessed Hope Company in Brampton.

Joseph Duchesne is back from the seminary to pastor the Cornwall and Hawkesbury congregations from May 1.

Didier Fourny will leave the Cornwall congregation at the end of April to pastor the Timmins, Cochrane and Haileybury congregations. All three congregations have been without a pastor for some time and will be happy to have a full-time pastor.

Eduardo Monteiro has moved from Emanuel Spanish Group and Monte Carmelo Spanish Company. He now pastors Ottawa Spanish Company and Lily of the Valley Group, having assumed his new responsibilities on April 1. He is replaced at Emanuel and Monte Carmelo by George Robleto who was previously the pastor of Windsor Spanish and associate pastor of Windsor Adventist Church. Pastor Robleto will also take up his new pastorate on April 1.

Charles Ojano has been appointed as pastor of Faith Filipino Fellowship after the merger of Bread of Life and Downtown Toronto fellowships. He continues as the associate pastor at Filipino Canadian Adventist Church.

Nicholas Rhone has resigned from full-time ministry after nearly two and a half years as assistant pastor at Ottawa and Orleans Adventist Churches. Even though this was his first pastoral assignment, he made many friends in the two congregations as he faithfully served them. He also made significant contribution to the children’s section of the past two conference camp meetings. We wish him God’s blessings and success as he takes on new responsibilities.

New Pastors

We welcome four new pastors to pastoral ministry in Ontario, replacing retirees and those who have moved on to other areas of ministry or occupation.

Pastor Kwesi Gyimah is a ministerial graduate of Southern Caribbean University in Trinidad.

He also has a background in public health, having studied in Nigeria. He is acquainted with a number of churches in the GTA, having worked with the Canada Youth Challenge programme over a number of summers. From April 1, he will be the assistant pastor at the Ghanaian and Heritage Ghanaian churches.

Pastor Julio Lopez is new to Ontario, coming from Puerto Rico via the Adventist Theological Seminary in Berrien Springs, USA. From April 1, he will be assistant to Pastor Marian Kossovan at the Windsor and Windsor Spanish churches.

Pastor Lyle Notice is from Toronto. A graduate of Canadian University College, he is new to ministerial work and has been appointed to serve as the assistant pastor of the Orleans and Ottawa (Benjamin Street) churches. He will intern under Pastor Floyd Spence.

In spring, Pastor Dae-doo Seo will be replacing Pastor Moon at Toronto Korean Adventist Church. Presently, he is head of chaplaincy at the Adventist hospital in Seoul, South Korea. His theological background has been enriched by a strong emphasis on health which he has effectively used to win hundreds of converts.

A Driver’s Prayer

Each time I step into my car,
I stop to breath a prayer
And ask my Lord for a vision clear
While keeping safely in His care
A prayer for calm attention
To every bike or car around
To keep my eyes and ears attuned
And be alert for every sound
A prayer to show consideration
For everyone who shares the way
Day or night whatever the weather
For this and more I daily pray
To help me take those extra minutes
Giving myself plenty of time
Then driving wherever becomes a joy
Just being alive much more sublime
I could finish every single day
With a calmer disposition
And maybe live much longer too
When prayer to God is my first petition
So now as I step into my car
Prepared to face the world of speed
Buckled up and secure within
I remember prayer is my greatest need.

George Wilfred Boyes, Thunder Bay
Pastor Mansfield Edwards and members of the Apple Creek Adventist Church firmly believe in taking the Gospel of Jesus into the homes of people. Since the beginning of 2007, they have taken the Gospel beyond the walls of the Apple Creek Church building directly into tens of thousands of homes in Ontario and other provinces.

*Discover The Power (DTP)*, a televised church-based programme, is Apple Creek’s evangelistic tool to reach beyond church walls. The dream of the local church hosting a television programme was one that Pastor Edwards longed to fulfil. However, the expense of a televised programme prohibited him from realizing his dream until he got the opportunity for a free slot on The Hope Channel.

“Having been offered a free programme slot by Hope Channel,” said Edwards, “I embraced it as God’s opportunity to prepare the church for a new phase of ministry to impact the local needs.”

While the slot on Hope gave DTP more exposure, it is viewed mainly by Adventists. Edwards, and others in the congregation, wanted to reach a wider audience.

“We needed a slot on a local station,” said Edwards, “because we wanted local people to receive the broadcast and hear the Gospel.”

Through prayer and the financial support of the local church and other interested persons, since September 2007, DTP can now be viewed on The Christian Channel, and most recently, Vision TV.

The DTP broadcast uses the strategy of addressing life issues such as grappling with grief, overcoming fear and seeing the benefits of prayer. Each broadcast is designed to build trust in God’s Word. DTP uses biblical situations that parallel the very situations people are presently grappling with and demonstrates the relevance of the Scriptures. Doctrinal subjects are strategically presented.

There is clear evidence that DTP is reaching people. Eight persons began visiting the Apple Creek congregation after seeing the broadcast. Earlier, a videographer from Rogers TV who heard of the project and went to observe was subsequently baptized along with his wife. Presently, he is part of the local team with whom he shares his expertise.

Meanwhile, viewers from across the province and elsewhere call into the programme, requesting further information. All responses are documented and directed to the Personal Ministries Department at the Ontario Conference for allocation to the nearest pastor. Adventist churches across the province and elsewhere are being benefitted by Apple Creek’s *Discover The Power*.

It is hoped that local churches will also be able to advertise their programme through DTP broadcasts. *Discover The Power* can be viewed Sundays (5:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.) on The Christian Channel and on Thursday afternoons (2:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.) on Vision TV.

“We want as many people to tune in and watch,” says Edwards. “I’m hoping that all Adventists in Ontario will encourage family members, friends and neighbours to watch the broadcast and discover the power of God in their life.”

To donate to Discover The Power, contact Apple Creek Adventist Church by phone, 905-946-8751, or send a cheque to: Discover The Power, 700 Apple Creek Blvd, Markham, Ontario, L3R 7X9.
Mabel ‘Aunt May’ Williams (nee Langley) celebrated her 100th birthday with nearly 200 family and friends at a dinner held in her honour at Apple Creek Seventh-day Adventist Church on Sunday, March 2, 2008.

Aunt May was born in Jamaica on March 3, 1908. Within a few years, she was adopted into a loving Adventist family. The principles learned at home created the foundation on which she lived her life, especially after arriving in Toronto in the 1960’s. She eagerly participated in the life and mission of the emerging immigrant Adventist church and made it her life.

Local pastor, Dr. Mansfield Edwards, described his surprise when he first arrived at Apple Creek Church and discovered that Aunt May, in her 90’s, was still active in church, acting in a dramatic production, singing duets and visiting the elderly in nursing homes.

Other tributes painted a picture of a giant of a woman, although quite diminutive in stature. This was attributed to her commitment to prayer and her love for God. She is known as a woman of prayer. Neighbours, friends and church family are used to dropping by her home for the prayer meetings that are regularly held there. Her love for prayer was almost matched by her love for singing. She had memorized nearly all her many favourite songs so, when she lost her sight a decade ago, she did not need a hymn book to continue singing. At the celebrations, everyone was treated to her mellow alto voice, still strong as it was decades ago, as she sang, ‘Under His Wings’ as a duet with Pretha Barrow.

Shortly after the enthusiastic applause subsided, many guests gasped with surprise and admiration when they learned that she had only retired 20 years earlier at age 80. This was no surprise to her family who are from a line of long-livers. Her younger sister, Olive, is 94. Another sister died at 97.

Aunt May described reaching 100 as ‘wonderful’ and attributes her long life to receiving God’s blessings and being a vegetarian for the last 50 years.

“I’m celebrating my birthday by praising God for His goodness to me,” she declared. “He’s been so wonderful to me!”

For many years, it has been her habit that on each of her birthdays Aunt May would take a birthday offering to church and present it to God. On this occasion, the church presented her with a gift of $1,000 as the first among its membership to reach 100 years.

Among the many congratulations sent to Aunt May were those from Her Royal Highness Queen Elizabeth II, Michaelee Jean, governor general of Canada, Stephen Harper, prime minister of Canada and Derrick Nichols, president of the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

On February 24, 2008, Pauline Christian, a member of Apple Creek Seventh-day Adventist Church, was honoured with the Police and Community Award of Excellence by the Toronto Police Service in partnership with the British Methodist Episcopal Church.

Pauline was given the award for “being a positive role model; for enriching the lives of those in need; and for her invaluable commitment and tireless efforts in giving back to various people and organizations throughout the City of Toronto”.

The Police and Community Award of Excellence is one among other Black History Month community awards that celebrate the value and achievements of Canadians of African heritage. It was held at the British Methodist Episcopal Church in Toronto.

When Pauline was asked how it felt to receive an award, she replied, “I’m really honoured and feel humbled by it, but giving back to the community is a natural occurrence that represents something that I love to do. To some degree, it’s a reason for my existence. Therefore, it is great being awarded for things that are naturally a part of you, in helping others to occupy a better place in this life, and ultimately the life to come.”

Adventist Recognized by Toronto Police Service for a “Job Well Done”

Pauline Christian with Chief Armand LaBarge and his wife, Denise

Photo by Naudia Larrow

Judith Cooper

Photo by Nechal Laxrrea

Church News

Apple Creek

Mabel Williams Celebrates 100 Years of Abundant Life

Halsey Peat

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First Baptism for Good News Fellowship

Good News Fellowship recently held its first baptism when, on Sabbath, November 24, 2007, Susan and Ronald Peterson were baptized by Pastor Dan Linrud.

The baptism was a time of celebration for the group of believers who, 18 months earlier, were part of Brantford Seventh-day Adventist Church. They were established to help further the growth of the kingdom in Brantford. Susan and Ronald are the first fruit of the group’s evangelistic endeavour.

Susan began attending Good News Fellowship after visiting a garage sale held by the group. At the sale, she was engaged in friendly conversation and was invited to a Bible study group. Retired pastor, Ralph Juriansz, and Bro. Immanuel Charles, helped her and her husband, Ronald, to accept Jesus as their personal Saviour.

It was not difficult for Susan and Ronald to make their decision. Ronald had been suffering from cancer but was miraculously healed after he had been anointed and prayer offered for him.

They were received into fellowship on December 1, 2007. Pastor Halsey Peat, Ontario Conference Communication and PARL director, was present to welcome them into the Ontario Conference Church.

Hamilton East Kicks off 2008 with Action

The year 2008 started with promise and renewal for the members of Hamilton East Seventh-day Adventist Church. On Friday, January 25, they opened the Sabbath with a candlelight consecration service for new church officers for the years 2008/2009. On Sabbath afternoon and on Sunday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., they gained knowledge and enthusiasm at a Natural Church Development seminar lead by Pastor Alex Golovenko, minister of the two London Adventist Churches. They gained knowledge on how the church can spiritually grow and what church members need to do in order to reach the lost in their community.

On February 23, they received a double portion of blessings when Kingsway College Philharmonic Touring Band and Drama Team ministered to the church and visitors during Sabbath School, the worship service and the AY programme.

The year 2008 promises to be a busy one for Hamilton East Church. They are already involved in or plan to be involved in aerobic classes, tea parties, craft classes, reading enhancement group for ages 6-13, prayer breakfast, walking club, monthly Monday morning prayer and praise meetings and cooking classes. They are planning other activities and warmly extend an invitation for others to visit them and receive the blessings they believe God has in store for everyone.

Margaret Komhyr
Communications/Church Clerk

Name Change

The West-Carleton Company has changed its name. It is now known as the ‘Kanata Seventh-day Adventist Company’

Mississauga Filipino Church Is Seven!

Mississauga Filipino Seventh-day Adventist Church has just celebrated its seventh birthday. On February 16, 2008, church members and friends gathered to worship God in thanksgiving and to reflect on Christ’s perfection.

In 2001, when the church first began as a small group, it was filled with a pioneering spirit and rich enthusiasm. Seven years later, the church, having grown to a membership of 93, is still as enthusiastic.

Church pastor, Jesse Anunciacion, told the congregation, “We have the potential to experience all that God intended for His children, but we must cooperate with the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives and be transformed.”

Guest speaker, Pastor Halsey Peat, Ontario Conference Communications director, counselled the congregation to seek the mind of Christ in order to fully reflect His perfection. “We need to learn to think Christianly,” he said, “to view life and all that we do through the spiritual eyes of a child of God.”

The congregation warmly welcomes guests and invites them to make Mississauga Filipino Church their own. The growing number of visitors from various ethnic backgrounds suggests that some are already thinking of making it their church.

Mississauga Filipino Adventist Church meets at Rehoboth Fellowship Christian Reformed Church, 800 Burnhamthorpe Road, Etobicoke.
Mount Olive Outreach Programme

There was a great sense of peace as the members of the team for seniors’ homes outreach witnessed the joy expressed on the seniors’ faces during their outreach programme.

Three years ago, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, Bro. Radcliff Lennon worked with other volunteers to establish a programme at one of the seniors’ homes in the Etobicoke area. Since the Mount Olive Seventh-day Adventist Church members are very enthusiastic about outreach programmes, they have been enjoying reaching out to seniors one Sunday each month, and it usually runs for two hours during which everybody enjoys special music, testimonies, choruses, sermonet and refreshment. The programme provides an opportunity for fellowship for the seniors who are unable to attend church.

On December 21, 2007, over 70 seniors attended the end of the year celebration programme. After an uplifting song service, Pastor Joseph Amankwah, assistant pastor of the Mount Olive Church, presented an inspiring sermonet, which emphasized the joy of giving. The seniors were given a healthy vegetarian meal, and they all received a gift.

V. Lyttle
Communications

Pembroke Church's Community Internet Connection

When Pastor Adriaan van der Lingen, minister of the Pembroke Seventh-day Adventist Church, accidentally discovered that his church’s wireless signal covered the entire parking lot of the church, he had an idea. He decided to offer a free wireless hotspot to travellers, truckers and passers-by so they can log on with their laptops to check their email, get their bearings or just surf the net. It did not take long for the folks in the area to catch on. Soon local youngsters could be found with their laptops on the steps of the church.

“This is just what I want,” said Pastor van der Lingen, “to make the barriers come down and show us off as friendly folk!”

He went on to describe how one elderly wheelchair bound neighbour from several houses far across the road arrived at the church to see him because the wireless adapter his son had bought him was not working. Apparently, he thought that the church was actually supplying internet service to the area!

Presently, Pastor van der Lingen is working on a free one-night course for the community on how to use the internet for Bible study. He will follow this up with a seminar in the church on the archaeological search for Jesus.

V. Lyttle
Communications

Young Women’s Retreat
Camp Frenda, Muskoka
May 2-4, 2008

Sponsored by Ontario Conference Women’s Ministries Department

HOW BAD DO YOU WANT IT?

Respect
Freedom
Love
Fun

V. Lyttle
Communications
Twenty-Three Graduate from Perth Avenue’s Lay School of Evangelism

On Sabbath afternoon, January 26, 23 smiling women and men, robed in black graduation gowns, marched down the aisle of Toronto Perth Avenue Adventist Church to the emotive strains of Sir Edward Elgar’s *Pomp and Circumstance*. It was the graduation ceremony for the first group of graduates from Perth Avenue’s Lay School of Evangelism.

As the graduates marched into the sanctuary, following the be-robed platform party of instructors and invited guests, the waiting congregation was visibly taken aback by the grandeur of the occasion. Clearly, very few expected that the ceremony would hold such high significance. However, when they saw Elder Derrick Nichols, president of the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists of the Ontario Conference, in personal ministries director and Elder Eustace Williams, of Seventh-day Adventists of the Ontario Conference, it was picked up by Elder Theodore Sargeant, Errol Lawrence, Fitzroy Maitland, Garth Dottin, Halsey Peat, Charles Skeete, Godfrey Beresford and Brother Terrence Harrison.

“We want to thoroughly prepare men and women to be effective witnesses,” said Sargeant. “I strongly believe that if more people are given the tools with which to win souls, our church will grow in leaps and bounds. My aim is to have at least 50% of the membership of our church trained within five years.”

The theme of witnessing was picked up by Elder Derrick Nichols in the feature address. Referencing Acts 1:8, he spoke of the promise of Jesus to send the Holy Spirit in order to make His followers effective witnesses.

“Now that you have received the preparation, go out and fulfill the Gospel Commission,” encouraged Nichols. “Today, honour is being conferred on you for your achievements but to win a soul is the greatest honour that can be conferred upon anyone.”

He told them that they were not simply to stand and gaze at what they see. They were to have an urgency about their mission because Jesus is coming back again.

It was noted that witnessing had already begun. When Yvonne Salmon heard about the course from her friend, she wanted to attend, even though she is not a Seventh-day Adventist. She was among the graduates and received her certificate from Pastor Derrick Nichols.

Valedictorian, J’eniver Farrell-Corbin, accepted the president’s charge on behalf of the class of 2007 and concluded, “This is just the beginning for us!”

The Lay School of Evangelism is open to everyone interested in knowing how to become effective witnesses for Christ.

Shiloh Church: A Building of Its Own

Shiloh Adventist Church has finally acquired its own church building. Fifteen years since it emerged from the union of two smaller congregations, Ephesus and Kingston Road, the church moved into its own property on Sabbath, December 1, 2007.

The church building, located at 1090 Bellamy Road N., Scarborough, is a former warehouse and office complex. However, some work was required to prepare the building for worship.

“We are excited,” said local pastor, Joseph Bulgin. “It’s a good feeling to be in our own home.” He described the first Sabbath as “a time of thanksgiving and praise when over 500 members and visitors came together for worship.”

Since his arrival at Shiloh nearly five years ago, Pastor Bulgin has been a driving force behind the congregation’s quest to obtain its own building. The building committee spent countless hours searching for a suitable property, encouraged fund raising and, at one time, even negotiated a partnership with Philadelphia Adventist Church in Scarborough in order to jointly purchase a building. Finally, Shiloh found the building at Bellamy Road.

“It has been a long struggle,” said Pastor Bulgin, “but it worked out. I encourage other congregations that are looking for their own church home to keep trusting in the Lord and to keep the faith. He will also make a way for you.”

The members of Shiloh Adventist Church warmly welcome fellow believers and friends to join them in worship at their new facility.
Eternal Life from a Drink of Water

When Emily Reitsma, 21, accepted the drink of water from Shawn Jarvis, she did not realize that she would shortly be drinking living water.

Emily had been painting fire hydrants in Caledonia during the long hot days of summer when a young man offered her a drink of cool water. She gladly accepted. Daily, he gave her water to drink and a friendship developed that led to her baptism in the Simcoe Adventist Church in the fall of 2007.

It wasn’t a smooth path to her baptism. Emily described it as “difficult” because she was at a stage in life where being popular in college, attending parties and socializing with friends were a priority. Shawn, a member of the Simcoe Church, invited her to church, and she accepted. Meanwhile, on Sundays, she started to attend the Christian Reformed Church every Sabbath but as she began to taste the living water, she fell in love with Jesus and the Simcoe church family and quit her job in order to keep every Sabbath holy.

She described how the church family made her feel very welcomed, and she desired to become a better person, reasoning that there had to be more to life than parties.

“My biggest step in the right direction was moving out of my party-drug-infested apartment,” says Emily. She started Bible studies on her own and later with Pastor Herb Sormin, minister of the Simcoe Church. This eventually led to her baptism.

The Simcoe congregation rejoiced at her baptism and gladly welcomed Emily into fellowship.

Members Preach for Simcoe Evangelistic Series

“Simcoe Church has held many satellite evangelistic series,” said Jeff Gunn, member of the congregation. “However, this was the first series where our members were the speakers.”

Jeff was speaking about the lay evangelistic series held at the Simcoe Church last autumn. A number of members preached, using the ‘Truth for Today; Hope for Tomorrow’ evangelistic materials.

For some members, it was the first time they had ever undertaken anything like this, but they were very pleased with the result.

“It was a huge learning curve for us,” said Lorraine Striemer, communication secretary, and we had the support of the congregation.”

There were a number of contacts made during the series, and they are now being followed up as members continue to reach out to the community.

Toronto Central Church Celebrates Twentieth Anniversary

From November 16-24, 2007, the Toronto Central Seventh-day Adventist Church celebrated its 20th anniversary with the theme, “20 Years by Faith…Our Journey.”

Elder Derrick Nichols, Ontario Conference president, was the keynote speaker on the opening night.

The sanctuary was filled to capacity on November 17 as visitors and members commemorated the anniversary. Dr. G. Earl Knight, secretary of the Greater New York Conference, delivered a timely message entitled: “Walk by Faith, and Not by Sight.”

In the evening, the celebration continued with a mini-concert, and Pastor Antonio Bueno, secretary of the Ontario Conference, inspired those present with his message, “Remembering, Reflecting, Refocusing and Rejoicing.”

An Anniversary Gala was held on Sunday, November 18, and featured the comedy of Jay Martin and music by KC. The Prayer Ministry Department coordinated an uplifting and powerful prayer and anointing service on November 21.

Merger of Bread of Life and Downtown Toronto Fellowship Companies

On Sabbath, January 26, over 100 worshippers, including the officers of the Ontario Conference, came together to witness the much-anticipated merger of Bread of Life and Downtown Toronto Fellowship Seventh-day Adventist companies.

The name selected for the new company is Faith Filipino Fellowship (FFF).

Pastor Charles Ojano has been appointed as the minister for the new company. They worship at College Street United Church at 454 College Street, Toronto, home of the former Downtown Toronto Fellowship.

The Centennial Celebration
Service of St. Thomas Seventh-day Adventist Church will take place on April 26 at 11:00 a.m. (380 Manor Rd.). Civic dignitaries, Ontario Conference officials and local clergy. Former pastors and members are also invited to join in at the celebration and share memories. Contact Pastor Todor Levterov at 519-633-3790; tlevterov@adventistontario.org
Women’s Retreat Offering Helps Children’s Aid Youth

On February 28, 2008, Natlene Walters made a presentation on behalf of a generous group of women in the Ontario Conference to the Durham Children’s Aid Society.

At the September 2007 Women’s Retreat at White Oaks Resort & Spa in Niagara-on-the-Lake, $1800 was collected to assist children in Durham Children’s Aid Society care, via the Durham Children’s Aid Foundation.

After several discussions, it was decided that the money would be of greatest benefit to those youths who are currently permanent wards of the society and would be making the transition to independent living. During the transition they often have little to start out with and little or no support system in their attempt to become self-sufficient.

On February 4, 2008, the preparation and packaging of 18 containers was eagerly completed with the assistance of ladies from the Women’s Ministries and Young Women’s Ministries. At the formal presentation on February 28, the containers, consisting of over 40 brand-new household items (such as bedding, pots and pans, dishes, cleaning supplies, etc.) was given to the Children’s Aid Society. The board expressed surprise and deep appreciation for the number and quality of items in the kits and presented a plaque to the Ontario Conference Women’s Ministries Department in appreciation of the generous donation.

Apple Creek Church Hosts ‘Adventist Icon’

In February, at Apple Creek Seventh-day Adventist Church, the Adventist Youth (AY) Department presented a series of musical programmes named ‘Adventist Icon’ in connection with Black History Month. The evening programmes showcased performances from soloists, groups and choirs in front of a panel of judges who observed the performances in order to offer encouragement to the budding performers. The final week climaxed the event with a line up of recording artists, covering various genres of music.

Each programme manifested a special theme, such as faith, hope, victory and freedom. There were also “Afro focus” presentations by mostly the junior youth that gave biographical sketches of prominent Adventists of African heritage.

Names of performers included Sandria Ricketts, Rahiem Hurlock, Shawn Spencer, Pam Lister, Margaret Meikle, LYNC, Deon Flash, KC Squared, Earlyn Alexander, Living Testimony, Second Chance, Soul Influence, Intercession, Expression of Praise and Markham Advent Chorale. The hosts of the events were Karl Hutchinson, Odette Henry and Nicole Gutherie. Vernon Langdon headed the panel of judges. The programmes were prepared by the AY team headed by Delois Gittens and La’Dana Manhertz.

According to La’Dana, assistant AY leader, “The programme itself had such a wide variety of performers.” It’s amazing to see that we have so much talent around us... It was a grand experience for not just the AY team but for the entire church.”

AY leader, Delois Gittens, was thrilled with the results, “I thought it was very successful. It allowed us to get other churches to participate and come to Apple Creek and get young people involved.”

When asked what it was like to judge Adventist Icon, Vernon Langdon responded, “It was a challenge. The standard was so high. I strongly enjoyed the experience... It wasn’t of a competitive nature.”

Adventist Icon was not competitive in nature like the popular television show American Idol. Instead, the series of musical programmes gave glory to the author of music, Jesus Christ.

Adrianna Lewis
Deon Flash Launches Debut CD, “Journey with Hymn”

There was always something special about worship at Apple Creek Church in the 90’s when Deon Flash was accompanying on the piano or organ. He played with an amazing skill and deep passion that inspired and delighted the congregation. That same skill and passion has been captured on his debut CD, “Journey With Hymn”.

Deon spent more than 20 years developing his musical talent and, not unlike a virtuoso, began studying at seven. He supplemented his natural ability and perfected his technique with professional training, receiving an ARCT Associate degree from the Royal Conservatory of Music, a Bachelor of Science in Piano Performance from the University of Toronto, and a Master of Science degree from Wheelock College. His virtuosity is complimented by his ability to arrange and compose.

Before returning to Toronto in 2007, Deon spent ten years in Bermuda as music director for various churches, music instructor at the Bermuda Conservatory of Music, and music teacher at the Victor Scott and Prospect Primary schools. His most notable post was as the assistant director for the Bermuda Philharmonic Society.

“Journey with Hymn,” contains a few of his favourite hymns such as Great Is Thy Faithfulness, There is a Fountain, Come Thou Almighty King; and spirituals Joshua Fit da Battle and Angels Watching over Me.

“Journey with Hymn” is available on CD at RG Mitchell’s bookstore (North York) and also online at www.deonflash.com. Ask for “Journey with Hymn” at the ABC.

Please note that the Ontario Highlights is gradually reducing the number of adverts for private businesses.

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