St. Thomas Seventh-day Adventist Church is 100 years old! Church members, friends, former pastors, conference officials, civic dignitaries and well-wishers gathered together on Sabbath, April 26, 2008, to celebrate 100 years since the church was organized in St. Thomas in 1908.

The celebrations began Friday evening with worship, but it was on Sabbath morning, as old friends and former pastors arrived, that the joy of the reunion really began. Yet, it was all about the goodness of God in how He established a church in Fort Thomas (the old name for St. Thomas) back in 1898, organized it in 1908, nurtured it until now and continues to lead and direct it.

It was soon evident that the centennial anniversary was a celebration of God’s work. From the rich quality of the music of father-and-daughter team, Agostino and Lanita Resendes; the sweet singing of the children of the St. Thomas Seventh-day Adventist School; and the Christ-centred Sabbath School lesson discussion by Pastor Wayne Martin to the powerful sermon of Pastor Derrick Nichols, the worshippers celebrated 100 years of God’s blessings.

Ontario Conference president, Pastor Derrick Nichols, and Pastor Wayne Martin, Sabbath School director, were among those attending from the headquarters of the Adventist Church in Ontario. Also present were Pastor Antonio Bueno, secretary; Brother Ulysses Guarin, treasurer; Dr. Errol Lawrence, Ministerial director; Brother Birthe Chan, Risk Management director; and Pastor Halsey Peat, Communication director. Some were accompanied by their wives.

Prior to the worship service, local pastor, Todor Levterov, happily welcomed the Honourable Steve Peters, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and MPP for Elgin-Middlesex-London; Jessica van Vugt, who represented Mr. Joe Preston, MP for Elgin-Middlesex-London; and St. Thomas mayor, Cliff Barwick.

Mayor Barwick praised the church for its supportive and positive role in the community of St. Thomas. Mr. Steve Peters had clearly done his homework and was able to speak about some of the founding principles of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He commended the Adventist Church for its commitment to a healthy lifestyle and expressed his hope that the rest of society would learn from it. Each of the civic dignitaries presented congratulatory certificates or plaques.

In his sermon, President Nichols commended the church upon reaching its centenary but also challenged it as it moves into its new century to be a loving congregation that is at the centre of the community.

Continued on page 3
Let Us Pray

Enjoy praying. I really do! There’s no sweeter, more satisfying feeling than to be alone with God, especially when things are going well in my life, and I’m simply enjoying His presence. When I’m faced with difficulties or a trying situation, and I’m dealing with my internal struggles, prayer is not as pleasurable, and sometimes I even find myself arguing with God. Even then, I look to prayer because God has an amazing way of calming me and reassuring me that He has everything in hand. Why then do I sometimes have difficulty when it comes to the intercessory prayer in the worship service?

In some churches, I’ve struggled to keep my mind focussed on God when the intercessory prayer is being offered. There have been moments when I’ve prayed, “Lord, please forgive me for longing for this prayer to stop because I just can’t take any more of it.” This has happened when I’d been kneeling, without the aid of a cushion, for over ten minutes, and the end was nowhere in sight!

It’s not the length that wearies me so much because there are times when we are caught up in God’s presence in such a marvellous way that time is immaterial; it’s when I don’t feel any connection with the prayer, and I realize that the person praying is oblivious to what Jesus has to say in Matthew 6:7, “When you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.”

Long prayers are one thing, but the pain becomes acute when some people approach the intercessory prayer as a time for personal supplication, griping about personal issues or even to preach to the congregation. Yes, some actually preach, telling the congregation what to do and how to behave. I’m amazed at how in the middle of the prayer, some cease talking to God and begin talking to the congregation under the guise of telling God how the congregation must live and respond to Him.

Others fill the allotted period with strings of cliches, repeating familiar and well-worn expressions. In some cases, they simply ramble on, just repeating words in a cold, lifeless monotone. At the other end of the spectrum are those who believe that God is either hard of hearing or needs to be convinced of their sincerity, so unless they shout or cry out in earnest expressions of fervour, their prayers will not be effective.

What a joy it is to hear someone pray a prayer of intercession to which I can truly say the ‘amen’ of agreement. How wonderful to respond to the call to prayer on a Sabbath morning and hear someone speak to God on my behalf, identifying with my needs and concerns, my hopes and aspirations, my expressions of thanksgiving and my longing for God’s eternal kingdom of peace.

It’s a pleasure to silently blend my prayer with those of all the worshippers, as together we join with the person praying on our behalf. It’s so inspiring to listen to someone approach God with bated breath, acknowledging the supremacy of God yet approaching Him confidently because of a keen awareness of God’s grace. There’s such a feeling of comfort to have someone pray for me and sense through the loving tone with which God is addressed that there is a deep friendship between the Divine and the human.

Yet, to intercede is not something easy. To stand like the prophet Daniel in sackcloth and ashes, having spent time in fasting and the confession of personal sins, to pray a prayer of intercession for God’s people (Daniel 9:3-19) is a frightful responsibility. Perhaps we have not sufficiently considered the weight of this responsibility and have been unfair in our expectations of those asked to bear it each Sabbath. We either expect them to pray like Daniel when they are neither prophets nor have they received instruction on how to offer a prayer of intercession, or we simply look for someone who is willing to pray as if it were some mere item in the order of service.

The intercessory prayer is perhaps one of the most effective evangelistic and spiritually fulfilling part of worship. It’s time to ensure that it lives up to its highest potential.

Halsey Peat
Editor
“The church exists to love,” he said. “It must do more than simply understanding the problems of people. It must meet their needs! People must know that they can run to our church with confidence.”

After lunch, the afternoon programme featured a mini concert and allowed the congregation to reminisce. Five senior members and two former pastors, Laren Kurtz (1977-1979) and Roy West (1989-1996), shared their memories.

“My first recollection goes back 80 years,” said Lois Kantor before going on to describe life with horse-drawn carts and sledges and the strong, loving bond of the congregations many years ago.

Pastor West spoke of the first church building that was located on the corner of Mary and Curtis Streets and the strong bond within the congregation.

“I remember when we would have a corn roast,” he said, “everyone was there. I mean everyone. It was one big happy family.”

The first church building was built in 1909 after a camp meeting held in St. Thomas in 1898, resulted in the raising up of a new congregation. After moving from one rented location to the next, they were able to secure their own building. By the time Pastor West became its pastor in 1989, the congregation had outgrown it. The discussion to build a new church was not eagerly embraced by some, but a decision was finally made and, with the gift of a piece of land, the members undertook the task of building the present property.

The new building was opened on September 15, 1991 at 3:00 p.m. by former Ontario Conference president, Pastor Rick Bacchus, and former mayor, Janet Golding.

St. Thomas Adventist Church has been served by 19 pastors during its 100 years of existence. It has a rich heritage of community involvement and providing Christian education. It now joins Six Nations, Ottawa, Brantford, Chatham and Hamilton Seventh-day Adventist Churches in Ontario that were organized over 100 years ago.

The church building is located at 380 Manor Road, St. Thomas, Ontario.

Owen Sound’s 30th Anniversary

Come celebrate with us on June 14, 2008 the 30th anniversary of Owen Sound Seventh-day Adventist Church, 122442 Grey County Road #5, Waverley Heights, Ontario (519) 372-1722.

Hear former pastors as they share their stories about how the Lord led Owen Sound Adventists, followed by a fellowship meal, and the opportunity for special comments and a group photo. PLEASE CONSIDER THIS AS YOUR PERSONAL INVITATION.

- Sabbath School at 9:50 a.m.
- Slide Presentation at 11:00 a.m.
- Worship Service at 11:15 a.m.
R.R.S.P. by May 23, 2008 to one of the following:
Pastor Peter Caran at 519-370-0135 or caran@bmts.com
Chuck Burgess at 519-538-2693 or ic.burgess@bmts.com
Karen Bluhm at 519-371-1750 or typist2go@bmts.com
“The Best Maranatha So Far”

“I've been to many Maranathas,” said Deevin Festejo, local elder at Mississauga Filipino Seventh-day Adventist Church, “but this is the best Maranatha so far! Everything about it was excellent—the place, the seminars, the speakers. It was great!”


“If I knew that it was this good, I would have attended a long time ago,” said Pastor Travis Afflick.

Attending for the first time, Bogana Grbic, from Toronto Yugoslavian Adventist Church was happy to make new friends and meet old ones again. “I really liked Maranatha”, she said. “I attended the postmodern seminar, and I learned a lot. I will definitely come back again.”

Maranatha is held each spring for the training of local church leaders and members in evangelism and community outreach. Over the years it has grown to include other areas of ministry, such as family, health and worship, since these can also be effective means of evangelism. Many attendees return year after year building expertise to strengthen the ministries in their local church. They expect and receive the very best in training. Maranatha 2008 was no exception.

Maranatha 2008 offered no less than ten seminars and workshops in areas, such as Lay Preaching, Reaching the Post Modern Generation, Prayer Ministries, Reclaiming Inactive Members, and Small Groups. Dr. Miroslav Pujic, Pastor Ron Halverson, Dr. James Zackrison, Faith Crumbly and John Tolman were some of the presenters who shared their experience and expertise and left participants feeling that they had received something very valuable.

“My workshop was absolutely amazing,” said Melanie Smith, Agape Temple’s youth representative to Maranatha.

Dave Alconcel from Mississauga Filipino Adventist Church said that the training he received during the Lay Preaching workshop was “amazing and tremendous.”

Most people couldn’t stop talking about the messages by keynote speaker, Pastor Ian Sweeney, from England. “I've never heard the Word spoken in that way before”, said Alrica Jones.

“The preaching was very, very good,” added Leonard North.

As Pastor Sweeney preached about ‘Desperate People,’ ‘Men’ and ‘Last Words’, it was easy for all to see why The Times newspaper voted him the UK Preacher of the Year in 1998.

The satisfaction that many felt towards Maranatha was due in part to the excellent facilities provided at the BMO Institute for Learning and the equally excellent service provided by its staff.

“I think that the conference did a really good job in having the seminars here,” said Milan Bolkovic. “It's a fabulous place... at one hundred dollars, it's a cheap, cheap bargain!”

Pastor Eustace Williams, Maranatha advisor, was very happy with the success of Maranatha 2008.
“It is very gratifying to know that people came,” he said. “They appreciated the services, workshops, the overall atmosphere, the food and fellowship. “We want to thank our people for how they conducted themselves, giving consideration to others and displaying the true and admirable attitude of Seventh-day Adventist Christians. The event coordinators at BMO were very pleased with our people. They said that they have never had a group of people as nice as ours. They spoke of our warmth, congeniality and appreciation towards their staff. We are very thankful to our people.”

He also spoke of next year’s Maranatha.

“We want to add a few more relevant workshops to fellowship and prayer and maybe even extending the time to an additional day or half a day.

“What we do know is that the success of this Maranatha will see many more people registering early, so my advice for those who did not attend this year is not to leave registration for the last minute. As lovely as the facility is, it has a limited capacity so register early.”

Registration for Maranatha 2009 will most probably begin in early November 2008.

Halsey Peat

Hearty congratulations are in order for Orville Browne, pastor of the Latter Rain Seventh-day Adventist Church in Scarborough. Pastor Browne recently obtained a Doctor of Theology Degree in Christian Ethics with a specialization in Bioethics from the University of Toronto in association with the University of Victoria.

He has received many messages of congratulations from ministerial colleagues and church members for his outstanding achievement. Holders of the ThD degree are often held in high regard by those in the field of theology.

His thesis deals with the assessment of health care providers’ response to African and Caribbean families living with the double stigma of HIV and racialization.

His work in this area opens new doors for the Adventist Church in Ontario to become involved in some of the significant issues affecting the lives of the people of this province.

Pastor Orville Browne Earns Doctor of Theology Degree

Heartiest congratulations are in order for Orville Browne, pastor of the Latter Rain Seventh-day Adventist Church in Scarborough. Pastor Browne recently obtained a Doctor of Theology Degree in Christian Ethics with a specialization in Bioethics from the University of Toronto in association with the University of Victoria.

He has received many messages of congratulations from ministerial colleagues and church members for his outstanding achievement. Holders of the ThD degree are often held in high regard by those in the field of theology.

His thesis deals with the assessment of health care providers’ response to African and Caribbean families living with the double stigma of HIV and racialization.

His work in this area opens new doors for the Adventist Church in Ontario to become involved in some of the significant issues affecting the lives of the people of this province.

Heartiest congratulations are in order for Orville Browne, pastor of the Latter Rain Seventh-day Adventist Church in Scarborough. Pastor Browne recently obtained a Doctor of Theology Degree in Christian Ethics with a specialization in Bioethics from the University of Toronto in association with the University of Victoria.

He has received many messages of congratulations from ministerial colleagues and church members for his outstanding achievement. Holders of the ThD degree are often held in high regard by those in the field of theology.

His thesis deals with the assessment of health care providers’ response to African and Caribbean families living with the double stigma of HIV and racialization.

His work in this area opens new doors for the Adventist Church in Ontario to become involved in some of the significant issues affecting the lives of the people of this province.

Pastor Orville Browne Earns Doctor of Theology Degree

Heartiest congratulations are in order for Orville Browne, pastor of the Latter Rain Seventh-day Adventist Church in Scarborough. Pastor Browne recently obtained a Doctor of Theology Degree in Christian Ethics with a specialization in Bioethics from the University of Toronto in association with the University of Victoria.

He has received many messages of congratulations from ministerial colleagues and church members for his outstanding achievement. Holders of the ThD degree are often held in high regard by those in the field of theology.

His thesis deals with the assessment of health care providers’ response to African and Caribbean families living with the double stigma of HIV and racialization.

His work in this area opens new doors for the Adventist Church in Ontario to become involved in some of the significant issues affecting the lives of the people of this province.

Pastor Orville Browne Earns Doctor of Theology Degree

Heartiest congratulations are in order for Orville Browne, pastor of the Latter Rain Seventh-day Adventist Church in Scarborough. Pastor Browne recently obtained a Doctor of Theology Degree in Christian Ethics with a specialization in Bioethics from the University of Toronto in association with the University of Victoria.

He has received many messages of congratulations from ministerial colleagues and church members for his outstanding achievement. Holders of the ThD degree are often held in high regard by those in the field of theology.

His thesis deals with the assessment of health care providers’ response to African and Caribbean families living with the double stigma of HIV and racialization.

His work in this area opens new doors for the Adventist Church in Ontario to become involved in some of the significant issues affecting the lives of the people of this province.
Prayer. The word conjures up various imageries. Pictures of Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane often come to mind. The classic picture of the 'praying hands' floods the memory. Perhaps a tinge of guilt troubles the conscience because prayer is so often neglected by some Christians. Maybe the word stirs up feelings of disappointment or frustration, especially when public intercessory prayer is considered.

Prayer is the atmosphere of the Christian life. To pray is to breathe in the air of God's presence. It is the voice of the repentant sinner and the praise of those filled with God's Spirit. It affirms God's reality and allows His children to draw strength from Him. When the disciples of Jesus saw how He fervently prayed and recognized the value of prayer in the life of their Master, they wanted to share in His experience. John taught his disciples to pray so they said, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1).

The disciples of Jesus recognized that prayer is something that must be learned. Man does not simply wake up and discover that he can pray. Yes, God hears the genuine outpouring of the contrite heart, but Luke 11:1 reveals that to truly pray, one must be properly taught. Acceptable prayer is the result of being taught by God. Otherwise, prayers amount to nothing more than the vanity of the hypocrites or the incessant babbling of the pagans of Matthew 6:5, 7.

In Matthew 6:6, Jesus commends personal prayer to a place of privacy. However, the Bible also recognizes public prayer as a practice of the church (Acts 4:31; 12:5, 12). It does not describe how the early church prayed but when they did, the power of the Holy Spirit came upon them and buildings shook with His presence.

The public expression of prayer and the manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit cannot be ignored. When the church comes together for prayer, it is an invocation of the Holy Spirit because we don't even "know what we ought to pray for," except the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with "groans that words cannot express" (Romans 8:26-27). All prayer, therefore, anticipates the manifestation of the Holy Spirit and His attendant power. None more so than the intercessory prayer, whether private or public.

The Scriptures expect us to approach God on behalf of others. Intercessory prayer is the prayer of love because it is selfless, thinking of others rather than of self. Paul urged Timothy to pray to God and to intercede for everyone. This is "good and pleases God," says Paul in 1 Tim. 2:1-3. Paul himself practiced intercessory prayer (Ephesians 1:16-17) and expected that when others interceded on his behalf, God would hear their prayers (Phil. 1:22).

In the New Testament, Jesus is seen as the model Intercessor. His prayer of intercession in John 17 shows the imagery of one who has an intimate relationship with the Father. He presents His disciples to the Father as one friend taking another by the hand and gently, lovingly, leading him into the throne room of God to receive grace and divine blessings.

In the Old Testament, the prophet Daniel's prayer of intercession (Daniel 9) is an exemplary model of what it means to intercede for someone else. While Daniel could not claim, like Jesus, to have been in heaven with the Father, he lived in the atmosphere of prayer. He was so accustomed to talking with God that as soon as he realized that the 70-year prophecy of Jeremiah was about to be fulfilled, he instinctively turned to God in prayer (Daniel 9:2-3). He did so, however, without the familiarity of presumptuousness. In fasting and in total humility (sackcloth and ashes), he approached God in prayer (Daniel 9:3). He began by confessing his own sins. This was part of his personal preparation to intercede for others. He did not make any claim to his friendship with God but approached the God of heaven in humility as a sinful human being in need of forgiveness.

Having confessed his own sins, Daniel's prayer takes on the attitude of worship. God is acknowledged as "the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, to them that keep His commandments" (Daniel 9:4). In verses 7 and 9 he recognizes that righteousness, mercy and forgiveness belong to God. Intercessory prayer must be approached as worship because it is the acknowledgment that God is the great God of heaven. All that is presented to God is based on His reality as the
foundation of all things and as the Ruler of the universe.

Daniel, as an intercessor, praying on behalf of God's people, fully acknowledges God's supremacy and presents His people to Him. "We have sinned and have committed iniquity," said Daniel (Daniel 9:5-15). If Daniel's prayer had been public, his hearers could have identified with him. His prayer would have made a connection with the people for whom he was praying. He was conscious of being their representative to the God of heaven. Like Jesus, he was willing to take them by the hand and lead them before God, confident that they would receive mercy.

Daniel also made additional preparation before praying. He recognized the fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy, gave thought to it and then approached God in prayer. When Jesus responded to His disciples by telling them how to pray (Luke 11:2-4), he established some principles for prayer. Among these is, thought must be given to prayer. Intercessory prayer demands that the one praying spend time reflecting on what to say to God on behalf of His people. To simply pray without thorough preparation is to act presumptuously before God and to disregard the responsibility of intercessory prayer. It is important to recognize the priestly role of the intercessor.

It is quite in order to prepare to offer the intercessory prayer by speaking to the pastor or elder in the church to determine the needs that should be presented to God. Difficult situations that have been made public and created unease among the congregation often demand thoughtful prayer. When praying for a family, it is necessary to contact the family or even visit them to determine the needs of that family. Prayers should be specific to the needs of individuals and church. The intercessor should take time to learn the names of those who are being prayed for to be able to present those names to God.

Perhaps the most significant preparation that is required is to seek the Holy Spirit. Since we do not know what to say without the Holy Spirit, then His guidance and power should be sought. We should not be afraid to ask Him what to say. He will tell us. When He does, it is quite okay to write down what He says and use it when it is time to offer the intercessory prayer.

Writing the prayer beforehand or using an outline helps to keep the prayer focussed, specific and God-centred. It helps to prevent repetition, rambling, criticism, and lengthiness.

When it comes to structuring a prayer, the following outline has helped many intercessors:

I. Adoration
II. Confession
III. Thanksgiving
IV. Intercession
V. Dedication or Commitment

Adoration
The congregation is led to focus on God Who is above all and to declare His glory. It is worship through prayer. It is the expression of worshippers who acknowledge God's being, attributes and worth.

Confession
Prayer takes on a more solemn tone. Like Daniel, we approach God, recognizing our rebellion against Him, and look for forgiveness. We ask for spiritual cleansing from Him Who is righteous.

Thanksgiving
This is the time of praise! The mood of our prayer changes. It is a time of celebration because grateful hearts and forgiven souls delight in thanking God.

Intercession
We present people to God because of our zeal for His image and His work in their lives. It is to supplicate God for His intervention in their situations. This is taking someone by the hand and presenting him or her to God.

Dedication or Commitment
Our prayer concludes with our willingness to live dedicated lives to Him. We renew our commitment to Him and the work to which He has called us. It is our response to what He has done and continues to do for us.

Others use the acronym, ACTS as an outline where A = adoration, C = confession, T = thanksgiving and S = Supplication. Both outlines are extremely helpful, and, once the Holy Spirit has led in the preparation for the prayer, they will serve to glorify God during the intercessory prayer.

The importance of public intercessory prayer cannot be overstated. It can either be a time when worshippers sense that they have been led into the very presence of God, or it could be the part of the worship service that is reluctantly endured by the saints. It depends on our understanding of intercessory prayer, our willingness to learn how to pray such prayers and on our submission to the Holy Spirit.

Intercessory prayers resulting from submission to the Holy Spirit enable a congregation to experience the atmosphere of heaven now. When we approach Divinity, as Daniel did, with humility and with the confession of our sins, when we follow Jesus' principle of thinking as we prepare to pray, our intercessory prayers will take on a power that clearly demonstrates an encounter with the Holy Spirit. When we pray prayers like these, people will confidently look to God, believing in all faith that He hears and will answer us.

"Lord, teach us to pray."

Halsey Peat
Camp Meeting 2008 - Christ, Our Only Hope
July 5, International Centre, Mississauga

Expectations are high! It’s camp meeting time! Since the beginning of May, two of the seven camp meetings to be held in Ontario this year have already taken place. While six of these are regional or ethnic camp meetings, the province-wide camp meeting, to be held on July 5, is the conference’s flagship to which members from across the entire province gather to worship and to fellowship.

The July 5 camp meeting will return for a second consecutive year to the International Centre at 6900 Airport Road, Mississauga, Ontario. The air-conditioned International Centre, with its spacious facilities, provides ample room for adults, youth and children’s programmes.

Dr. Donald G. King, 19th president of the Atlantic Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, will be the speaker for the adult meetings. He is well-known for his powerful and practical preaching style and his excellent ability to reach different cultural and ethnic groups.

Pastor King’s personal mission in life is to inspire and motivate others to achieve Christian excellence and ways of “wellness” in their lives. His vision is to work tirelessly to help populate heaven with people from planet Earth.

Furman F. Fordham II will be the speaker for the youth meetings. He is the pastor of the historic Riverside Chapel Seventh-day Adventist Church in Nashville, Tennessee. He has served as a youth pastor in Melbourne, Australia, and an assistant pastor in Chicago, Illinois.

Pastor Fordham’s personal purpose statement is to be a growing Christian, an adoring husband, an exceptional father, and an excellent pastor simultaneously.

For members travelling from far who are unable to return home for lunch, great effort has been made to ensure that the lunch provided at the International Centre is completely vegetarian, healthy, of sufficient amount and at a reasonable cost. The International Centre has recently changed its caterers and now offers better services than was experienced last year. For price and menu, visit www.adventistontario.org.

Last year, two large picnic areas were reserved at the nearby Wildwood Park (3430 Derry Road East at the corners of Derry Road and Goreway Drive). This was so popular with many members that traffic in the park became difficult to navigate. This year, those wanting to use the park will still be able to do so because it is open to the public, but no specific picnic areas will be reserved. Some members might choose to picnic at Humberwoods Park at Rexdale Boulevard and Humberwood Boulevard to avoid traffic congestion at Wildwood Park. It is advisable to find out more about these parks and their facilities, including parking, prior to July 5.

The Ontario Conference is planning to broadcast the main services and youth meetings live via the Internet. Those unable to attend will be able to go to www.adventistontario.org and see and hear the meetings as they take place on July 5.

CD and DVD recordings of the sermons will also be available after sunset from the information desk in the lobby. CDs and DVDs from Maranatha 2008 will also be available.

For hotel accommodations and directions to the International Centre, visit www.adventistontario.org.

Southwestern Ontario Regional Camp Meeting

Simcoe: June 13-15
Speakers: Elder Gordon Pifher and Elder David Hall
Location: Norfolk County Fairgrounds, situated next door to Simcoe Adventist Church.

Elder Gordon Pifher is president of the British Columbia Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Elder David Hall has ministered throughout the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, preaching the good news of Jesus Christ at various youth gatherings and rallies and has conducted seminars and workshops on youth-related topics. He is currently the director of youth ministries for the Nevada-Utah Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Northern Ontario Regional Camp Meeting

August 29-31, 2008
Speaker: Elder Derrick Nichols

Elder Derrick Nichols is president of the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. During his 35 years of ministry, he has served as pastor, departmental director and evangelist. His mission is to see the people of Ontario find a home in the kingdom of God.

Location: Camp Noronto, near Monteville.

Hispanic NET 2008 will be uplinked from two different locations at two different times: Chicago La Red will be August 10-17, and Phoenix La Red will be September 13-20. Alejandro Bullon, internationally known evangelist will be the speaker for both locations. The two series are planned to be used as a full evangelistic package, but they also can be used independently. The Chicago series will be a study of I Thessalonians and the Phoenix series will conclude with a series on II Thessalonians.

Contact: www.laesperanzaesjesus.org to register. Registration is the only way to receive the promotional materials.
Gold for Crawford Adventist Academy Band at Kiwanis Festival!

I
t was all smiles and ‘high fives’ as the 40-member band of Crawford Adventist Academy heard that they had just received the gold medal in their category at the 37th annual Oshawa-Whitby Kiwanis Music on Wednesday, April 15, 2008.

“It was a fabulous performance,” said Vernon Langdon, associate superintendent of education and former principal of Crawford Academy. “We are very proud of our students and their achievement. We congratulate them. Their success is the result of self-discipline and commitment.”

Winning gold was very satisfying for band director, Edwin Mansook, who led the band to the silver award at its first attempt last year.

“I knew that the students had what it took to achieve gold,” he said. “It was very challenging, but they did an excellent job. It shows their talent and commitment.”

The band aimed at demonstrating its versatility and expertise in its choice of pieces. Two of these were Joyful Exclamation, an arrangement of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony by James Hosay, and David Gillingham’s Be Thou My Vision. Mansook describes Hosay’s piece as “a challenging one, featuring solos by the French horn, alto sax, and flute but accompanied by a lot of trumpet work that shows off the dexterity of the students.”

Be Thou My Vision allowed the band to demonstrate its ability to play pieces of rich and warm texture. The piece featured an antiphonal relationship between the flutes and clarinets, and solos by the French horn and baritone Euphonium.

Vernon Langdon commented that these pieces “clearly demonstrated that children from the so-called inner-city neighbourhoods who receive the benefit of Christian education can achieve excellence in the same way as those from suburban arts schools.”

Band leader, Mansook, paid tribute to the children’s parents for their commitment and support.

“We couldn’t do it without the support of the parents,” he said. “We are thankful to them. It shows their commitment to Christian education and the music programme at Crawford.”

By the conclusion of the festival on April 25, over 1,000 participants competed in music, voice and public speaking categories. It ran April 14 through 25 at nine venues in Oshawa, Whitby and Courtice.

Halsey Peat

Job Opportunities

Crawford Adventist Academy
A full-time French/physical education elementary teacher is needed beginning September 1, 2008. Ability to teach French using the A.I.M. method would be an asset. CAA is a 12-grade school located in Toronto. Submit resume and cover letter.

Crawford Adventist Academy – East
A full-time grade 1-4 multi-grade teacher is needed beginning September 1, 2008. CAA-East is a one-year-old K-7 grade school located in Pickering, Ontario (between Toronto and Oshawa).

Ottawa Seventh-day Adventist School
A full-time upper grades (5-8) elementary teacher is needed beginning September 1, 2008. Ability to teach French (preferably using the A.I.M. method) would be an asset. This three-teacher school is located in the nation’s capital, close to skiing and a host of other cultural amenities.

Applicant must be a committed Seventh-day Adventist, be legally able to work in Canada, and be eligible for denominational and/or provincial certification. Only candidates chosen for interviews will be contacted.

Persons interested should fax a resume to Dr. Frances Schander, superintendent of education, (905-571-5995) or e-mail fschander@adventistontario.org.
Conference Schools Unite at Fine Arts Festival

Nearly 200 students from seven of the Ontario Conference’s ten schools joined voices in a massed choir on May 2 and 3 at the 2nd annual Fine Arts Festival. For both, the choral music and the art, this year’s theme was based on Genesis 1:1 featuring “Creation: In the Beginning.” Held at Crawford Adventist Academy (CAA) in Toronto, the festival was designed to supplement and inspire the musical and artistic talents of the conference’s upper grade elementary students.

“Our schools are good at delivering regular curriculum like language arts and mathematics,” says Vernon Langdon, Ontario Conference associate superintendent and organizer of the event, “but we sometimes overlook some of the ‘softer’ curriculum which truly enriches children’s lives.” He also pointed out that small schools often don’t have the numbers to support viable choirs, so joining forces occasionally only makes sense so that students can appreciate the large choir sound.

Schools were encouraged to prepare a choir selection to share with the entire group at the Sabbath evening programme. On Sabbath morning, schools performed for churches in the Toronto area. For Windsor Adventist Elementary School (WAES) students, performing at “big” Apple Creek Church (Markham) seemed daunting at first. However, under the direction of Claude Bastien, WAES principal and musician, the 21 students exceeded even their own expectations and received a standing ovation from the appreciative audience.

For the evening programme held in the packed CAA auditorium, in addition to individual selections by various school choirs, the massed choir performed “O Sifuni Mungu” (arr. Emerson), directed by College Park Elementary School’s Crystal Sayler and the “Hallelujah Chorus” (arr. Stevens & Landes), under the baton of Jewel Scott, CAA choral instructor.

In addition to choral music, K-8 students from Ontario schools entered a juried art and craft show, also based on the Creation theme. Entries included calligraphy, tessellation, painting, clay, and much more. Kathleen Mitchell, principal of Grandview Adventist Academy (Hamilton), organized this section of the event. The works of more than 250 students were entered, and judges repeatedly remarked on the fine quality of many of the entries.

The Fine Arts Festival was sponsored by the Ontario Conference Office of Education (OCOE).

Mt. Zion Filipino Wins Again!

For the second year in a row, 7th and 8th graders from Mt. Zion Filipino Church (Toronto) have won the Math Olympiad trophy. Sponsored by the Ontario Conference Office of Education, the math competition included nine groups of junior high students, each competing for the coveted trophy. The event was held at Crawford Adventist Academy.
These Three… Tested and Tried

There is still great concern among many of us about the welfare of today’s youth. One would hear statements like, “Today’s young people are different from the youth of our generation” or “What is wrong with young people today?” We mention the fact that just over a generation ago the disciplinary challenges in our schools were confined to eating bubble gum, running in the hallway and a level of truancy in some countries. But how times have changed! In our schools in North America, there is murder, rape, assault, personal theft, burglary, drug abuse, carrying weapons, absenteeism, vandalism, and extortion.

Many of us from our “old countries” would reminisce on our youth and how just one look from our parents would bring us “in line”. We talk of the times when we were disciplined by the older folk in our communities when they considered that we had been misbehaving, then to arrive home and be again punished by our parents. Very few of us are resentful towards our parents and the elders in our communities because of what they did.

Today, many of us are appalled to learn of Adventist youth who get into trouble with the law. Some of them even end up in prison. Again, we wonder aloud, “What is this world coming to? What is wrong with our present generation?” The task of raising our children has increased in difficulty and importance. More specifically, if the Adventist Church in North America is to survive and remain relevant, we must make sure that we pass the torch of leadership to a new generation of well-trained leaders.

It is still true that “the best education that can be given to children and youth is that…given by godly parents…devoted teachers, and by the church…” Yes, these three institutions of the home, the school and the church community have been tested and tried. Our Adventist youth are not immune to the booming and competing voices on the television, the news media, the internet, the iPod, the cell phone. To recognize the voice of God amidst such noise often requires supernatural intervention.

More challenging is the fact that the majority of our children, whose minds are so impressionable, do not attend Seventh-day Adventists schools. To be fair though, as a church we do not yet have the infrastructure to accommodate the Adventist youth of Ontario in our schools. The Partnership in Adventist Christian Education (PiACE) initiative by the Education Department must be applauded and supported because its purpose is to build an infrastructure of Adventist schools so that all Adventist youth can have the opportunity of Christian education. Meanwhile, it is for this reason that the Adventurer and Pathfinder Ministries must be lived in the context of Christian education. These are the ministries that best link home, church and school.

This fact was dynamically lived out during our recent March break activities at Camp Frenda and at the Willowdale Church. Parents took time off to be at camp with their children and to assist them in their all-round development. It is a fact that our most effective leaders for the Adventurer Ministry are the parents. In our schools, some teachers recognize the benefits of the Adventurer curriculum and incorporate it into their teaching.

Recently, during a week of prayer at the Ottawa Adventist School, I daily heard the children sing “When He Cometh.” A great hope in the second coming of Christ welled up within me. It was as if I was living in the presence of that reality and it convinced me that there is hope for today’s youth. Despite the challenges, parents ought to be fully aware of their God-given responsibility to help raise godly children. As a people we are blessed with a God-given philosophy that, when implemented, will assist our youth to grow up and for a lifetime will serve the Lord.

As parents, teachers and youth leaders, we need to let our children know that we understand, we are there, and we love and support them. Each heart is like soil that can be moistened and tilled—to receive the seed of Christ. Timothy, a young Christian leader, was known for his Christian faith, a faith modelled by his grandmother, Lois; his mother, Eunice and the apostle Paul. Such great models for both children and parents!

Charles Leader
Adventurers & Pathfinders Specialist

Photography by Charles Leader
Renewed Commitment at the Falls

Marriage Enrichment Retreat, April 18-20, 2008

S
pending time with our spouses away from the hustle and bustle proved invaluable to the 80 couples that attended this year’s Marriage Enrichment Retreat in beautiful Niagara Falls. My husband, Darren, and I use this time every year to reconnect after a 12-month roller-coaster ride. In fact, I think he looks forward to it more than I do! One husband claimed this retreat was “a refresher of things to look out for to ensure we have a wonderful marriage”. I couldn’t have said it better.

We also had opportunity to share in private devotional time with God and converse one-on-one about trials and joys in our marriage. Darren and I soon came to appreciate all the quiet time we had—a rare thing for us. We plan to have more of this at home.

We also spent time at play in the fun and interactive team-building games led by our dedicated team leaders. You might say we took home the gold!

Many left with the desire to practice the skills learned to further enrich their marriages and to share, with others, lessons from the retreat. One husband and wife team left with the determination to hold marriage seminars at their church to “spread the blessing.” Darren and I went home with renewed spirits and the assurance that placing our marriage in God’s hands and seeking His daily blessings on our marriage, we will be continually enriched. We can hardly wait until next year!

Kristen Bailey

Record Numbers at Young Women’s Retreat

Rainy weather didn’t dampen the spirit at the annual Young Women’s Retreat, May 2-4, as 122 women laughed, prayed and played together at Camp Frenda.

Speakers for the retreat – Shuna Beaubrun, Laura Chung, Laura Henry-Stump and Sarah Vendetti – delivered thought-provoking and inspiring presentations.

The retreat featured a musical café Saturday night, showcasing a rich variety of talent and Sunday morning team-building activities.

One young woman stated that she has become calmer and is determined to develop a closer relationship with God and better communication with her mom. Young Women’s Ministries lay leader, Naudia Larrow, and Nicole Dixon, GTA Young Women’s Ministries leader, expressed enthusiastic appreciation for their “dream team” committee that worked hard to ensure a great retreat.

Canadian Adventist Youth Summit

September 18-21, 2008

Pugwash, Nova Scotia

Register online at www.AdventistYouth.ca
On March 25, 2008, 12-year old Ricardo Welch of Perth Avenue Seventh-day Adventist Church proudly accepted an award from the Human Rights and Race Relations Centre, Toronto, for his winning essay on discrimination for the contest.

“I think that this is an important topic,” said Ricardo, “and I was glad and honoured to receive such an award because of this essay. This was a great opportunity to listen to other children’s opinion on the topic.”

His mother, Marvet Atkinson, and the church family at Perth Avenue were very happy with his success. “We are very proud of Ricardo for winning this award,” said senior pastor, Theodore Sargeant, “and we heartily congratulate him. We are happy to see our children and youth make a positive impact on their schools and on their communities.”

Among the ideas presented in his essay is a “recognition assembly that recognizes the people who try to prevent bullying and eliminate discrimination.” He also suggested workshops on anti-bullying and discrimination.

He concluded his essay by stating that he felt it was necessary for students to know what is happening in society and be armed with the appropriate tools with which they can be involved.

Ricardo is a fun-loving twelve-year old who loves reading, writing and playing computer games. His ideas on discrimination reveal the importance of parents teaching their children to love God so that they will live their lives as a blessing to others.

Traysee Gelliseau
Hamilton Filipino Company Becomes Tenth Filipino Congregation

It’s official! The Hamilton Filipino Company became the tenth Filipino congregation in the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists on Sabbath, April 5, 2008.

There was standing room only as conference representatives, Elder Derrick Nichols, president; Elder Antonio Bueno, secretary; Brother Ulysses Guarin, treasurer; and Dr. Errol Lawrence, Ministerial director, led the worship. They were accompanied by Dr. Wesley Torres, pastor of Hamilton Mountain Adventist Church, and Dr. Dan Linrud, pastor of Living Word Christian Fellowship in Hamilton.

Brother Mario Diamante opened the ceremony by welcoming all guests and members before thanking those who helped in creating the new congregation. The list included the Hamilton Mountain, Living Word and Bramalea Seventh-day Adventist Churches, the Filipino Adventist Ministry Development Council (FAMDC) and the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Music played a significant role in the celebrations. Six children, affectionately called “The Filipino Kids,” delighted the congregation with their songs of praise, “Step by Step,” “Give Thanks” and “We Are an Offering.” Pianist Gerry Muller and guitarist Luis Morado provided the instrumental accompaniment. “Crystals for Jesus,” another group of children, sang “The Mighty Hands of Jesus.” A group from the new company was accompanied by Mario Diamante, playing his electric-acoustic guitar when they sang “Nothing Is Impossible.”

Elder Derrick Nichols’s inspirational message entitled “Ye Shall Be My Witnesses” greatly encouraged the new company to continue its tireless endeavours to witness to others, thus drawing them to Jesus. His concluding statement was “Hamilton Filipino Company, you have taken upon yourselves a huge task. People are dying, perishing, left, right and centre, and all we can do is pray that God will lead you.”

In the formal organization of the new company, as Elder Antonio Bueno called out the names of each of the 35 Charter Members, they eagerly moved to the front and stood proudly on the platform. Finally, Elder Nichols made the anticipated declaration: “You are now formally recognized by the Ontario Conference as The Hamilton Filipino Seventh-day Adventist Company.”

The new company meets at 79 South Bend Avenue East in Hamilton, Ontario.

Elsie Christian

Champion Ingatherer, Hilda Knee, Dies at Age 88

Champion ingatherer, Hilda Knee, a long-time member of the Kingsview Village Seventh-day Adventist Church, passed away on February 17, 2008 after a period of illness.

Hilda was born on September 13, 1920 in Safe Harbour, Bonavista Bay, Newfoundland. At age 25, she became a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in St. John’s in May of 1945. She ‘immigrated’ to Ontario the same year and was required to have a police check and use a passport since Newfoundland was not yet part of Canada. In Ontario, she attended Oshawa Missionary College for a brief period before moving to Toronto where she worked at various industries, including the McGregor Sock Company where she worked until her retirement in 1985.

Hilda became a member of Kingsview Village Church in 1946, when it was called Awde Street Seventh-day Adventist Church and became an ardent Sabbath School member and ingatherer. Even into her seventies, she would climb the stairs to her Sabbath School class on the balcony. As an ingatherer, she accounted for at least sixty percent of the total amount of ingathering (ADRA) solicited by the entire membership of the Kingsview Village Church. Each year, she brought in more than $8,500.

She is greatly missed by her family members and church family. She was laid to rest on Monday, February 25, 2008, to await the Lord’s return.

Royston Mckenzie

Seventh-day Adventist Named International Woman of the Year

In March 2008, Joseline Rugigana, a social worker from Rapelje Lodge in Welland and a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Niagara Falls, was named International Woman of the Year by Welland Heritage Council and Multicultural Centre. In addition, she was given two tickets to attend a brunch held on Sunday, March 30, with Lieutenant-General Roméo Dallaire at the White Oaks Resort in Niagara-on-the-Lake. This was a great honour, not only for her and her family, but also for the entire church in Niagara Falls. Her quiet, faithful and dedicated work has been...
recognized by both her local
curch and the community in
which she has been living for
the past five years.
Joseline and her family
(husband Albert, and
children Noella, Omer and
Giselle) arrived in Canada in
December 2002 as refugees
from war-torn Rwanda where
they had practically lost
everything and everyone (she
lost nine brothers, two sisters
and both parents). This was
not all. Due to her husband’s
severe injuries during the war,
he became almost incapable
of working, thus making her
the sole breadwinner of the
house. Despite everything,
they see God’s merciful hand
in their daily life and praise
Him for His goodness to
them. It was for her courage
and inspiration to other
women that she was named
International Woman of the
Year by Wellend Heritage
Council and Multicultural
Centre.
In a few months’ time,
they will be moving to their
own house, built by Habitat
for Humanity. They have
made many friends and
acquaintances in both their
community and their local
church.
“I am so proud of having
members like you,” said
Pastor Miler during a special
recognition ceremony
organized at the Niagara Falls
Adventist Church, “but this
recognition makes God even
prouder because your life has
shown how our Lord Jesus
Christ can be glorified with a
dedicated and faithful service
of simple men and women in
their respective communities.”

Pastor Edvard Miler

(For local coverings of
this event, go to http://www.
iagarathisweek.com/news/
article/162846)

Come, join us for the
Mortgage Burning Celebration
of the
Toronto West Seventh-day Adventist Church

Ordinary People, An Extraordinary Celebration

The celebration started with Dr. Dennis Marshall on March 29th and Pastor Harold Johnson on April 26th.
Join us on the following Sabbaths leading up to the grand celebration week:

May 31, 2008: Pastor L. David Rogers
June 28, 2008: Pastor Omar Palmer
July 19, 2008: Pastor Andrew King

Grand Celebration week - August 2-10, 2008

August 2, 2008: Pastor Fitzroy Maitland
August 9, 2008: Pastor Steve Cassimy - Divine Service
Pastor Derrick Nichols - Mortgage Burning Service (afternoon)

August 6 and August 8 - Weeknight Services August 10 - Fun Day

You may celebrate with us by purchasing advertising space in our program booklet
for business advertisements, congratulatory messages, memorials, etc.
Cost: Full page: $200 Half page: $100 Quarter page: $50
Kindly e-mail your advertisements to: communications@torontowestsda.org
More Churches Benefit from the Church Building Investment Fund (CBIF)

Four Adventist congregations each received $25,000 in 2007 from the Church Building Investment Fund (CBIF) towards paying off their mortgages. They can now happily testify of the value and success of the programme.

When Smith Falls, Scarborough, Toronto East and Agape Temple Adventist Churches each received cheque of $24,499.98 from conference treasurer, Ulysses Guarin, they were closer to planning their mortgage burning ceremonies. Thanks to the CBIF.

Yearly, the CBIF demonstrates the good sense of all churches and companies within Ontario Conference working together to eliminate the millions of dollars owed by Adventist churches across the province. The simplicity of each member giving just $2 each week, or $8 monthly, towards a common pool seems too easy for some members so they fail to contribute. The potential of yearly raising close to $1,000,000 (assuming 10,000 members participate) is not realized. However, those who do recognise the value of the CBIF and contribute to it helped the fund achieve a total of $139,994.17 between October 1, 2006 and September 30, 2007.

Thirty percent ($41,998.25) of the total amount received was distributed equally among the churches and companies (excluding those that received $25,000) for their church building-related projects. This amounted to $308.81 for each congregation.

The remaining seventy percent ($97,995.92) was shared between the four churches with the oldest debts. There is no doubt that the members of those congregations would have been even happier if there had been more participants in the CBIF programme.

Since its inception in 2001, the CBIF has raised $851,096.98. Churches with the oldest debts have received $595,767.89 while all other churches have received an equal share from the remaining $255,329.09.

Pastor George Ivkov, CBIF field representative, is passionate about the value of the fund and travels from church to church to promote it. He is convinced that many more congregations will be able to possess their own church building far sooner if more people contributed to the CBIF.

“Donate your $2 every Sabbath or $8-$10 at the end of each month,” says Pastor Ivkov, “because what you give will definitely return to you.”

Maranatha sermons and Prayer Workshops are available on CD and DVD from the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (905-571-1022 ext. 201). They will also be available at Camp Meeting.

Annual Ontario Conference ASAM Singles Spring Brunch
June 8, 2008 - 11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Crowne Plaza Hotel
33 Carlson Court, Etobicoke
www.crowneplaza.com
Register Now! Only $25
Contact the Family Ministries Department, Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
Visit www.adventistontario.org