When Spirituality Meets Politics

A First-timer’s View of the 32nd Constituency Meeting

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Is It Really True?

I still can't believe how it happened. I was so sure. I clearly heard him say it. How could he say he hadn't? I knew that I couldn't have been mistaken because someone else had also heard him say it.

This is what happened: Standing by the doorway in a room with about thirty others, I heard the person beside me make an announcement. A few days later, when there was some confusion about the announcement, I asked for clarification from the person who'd made it. To my surprise, he was adamant that he hadn't made an announcement. Dumbfounded, I sought confirmation from a colleague who'd also been standing close by. He confirmed what I was certain of, and together we confronted the person.

To our consternation, he still argued that he hadn't made an announcement. We faced him with the fact that we'd both seen and heard him. We couldn't possibly be wrong. He insisted that we were because he'd been absent on the day in question. We finally realised that he was speaking the truth. The announcement had been given by someone else.

My colleague and I were flabbergasted. How could both of us have made such an error? Yet we had.

The realization of how easy it is to make a serious mistake has since been at the forefront of my mind. I saw how easy it is, given different and more serious circumstances, to cause an innocent person to suffer because of the testimony of witnesses, even though the witnesses could be wrong.

Unfortunately, it's not often that we're willing to consider that we're wrong, much less to admit it. Once we have an idea in our head or we've heard someone say something, it becomes true.

As one of Terry Pratchett's characters said in his satirical novel, The Truth, "If it's in the newspaper, it must be true!"

Psychologists say that we all engage in 'self-talk.' That is, we tell ourselves things about God, family, church, people, etc., based on our perception or interpretation of an experience. The problem is, too often we believe what we tell ourselves. It becomes gospel to us, and we're convinced that our understanding or perception is fact and treat it as such. Someone tells us something, and we believe it to be true even though it is unsubstantiated. We accept it because we trust the person who told us. Worse yet, we repeat it as fact. Is this not 'bearing false witness'?

Unsubstantiated claims about someone can be very destructive and have long lasting effects. Reputations have been tarnished by them, career prospects diminished because of them, and service to God and His church lost on account of them. On some nominating committees or in board meetings, a well-placed negative statement can easily sway a committee's decision regarding someone, especially when the person making the statement has influence. When such statements are allowed to go unchallenged, it is likely that decisions will be made on incorrect or on blatantly false information.

Secular society recognizes the potential damage posed by unsubstantiated claims and has made laws to protect individuals and organisations from them. However, in God's church, it appears that we believe in the inherent goodness and Christ-likeness of God's children and, therefore, there's no need to offer protection because no one would make false claims against a brother or sister.

Was it not the Apostle James who spoke to God's children about the danger in the use of the tongue in James 3:5-12? In verse 8 he describes the tongue as "a restless evil, full of deadly poison." 

It was Jesus, the Saviour Himself, who warned us of the dangers of judging in Matthew 7:2.

This is familiar to us, but still we do not heed His warning. We see a situation, and we self-talk, making a judgment on it. Bad enough, but then we let loose the tongue and reap havoc and devastation.

My experience as a well-intentioned but incorrect witness has taught me not to believe my eyes nor my ears. I'm learning to be sceptical about anything negative I hear about others.

While I think I have the facts, they are often corrupt or incorrect. Only God has the true picture about you and me. He is the righteous Judge. So, let Him judge! For our part, let us look for the good in each other and so further God's kingdom.

Halsey Peat
Ontario Conference Elects Mansfield Edwards As President

Pastor Mansfield Edwards is the new president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ontario.

He was unexpectedly voted as president at the 32nd constituency meeting of the Ontario Conference on July 5, 2009. The vote was taken late on the closing day of the two-day constituency meeting, held at the International Centre, Mississauga, Ontario, after hours of deliberation and uncertainty.

Shortly after the meeting began on Sunday morning, the name of the incumbent, Derrick Nichols, was nominated to serve a fourth term as president. Before the vote was called, however, a delegate referred the report to the nominating committee for further consideration. The committee did not return with a report until close to the end of the scheduled time, necessitating an extended meeting.

After a short break, the report was finally given, and Dr. Mansfield Edwards was nominated as president. The vote reflected the delegates’ confidence in him by a margin of 3 to 1 and Edwards was declared to be the new president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ontario, succeeding Pastor Derrick Nichols.

As Pastor Daniel Jackson, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada, turned to thank Pastor Nichols for his service as president, the entire delegation rose to its feet and burst into spontaneous applause.

Nichols, in hallmark humility, immediately acknowledged the surprise vote for Edwards as “good for Ontario.” He remarked how happy he was for the time he served as president and, to enthusiastic applause, thanked the constituency for its support and prayers. He quickly moved on to warmly congratulate Edwards and promised him his 110% support.

To answer the unstated question regarding his future, he said, “I went to college to study for the ministry. I did not go to study to be president. I went to do ministry, and ministry I will do.”

The delegates, still standing, continued clapping, demonstrating their appreciation for his leadership over three terms and, perhaps, his humility and strength in chairing the meeting even after learning that he was no longer the nominee for president.

Pastor Mansfield Edwards arrived at the constituency meeting on Sunday prepared to say the closing prayer, as he had been requested to do. Instead, he stood as president of the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. After expressing his surprise at being selected and his gratitude for the confidence of the delegation, he moved into his new role as president.

“What we have done here today,” he said, “will influence the direction of God’s work in this conference for the next four years.”

He graciously thanked his predecessor, Pastor Derrick Nichols, for his outstanding contribution and pledged himself to build on the work of all those who had preceded him. He was quick to recognise that each administration is called to serve and prepare the way for another.

“We must not forget that we have been elected to serve four years, and after that we too will be in the past,” he said.

Concluding, he reminded the delegation of the seriousness of the age and urged each delegate to commitment to God and to effective ministry.

Ontario. Linrud replaces Pastor Antonio Bueno, who served one term in the position. The re-election of Mr. Ulysses Guarin as treasurer completed the election of the officers of the church in Ontario.

Departmental Directors

ADRA Representative for Ontario/Community Services/Adult and Youth Sabbath School: Theodore Sargeant
Children Ministries/Health Ministries: Maria McClean
Communication/Public Affairs & Religious Liberty: Halsey Peat
Pastor Mansfield Edwards will tell you that he knows what it is like to trust in God. When he accepted Jesus and chose to become a Seventh-day Adventist, he was forced out of the family home in Jamaica by his father with nothing but the clothes he was wearing. Many years later, he baptised his father.

Edwards studied theology at Northern Caribbean University and began pastoral work in the East Jamaica Conference of Seventh-day Adventists before being elected as a director for communication, religious liberty and health education at the regional headquarters in Kingston, Jamaica.

Before arriving in Ontario in 2002, he was senior pastor of the historic Westmount Seventh-day Adventist Church in Montreal where he was elected as co-chair for the English-speaking sector of the city’s Evangelism Council.

Arriving in Ontario, Edwards was appointed as senior pastor at Apple Creek Adventist Church, where he founded and became the speaker for the television programme Discover The Power, on Vision TV and The Hope Channel.

In 2006, Edwards was appointed as a chaplain for York Regional Police. He also serves as chaplain for the Canadian Federation of Inter-Cultural Friendship.

His education is diverse, including degrees in Theology, Public Health, Counselling Psychology and Preaching.

Edwards is happily married to Sharon, with whom he has two sons, Matthew and Craig.
When Spirituality Meets Politics
A first-timer’s view of the 32nd Constituency Meeting

By Frank A. Campbell

She gave an excellent summary of the lessons learned during the 32nd Constituency Meeting of the Ontario Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. And she wasn’t even there. Her name is Ellen White, and this is what she wrote: “The secret of success is the union of divine power with human effort.”

In that light, when I reached Mississauga as a Nepean Church delegate, I took up temporary residence in that space where politics and spirituality meet and mingle.

time for everything under the sun. There was even a time for things to move smoothly. As outgoing conference president, Derrick Nichols, took us through the procedural items, he was thinking just what I was thinking.

He would put a motion to the vote, and virtually every voting card would rise in support. “If only the entire meeting could proceed in this fashion,” he chuckled knowingly. That’s what I was thinking. Delegates—especially, I suspected, the old-timers—also laughed knowingly.

As we got to substantive items, such as the president’s report, delegates began approaching the microphones to raise questions, make suggestions, enter objections. The focus of their interventions was mostly, not the progress that had been made but what remained to be done, what could have been done better, what should be done differently next time.

These were eager saints, demanding and getting answers about the Lord’s work. Why was Camp Frenda up for sale? (It wasn’t). Why a one-day camp meeting sandwiched between a two-day constituency meeting? (Cost.) Why not buy property where we could hold camp meetings instead of renting space each year? (Unfeasible, according to a committee mandated by the last quadrennial). Why not train Year of Lay Evangelism volunteers during camp meeting? (Not enough time). Why not compel congregations to send more youth delegates to constituency meetings? (Can’t. That’s the prerogative of local congregations). You get the idea.

Eventually, things got political. Voices rose ever so slightly. The back and forth between the chair and the floor intensified. Increasingly in demand were the skills in meeting procedures and adjudication possessed by Toronto lawyer, Keith Juriansz, parliamentarian for the meeting.

Meanwhile, the near-unanimous voting pattern could no longer be relied upon. Motions survived or died sometimes with razor-thin majorities. Occasionally, a delegate got ruled out of order.

I’m sure there must be a prize somewhere for the person who can identify the point where politics trumped spirituality. Those more schooled in the ways of constituency meetings probably smelt change coming when item 11 got postponed.

That’s where the nominating committee was supposed to present its report. Instead, the committee’s chairman, Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada President Dan Jackson, explained that his members needed more time.

This brings me to my second lesson: Things are not always what they seem.

In other words, don’t be deceived by the apparent inevitability of the nomination process.

I had received the nominating committee’s interim report in my delegate’s package. I “knew” there was a meeting dealing with the report in the hours before the formal start of the quadrennial. I “knew” we would raise our voting cards in unison, and those named in the interim report would be elected to serve as our leaders for 2009-2013.

Of course, none of these things I “knew” was true. What took place earlier in the day was not a meeting, but a series of closed-door discussions during which individuals told the committee why they thought this or that nominee was unsuitable for a suggested office.

Ellen G. White

As a former politician, I had been sad, sometimes angry, about politics—church politics, that is—on church and school boards, at business meetings, and—need I say it?—on nominating committees. At the conference level, where everything is writ large, I probably could have been excused if, instead of being sad or angry, I had been horrified.

Surprisingly, I wasn’t even disappointed. I did leave the constituency meeting, however, with new insights. I’ll mention three.

One, is that there’s a...
surprised to find a line that while not matching some of the crowds waiting for Canadian Idol auditions, was nonetheless impressive. When Pastor Jackson rose to address delegates, his committee had not had time to evaluate the many petitions to amend its original recommendations.

So plenary discussed other matters while nominating committee members, a hardy and hardworking bunch, kept slogging away in a room somewhere.

Even after the committee had completed its evaluation and made new recommendations, objections from the floor, in the form of polite procedural motions to return the report to the committee, sent committee members trekking to their backroom once more.

Persons who one minute seemed a sho-in for certain offices would the next minute find they were not even on the ballot. However strong their faith in God or their loyalty to church procedures, they must, at some human level, have reacted with frustration if not distress. Even persons not directly affected expressed dissatisfaction—some in soft sentences spoken in the corridors, others in less subdued tones at the microphone.

Perhaps there is a better way. However, as someone who arrived from Ottawa prepared to witness a coronation, I take ecclesiastical pride in the discovery that a system where only one name appears on the ballot for any position is not necessarily a cheap imitation of the democratic process.

Pastors, conference officers, directors, staff, committee members, other volunteers, delegates to constituency meetings, indeed all members, are part of that imperfect system known to us fondly as the Ontario Conference. It is imperfect because it is human. God in His goodness makes up the difference.

That is why once or twice, someone, sensing that the political mercury was rising and the spiritual mercury receding, called for prayer. At one time, Pastor Jackson just sat there and started singing. The rest of us joined in, and a sing-along occurred. We began with songs not often heard since the days when Adventist Youth (AY) was called Missionary Volunteer (MV) Society, i.e. before the birth of some delegates.

The impromptu choir practice eased the suspense—nay, the tension—attending the ballot count. At meetings of the nominating committee itself, every member was authorized to call for a prayer break whenever he or she thought one was needed.

Human effort; divine power. We needed both.

My third take-away from Mississauga was that the world was just outside our door. You see, the meeting was not about procedures and elections; it was about mission and ministry.

In this respect, the reports from Pastor Nichols and others about the increase in membership, in the number of congregations and, even at such a time as this, in tithes and offerings, were valuable and encouraging. So were the plans to reach large population groups and to involve youth in evangelism. So also was the support from the leadership for suggestions from the floor to intensify our work among Aboriginal Canadians.

What about the people at the restaurants where we ate while in Mississauga? What about the people on the streets, in the malls or at the bus stops looking quizzically at our tall-tale “dog tag,” announcing that we were in their city for a meeting? What about the staff at the hotels where we stayed?

On Saturday morning, before departing for camp meeting, one delegate left a note, accompanied by a modest monetary gift and announcing that, except for some food-based garbage, there was no need to do any work in his hotel room that day. It was the Sabbath, his note explained.

At lunch time, the maid met him in the corridor. “I wish I could get the Sabbath off too so I could go to church,” she said to him. The surprised delegate barely found his voice in time to assure her that the Almighty could achieve anything.

Returning to his room that evening, he found a written response to his note and a gift. The paper was prettier and the handwriting more careful and elegant than he had used earlier that day. This note said: “Thank you and God bless you. Happy Sabbath.”

A simple yet inescapable reflection of what camp meeting guest speaker, Pastor Derek Morris, echoing Luke 10:2, emphasized all weekend: “The harvest is inches from the doors of our homes, churches and conference gatherings.

So finally, between now and our 33rd Constituency Meeting, let us remember those on our new Ontario Conference leadership team in our prayers. Let us support them through our work and our wallets. Any success our conference enjoys during these four years will come from “the union of divine power with human effort.” May we always remember that.

Frank A. Campbell

Frank Campbell is a freelance journalist and a member of the Nepean Seventh-day Adventist Church.
Since his recent election to the office of the president of the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, many members have been wondering what direction their church will take under Pastor Edwards’ stewardship. In the following interview, Edwards shares his initial vision with Pastor Peat.

Pastor Halsey Peat: On Sunday, July 5, when you were asked to allow your name to be nominated as president, what feelings did you experience at the time, and what thoughts went through your mind?

Edwards: The increase in the secularization of society is a growing challenge to the Adventist Church. How well-prepared are we? I think we’re very well-prepared theologically. We are safe and prepared doctrinally. But from the perspective of how we do ministry, I don’t think we’re very well prepared. There are some perspectives we need to change and to get away from—the kind of complacency and self-sufficiency that we have or feelings of having arrived leave us insensitive to our responsibilities within the communities in which we exist.

I think our strategies need urgent revisiting, an urgent overhaul. We have to ask ourselves the question: “What are the needs that we’re trying to address?”

I think we have been doing what we’ve always been doing, and as such, we are becoming increasingly irrelevant to the needs of the secularized society. The postmodern mind is not open to receive doctrines, and teachings, even the truth from people who are not perceived as being caring and honest. The postmodern mind needs sincere, trustworthy people, and once we can get to the place where we can be trusted, where our ministry can be sensitive to the needs of people, and people see that we care, then they will listen to us.

“People don’t care how much we know, until they know how much we care.”

Peat: How well-prepared do you think we are as a church in Ontario to face the challenges of an increasingly secular society?

Edwards: Number one is based on biblical principles, seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. The first thing must be to intentionally grow our church spiritually. I think Adventism is becoming a tradition in the minds of too many people. God has called His church to be the body of Christ and to continue the ministry of Jesus Christ in the world. Firstly though, to do so effectively, we’ve got to experience Christ, and that has to begin in our own hearts before it begins to influence people in what they see, and then be led to come to our teachings and follow us as we follow Christ.

The second thing that must be done is for us to increase and improve our relevance to the community. We’ve got to understand that ministry takes place within the church, for it’s the building up of the body of Christ, but mission takes place outside the walls of the church. The sum total of too many of our church activities is just resident within the four walls of the building. We have got to begin to make a powerful impact and influence in the community. Jesus never went into any community where He didn’t make an impact, and God has placed His church as the body of Christ within respective communities. And we have got to impact these communities intentionally, and we have got to do it strategically.

The third thing is evangelism. Evangelism is crucial. There are 13 million people in this province who urgently need the gospel truth. The signs are very clear. We do not have a whole lot of time left for Jesus to come. So, we have a great work to do in a short period of time. It is the commitment to spirituality, the recommitment to Christ that is going to bring that outpouring of the Holy Spirit that will empower us to finish the work with urgency and rapidity, making a powerful impact.

People are being fed every day through the media with false doctrines, with agnostic teachings, and with atheistic influences. The only counter to all of that is the truth of the living God. So, we have got to seriously and intentionally believe, live and proclaim God’s truth.

Peat: During your ministry at Apple Creek, you developed a television ministry, Discover The Power. Do you see television ministry as a valuable tool for the Ontario Conference?

Edwards: It’s extremely valuable. It is a tool that the devil understands the value of, and he has been using it very well. We have got to be wise. Through this facility, many homes could be entered into with one message at the same time. We understand that when we knock on doors, there are some doors that will not be opened to us, but through television ministry, we can get into these homes. Television ministry allows us to penetrate communities with the gospel.

As a conference, we need to change some of our tools and strategies that we’ve been using in the past. We have so much to offer—the gospel, the health message, family life resources, to name just a few. We can strategically use television ministry to...
enhance our effectiveness. We can build relationships with people even from a distance through television ministry and form virtual congregations in the community. As relationships are built, commitment builds. I dream of the day in the not-too-distant future when we will move in this direction.

**Peat:** What do you look forward to the most in this new position?

**Edwards:** I’m looking forward to God leading in powerful ways. Joshua is my mentor. He’s an ordinary man from humble beginnings, but the thing is that Joshua had an approach to life in which he just allowed God to set his agenda, and he diligently followed. So, I’m looking for God doing powerful things and set my agenda. I’m just looking forward to what He is going to do.

**Peat:** You mentioned Joshua as your mentor. What role have other mentors played in your life?

**Edwards:** Sure, there were many mentors. I always, wherever I work, scan the whole spectrum of ministers there and follow their ministry as closely as I can. I always try to identify individuals whose administrative skills just seem to be really on target, and I relate to that person as a mentor to develop my own administrative skills. I look for someone with pastoral skills so that I can relate to that person as a mentor for my pastoral development. I do the same with someone with evangelistic skills and so on. So, in any one year, I may have four or five mentors. Mentorship is vital. There is a biblical precedence for it, and there’s no justification for anyone to incline themselves to any kind of self-sufficiency and independence in ministry. We all need each other.

**Peat:** What do you consider as a “guiding principle” for your ministry?

If there’s a single principle, it’s just making sure that whatever I’m ordering my life in terms of direction; whatever I’m trying to pass on to the workers in terms of a direction for the ministry; whatever I’m teaching or preaching is fundamentally established in Scripture. If there’s going to be consistency, if there’s going to be stability, if there’s going to be a church that’s true to God’s will, it has got to be based on Scripture. So, everything I do ought to find some fundamental basis in Scripture.

**Peat:** My final question: What can church members expect of you?

**Edwards:** I’ll summarize this in three points. Number one, they can expect sincere commitment to God. Number two, they can expect hard work to advance God’s cause, to execute the mission He has left for us. Number three, they can expect that I would expect the same from them.

**Peat:** Pastor Edwards, thank you very much.
What Really Happened at the 32nd Constituency Meeting?

A constituency meeting is a business meeting. Like all business meetings, it is a time where the leaders give an account of their stewardship to the church membership. The 32nd constituency meeting was no different.

On Friday, July 3, after an inspiring devotional by Pastor Don Schneider, North American Division president, the process of seating delegates, appointing a parliamentarian, and hearing the president’s report (sent previously to all churches in Highlights) began.

Friday also saw the following actions:

1. The congregations at Ajax, Fairhavens, Toronto North that were organised into churches during the quadrennial were voted into the sisterhood of all churches.
2. Six new initiatives adopted:
   a. Continued evangelistic thrust in Northern Ontario
   b. Targeted outreach to large people groups in major urban areas
   c. To adopt the NAD initiative for 2010 as the Year of Lay Evangelism
   d. 2011 earmarked as the Year of Youth Evangelism
   e. To set up an electronic evangelism task force that harnesses the skills of teenagers and young adults
   f. To develop and put in place an electronic system to allow churches and others to donate online.
3. The conference is to develop ways in which online payments for conference sponsored workshops and seminars can be made in Canadian funds.

As business adjourned, the business meeting transitioned into a worship meeting and camp meeting speaker, Pastor Derrick Morris, opened God’s Word and preached the message, Life-Changing Devotion from Acts 6:1-7.

Sunday

Meetings resumed on Sunday morning after a stirring devotion by The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada president, Pastor Dan Jackson.

Significant actions voted:

1. Licences and credentials as published in the 32nd Constituency Meeting Book.
2. The adoption of the model constitution and bylaws as recommended by the North American Division as the model for the constitution and bylaws of the Ontario Conference.
3. To change the name from “Ontario Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church” to “The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ontario”.

“Ontario Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church” to “The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ontario". While this was voted, it was clearly stated that the new name cannot be used as the official name until all the legal requirements have been satisfied. It is expected that the process could take place within twelve months.

4. That the bylaws committee considers an amendment to the bylaws that provides for elected individuals to serve up to a maximum of two consecutive terms, elected by simple majority. Election to subsequent terms must be by two-thirds majority.
5. To reduce the number of delegates for the next constituency meeting by the following formula: “Each church will be entitled to one delegate per church, regardless of membership, plus one additional delegate for each one hundred members or major fraction thereof.”

The old formula read “...for each fifty members or major fraction thereof.”

Another action was taken that opened the way for the option of using electronic means as one of the methods of voting at future sessions.

Of the various actions that were defeated, perhaps the most significant, was that of moving from a four-year term to a five-year term.
For the past three terms—twelve years in total, Pastor Derrick Nichols has been the face of the Ontario Conference. Whenever a new company was formed, a church building dedicated, a church anniversary celebrated, an evangelistic series held, or a church was facing difficulties, the ‘conference’ was there in the person of Derrick Nichols.

When he was selected to serve as president on September 17, 1997, by the Ontario Conference Board of Directors, Pastor Nichols was happily serving as senior pastor of the Kingsview Village congregation in Etobicoke.

His election came as a surprise to many, but he quickly demonstrated his ability to effectively lead the conference. His subsequent election to office for two additional terms and a nomination for a fourth, underscored the constituency’s confidence in him.

Very early in his first term, Pastor Nichols shared some of his goals and concerns and then worked steadily to accomplish them. These included the fostering of strong spiritual growth in the conference, unity and fellowship among the church family, solid and well-balanced leadership and a greater role of youth in the church—especially in outreach, the planting of new congregations, creating a Canadian Bible Information line, replacing the manor at New Frenda and establishing a prayer ministry in every congregation.

A casual reflection over the past twelve years will reveal that Pastor Nichols has achieved even more than he set out to do. Since 1997, approximately 10,000 members have been added to the church in Ontario. Prayer Ministry is now an integral part of 73% of all churches, companies and groups and prayer conferences are a regular feature of the conference calendar. Bibleinfo.com now plays a valuable role in conference evangelism, and youth involvement in outreach is steadily growing in local congregations.

The past twelve years have also seen a significant increase in congregations. In 1997, there were 101 churches and 7 companies. Since then, the companies have all become churches, resulting in 114 churches.

The Nichols era will also be remembered as the era of financial growth and new buildings. In the twelve years, tithe income has grown by approximately $87,000,000 and continues to grow. He also initiated the CBIF. In 2003, a new debt-free manor was completed and opened at Camp Frenda. A year later the construction of the new conference office building in Oshawa commenced. It was officially opened in June 2006. During the construction of the new conference office, Pastor Nichols could often be seen conferring with the architect and contractor about modifications and improvements. The buildings are visible portions of his legacy.

Perhaps, Pastor Nichols’ time in office will be best remembered for his availability to both members and pastors alike, and for his compassion and desire to foster unity and growth. He was always respectful, looked for the good in people, quick to offer complete forgiveness and preserve peace.

Pastor Nichols is presently enjoying a well-deserved rest while awaiting his new pastoral assignment.

Relaxing at home with Ada, his lifetime companion

Ontario Conference Headquarters in Oshawa
The following was prepared by the Health Ministries Department of the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in response to the increasing concerns about the spread of infectious diseases – particularly the H1N1 flu virus. The list of recommendations is not exhaustive, so you are encouraged to consult your physician and the Public Health Department in your area for further information. Church leaders are also encouraged to have alcohol-based hand sanitizers available for use at places of worship. These sanitizers should contain a minimum of 60% alcohol.

- Remember to wash your hands with soap and water when they are visibly dirty and as soon as you enter the house.
- Before handling food before eating before washing dishes after visiting the restroom (use a paper towel to turn on/off the tap and open the door)
- After changing a baby’s diaper
- After touching eggs, raw meat, poultry, or fish
- After handling animals – especially reptiles
- After cleaning up animal waste
- After handling garbage
- After visiting the sick
- After attending a funeral or visitation
- Before and after touching a cut or open sore

- After shaking hands
- Before touching your mouth, eyes, or contact lenses
- It is best to wash your hands at the bathroom sink and NOT at the kitchen sink. To make sure your hands are really clean, scrub your palms, between your fingers, the backs of your hands, and under your fingernails with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- Dry skin can crack and this may provide an opening for germs to enter your body. To prevent dry skin, you may use soap or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with lotion already added, or use lotion (water-based is preferred) after cleaning your hands.
- Do not sneeze or cough in your hands. It is best to cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or sneeze into your sleeve. Place used tissues in the garbage, then clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer or soap and water.
- Avoid eating candy from public areas, including restaurants and medical offices.
- Avoid purchasing food from places where attendants handle money and food without washing their hands between service to patrons. Before buying from public vendors, check out their practices re: food preparation, food handling, personal hygiene and sanitation, and methods of food storage.
- Do not talk unnecessarily over food that will be served to others. Do not prepare or serve food to others if you are not well.

• Practice good health habits – eat healthy foods, get regular exercise, and enough rest.
• Avoid spitting in public, and refrain from moistening your fingers with saliva to turn pages or count money.
• If you’re sick, stay at home and avoid crowds unless directed to seek medical care. Keep your eating utensils and personal items (including towels, toothbrushes, toothpaste) separate. Use a disinfectant to clean surfaces used by other family members. Do not share personal items or drinks.
• When using public washrooms, telephones, transportation, aeroplanes, computer keyboards, touch screen kiosks, ATM machines, etc., try not to touch surfaces more than necessary. Clean hands after use.
• It is advisable to wash fruits and vegetables before using them. This includes those whose skins are discarded – melons, bananas, pineapples, cantaloupes, etc. Sugar cane should also be scrubbed before use. Washing these items ensures that most bacteria, residual pesticides, and other contaminants transferred by staff and the public are removed. Use a light cleanser – not just water. There are many safe herbal preparations that are available at grocery stores.
• Luggage, grocery bags/boxes, or other bags that have been placed on the floor/ground should not be placed on your bed or kitchen table.
• Do not place your bags/handbags on the floor – especially in public bathrooms.
• As far as possible, hold doorknobs, rails, and press elevator buttons with a paper towel or something other than your bare hands.

Remember, hand-washing, when done correctly, is the single most effective way to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. A quick rub – even with soap – is not adequate. Good hand-washing technique is easy to learn. That, combined with adherence to the above guidelines, can significantly reduce the spread of foodborne illnesses, influenza (including the H1N1 flu virus), cold viruses, whooping cough, SARS, hepatitis A, many kinds of diarrhea, and other infectious diseases among both children and adults. Principal source: www.toronto.ca/health

Compiled by Maria McLean, Health and Children’s Ministries Director
"If you pray this radical prayer in simple faith, your life will be changed forever. I know that from experience!" proclaimed Dr. Derek Morris, as he introduced his theme for camp meeting 2009.

Derek Morris, camp meeting speaker for the adults' section, was referring to the words of Jesus in Luke 10:2 when He spoke of the great harvest and the need to pray to God to send workers into the harvest. Against this background, Morris set out to convince over 5,000 people that the harvest truly is great and sought to encourage them to pray that they might see the world from God's radical perspective. The enthusiastic response of many in the congregation to his sermons strongly suggests that Morris had met his objective.

"These messages really gave me a new perspective," said John from Toronto, "It's given me great hope that God can do a great work that I can be part of!"

"I used to doubt whether God had any real use for me," commented Rochelle, "but now I'm pretty convinced that if I say the radical prayer in all sincerity, God will use me to do amazing things for Him!"

"Pastor Morris' sermons have really given me something to think about," said Veronique from Ottawa.

"I wasn't planning on attending camp meeting because I'm not into crowds," said Julio, "but my wife, Carmen, convinced me to come. I'm so glad that I came because my faith in God has been really strengthened, and now I want to go out to bring in the harvest!"

Attendance at camp meeting 2009 was even higher than last year. In the adults' section, in hall 5, there was standing room only. An estimated 6,000 worshippers gathered to worship and praise God as one body. Numbers were also up in the teen and youth section where the 2,000 seats were soon occupied and it was standing room at the rear of the hall only. Hall 4A coordinator, Pastor Fred Nichols, was pleased and said that he was pleasantly surprised that the evening meeting was as full as the morning.

"I think that we had more people than usual," he said, "because of the constituency meeting being held on
the same weekend as camp meeting so people who would not normally have come were here.”

For the second consecutive year, the teen and young adults section had a different speaker from the one advertised. Instead of hearing the young and dynamic Anthony Fuller, the congregation heard the young and dynamic James Black, Jr. Youth director Pastor Cyril Millitt explains, “A few days before camp meeting, we realised that Anthony Fuller would not be able to be with us, and we prayed and struggled to find a replacement. We were so thankful when James Black Jr. indicated his willingness, and I believe that everyone was richly blessed by the messages he shared.”

In the evening Kevin Cameron’s movie, Hush, was shown in hall 4A to an enthusiastic and appreciative audience. Hush is Cameron’s first film and was shown as a fundraiser for the Toronto Adventist District School Board.

Worship in the teen and young adult hall is always upbeat. A band of excellent musicians and an enthusiastic praise team led the worshippers in a vibrant time of praise and worship. Over in hall 5, the adults gladly sang many of the old favourites in a more traditional way.

In the Aviation Ballrooms, staff and volunteers were struggling to keep up with the increased number of energetic children attending camp meeting. For many years, parents have greatly valued the excellent quality of programmes provided for their children and never hesitated to leave them in the hands of trusted and capable staff. Even when they arrived at close to midday and registration had ceased because the rooms had reached capacity, some parents insisted that their children should benefit from the programmes.

Ontario camp meetings have traditionally sought to highlight evangelism and education. This year was no exception. Both Dr. Errol Lawerence, evangelism coordinator, and Dr. Frances Schander, the then education superintendent, gave presentations in the afternoon. Highlights of these areas continued into the late afternoon with the commissioning of five teachers and the ordination of three pastors.

Pastor Derrick Nichols, in his last address as president, continued on the theme of evangelism and harvest and urged the church to venture out “into the fields and begin the harvest”.

For the third successive year, camp meeting was broadcasted via the Internet. Viewers from across the province and from around the world were able to watch both adults and young adults’ services. They were able to share in the entire programme. What they missed, however, was perhaps one of the most meaningful aspects of camp meeting—the joy of fellowship, meeting with other children of God from across the province and recognising that they belong to a very large family.

Commissioning and Ordination Service

As they prepared to walk onto the platform, there was an aura of nervous expectation about the five teachers and three pastors. Lisa Clarke, Donald Coleman, Kimberlea Kwon, Paula Marshall, Fran Wilson, James Anderson, Donville Cooper and Omar Palmer stood waiting. Here and there, a colleague fussed over them, making sure that their corsages were pinned on correctly, the speck brushed from a dress or suit, a tie straightened. The moment they had been waiting for had arrived; they followed the officers of the conference and other members of the platform party onto the platform, ready to be commissioned or ordained.

The Commissioning and Ordination service is a very happy but also solemn service. Happy, because it is a pivotal point in the life of a teacher or pastor. Solemn, because it is the recognition of the church that God has called men and women to dedicate their entire lives to serve Him in a specific role.

While the ordination of pastors has been in the Seventh-day Adventist Church since its inception, it was not until 1988 that the North American Division officially recognised the sacred role teachers have in leading children and youth to Christ.

The Ontario Conference acknowledges the unique contribution of both pastors and teachers and plans one service when teachers are commissioned and pastors ordained. While every service follows a similar pattern of music, a homily by a guest speaker, prayers, litanies, charges, presentation of certificates and flowers, each service is unique to those being commissioned and ordained.

Newly Commissioned Teachers

Lisa Marie Clarke is vice-principle and grades 5&6 home room teacher at Grandview Adventist Academy near Hamilton. She began her teaching service at a one-teacher school in Simcoe in 1999. She is married to Delwin, with whom she has two children, Braeden, 12, and Kailey Brianne, 5.

Donald Coleman began his professional career working in the social services before making his entry into teaching. Both careers reflect the genuine love he has for young people. He has
been teaching at Crawford Adventist Academy for the past nine years, where he has taught gym and social science.

Donald is married to Dawn. They have five adult children: Jermaine, Jamahl, Chantal, Mishra and Durell.

Kimberlea Kwon loves her students. As a teacher, she sees her mission as “serving God’s children” and always wants to reflect Jesus to them.

Kimberlea has been teaching grades 6-8 at College Park Elementary School for the past two years. However, her career has taken her to South Korea, British Columbia and Brampton. She is married to Ohseung and is mother to Jakob, age 6.

Paula Marshall is more than a match for the challenging grade sevens who quickly grow to love and respect her almost immediately after entering, for the first time, her home room of the past nine years at Crawford Adventist Academy.

Paula is a lover of creative arts and is often involved in drama and music. She is married to Andy Marshall. Together, they enjoy each other’s family.

Fran Wilson is the kindergarten teacher at Peel Adventist Academy in Caledon. She views her children as God’s precious treasure and constantly prays for them.

Fran taught fourth grade in the public system before committing herself to serving in the Seventh-day Adventist system. She first taught at Crawford Adventist Academy for seven and a half years before transferring to Peel where she served for the past two years.

Newly Ordained Pastors

James Anderson is pastor at Peterborough Church and Lindsay Company. He is a product of Adventist education from elementary all the way through high school. Although he took a break from Adventist education to pursue his career in 1991, he returned to it and attended Canadian University College to prepare for the ministry.

James is married to Cathy whom he met while in high school at Kingsway College. They have two children, Eric and Sophie.

Donville Cooper is a graduate of Oakwood College. He chose to attend there after sensing a strong call to ministry in 1995. While at Oakwood, he met Esther whom he later married.

Donville served as assistant pastor at Perth Avenue, Toronto Central and Toronto Heritage churches before leaving for the seminary at Andrews University. He is presently assistant pastor at Philadelphia Adventist Church in Scarborough.

Donville and Esther have two daughters, Donesha, age 7, and Donessa, age 2.

Omar Palmer is very proud to have been born in Jamaica. However, his greatest pride is as a born-again child of God, and his greatest pleasure is to see others also experience the new birth. This has motivated his passion to preach the gospel.

Omar graduated from Canadian University College in 2002 and was subsequently employed at Toronto West Adventist Church as intern to Pastor David Rogers. Since then, his reputation as an evangelist has been constantly growing.

Omar serves as associate pastor at Apple Creek Church and is married to Georgiana.

ATTENTION ALL HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS!

If you are interested in being added to the list of presenters available to the Health Ministries Department of the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, kindly e-mail your name, contact information, and a short bio, highlighting your area of expertise/training to mmcclean@adventistontario.org.

Thank you for your prayers, support and willingness to serve.
Philadelphia’s athletes are the new Christian Youth Sports Academy (CYSA) Division A champions! Wearing their new blue shirts with the name ‘Philadelphia’ emblazoned across the front, they sprinted, jumped, leaped and threw their way to the top spot of the annual track and field meeting at York University on Sunday, July 19, 2009.

In winning the top spot, Philadelphia’s athletes have done what no other church has done since CYSA took over the annual event eleven years ago—knocked Apple Creek’s athletes off the podium with 342 points to 253 points.

For the past seven years, the yellow shirts of Apple Creek’s outstanding athletes could be seen winning or coming in second place in nearly every event. However, since moving into Division A (churches with a membership of less than 500 compete for the Division B championship, while those over 500 are placed in Division A) two years ago, Philadelphia’s athletes set their eyes firmly on the champion’s crown. For three successive years, until 2007, they comfortably wore the crown as Division B champions, and having moved into the big league of the larger churches, they were not content to be also-rans. They wanted the new crown and on a perfect day for athletics they won it.

Kendalwood’s athletes were just as jubilant as Philadelphia’s. When they heard that they had won Division B, the celebrations began, especially since they had only made their first appearance in 2006. From then, they were determined to win. Last year they came in third place behind Bethel and Malton. This year, however, they demonstrated their full potential and claimed the crown as their own. The other churches in Division B will most probably find it very difficult to pry it loose from them next year.

Kendalwood had additional reasons to rejoice. One of its elders, Pastor Errol Lawrence, won the bronze medal in the over 40 pastor’s race. Last year, its pastor, Hymers Wilson, won the silver. The gold in the pastor’s race (over 40’s) went to Stanley McFarlane from Toronto Central Church. Finishing close behind was Daniel Sanchez from Spanish Betel and Spanish Maranatha churches. He celebrated his birthday with the silver medal.

The under 40’s race for pastors was won by newcomer Leonard Northe, Bible instructor at Toronto North Church, beating last year’s winner, Kenton Perrin, into the silver position.

Yearly, the event grows. With over 1270 athletes and 17 churches represented, this was the biggest CYSA sports day in its eleven year history. Four thousand spectators also made it one of the most attended. It still maintains its international flavour with a team from Boston, Massachusetts, returning for a second time, and six athletes from Jamaica.

For Philadelphia and Kendalwood, it was a perfect day because they won the championships. Athletes from other churches also gave outstanding individual and team performances. The memories of last summer’s Olympic Games seemed to have inspired many athletes to achieve their very best. The 100m was again the showcase for speed. Brampton’s Daniel Harper did it in just 10.8 seconds while Toronto Central’s Francis Donamay did it in 12.25 seconds in the women’s race. They were just two of a number of athletes who demonstrated the high standard attained by the athletes each year.

While July 19 was a perfect day for athletics because of dry and comfortably warm weather, CYSA’s big event was not so perfect. The day came to a close before all the events could take place. Relays, arguably the most exciting events of the meeting, were abandoned. The delays were once again blamed on the electronic equipment.
The fancy drill competition championship belongs to the drill team of Bramalea Signet Pathfinder Club. On Saturday night, July 25, at Canada Christian College, Signet Club beat last year’s champions, Orion Club of Mt. Zion Filipino Church, by just one point to enjoy the rewards of long hours of disciplined practice and effort.

Five teams entered the fancy drill competition on the night when the Ontario Drill Team, under the leadership of Delwin Clarke, presented a display of precision drilling that left the audience with wide-eyed admiration. Ontario’s drill team will represent Ontario at the International Camporee’s drill competition in Oshkosh, August 11-15, 2009.

All five teams performed with exceptional skill. The police officers from the Toronto and Peel Region forces and the other judges were hard pressed to distinguish between the performances of the top three teams who were separated by just five points.

Some teams expressed their dismay that other teams included athletes who are neither church members nor do they attend church services. A CYSA spokesperson admitted that the rules regarding the involvement of athletes who are not Adventists will need to be looked at again.

The CYSA planning committee will also need to consider whether the spirit of fun and the privilege of participating is losing ground to the spectre of competitiveness.

There was still much to celebrate at this year’s meeting: the joy of the spectators, cheering on athletes from churches other than their own was heart-warming and bodes well for the future; the presence of the newly-elected president of the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Pastor Mansfield Edwards, sent a clear message to the teens and young adults that they are highly valued by the leadership of the church; the participation of a community team speaks of CYSA’s openness and inclusiveness; the first-time involvement of Spanish Bet-el Church, following on from last year’s first-timers—the Yugoslavian Church, heralds a positive shift towards a multi-cultural future. However, it was the broad smiles of happiness on the faces of Doniesha Cooper, Jordyn Thompson, Mykalia Edwards and Sherese Lucas, all under age 8, as they received their medals, that speak of the future success of CYSA’s sports day.

### Final Positions

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<td><strong>Position</strong></td>
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**Bramalea Signet Wins Drill Competition at CYSA Rally**

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On July 26, Christian Youth Sports Academy held its annual awards at Canada Christian College.

Pastor Mansfield Edwards, attending the awards ceremony for the first time as conference president, congratulated all the participants and encouraged them to continue to do their best in every area of their lives.

Scholarships of $1000 were awarded to university students, Johnathan Guthrie, Kyla St. Hilaire-Spooner, and Johanna Bannis.

“We are really pleased to make these scholarships,” exclaimed Kester Griffiths, CYSA president, “because we want to encourage our young people to pursue higher education. CYSA is not just about sports but about the complete person.”

Griffiths explained that the scholarships are open to all Adventist students and are funded by admission fees to the annual track and field meeting.

As awards were presented, the 700 plus audience applauded and cheered. However the loudest and most enthusiastic applause came from the Kendalwood and Philadelphia members when the Division B and A awards were announced. Sharon Russell, Kendalwood’s head coach, joyously received the championship trophy for Division B from CYSA president, Kester Griffiths.

Kathleen Cottoy and Janet Blake, coaches for Philadelphia’s team, along with their pastor, Fitzroy Maitland, enthusiastically held Division A’s trophy for the first time, knowing that it was theirs to keep for at least one year.

For another year, the awards ceremony and drill competition revealed that when talent of any level is combined with commitment and discipline, anything is possible.

On June 13th, 2009, members of the Ajax and Agape Temple congregations united to witness the baptisms of four precious souls at the Agape Temple Church in Pickering.

Ajax church members were especially happy since three of the newly baptised, Acklima MooKing, J’vell and Janelle Boyce, are from the Ajax community. They were received into fellowship on Sabbath, July 11, 2009.

Acklima MooKing, who was visibly moved by her experience, said, “I was searching for a true relationship with God and was happy to find this within the teachings of the Adventist Church.”

It was during a powerful sermon, preached by Elder Velma Morgan that Acklima made her decision to accept Jesus as her Saviour. She is grateful for the support of the pastor, the Personal Ministries Department, and members of the Ajax Church.

J’vell and Janelle Boyce (both students at Crawford Adventist Academy) are also grateful for the support and encouragement from the school chaplain, Pastor Andre Anderson, Pastor Rupert Gray, Elder Francis Marcellin, the administration of Crawford and the members of the Ajax Church.

This is the second baptism held at Ajax this year. In January, Justin Sutherland and Courtney Delrish were also baptised.

The Ajax congregation is grateful to Pastor Fred Nichols and his congregation for the use of their baptismal pool.

Judy Hutchinson-Boyce
**Bulletin - a Big Hit for Parents and Children at Apple Creek**

Apple Creek Church has come up with a way of keeping children engaged during worship services.

Children's Ministry leader, Micheline Salmon-Hastick, has implemented worksheets (kid's bulletins) that cater to children from ages 0-6 and 7-12. The younger group receives a package with activities related to the sermon or Sabbath School lessons, while the other group receives activities, including questionnaires about the divine service with an area to make notes about the message. Sister Salmon-Hastick says that she works with the pastors so that activities can be tailored towards the message or on the theme of the children's story. She says that the 7-12 age group has to focus on the presentations in order to complete the worksheets.

The children are very enthusiastic about the new bulletins:

“I find them entertaining, useful and full of enjoyment… because they have word searches; they have lines for your points and opinions on the sermons…they are really fun to use!” said ten-year old Gideon Ducéén.

“I like the bulletin because it can help children listen to the sermon more,” said nine-year old Garfield Bailey.

Most parents interviewed applauded the venture, noting that the bulletin keeps the children involved while they get an opportunity to listen to the sermons and children's stories.

*Jewel Bailey*

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**Scarborough Youth Helps Keep Toronto Green**

On Sunday, May 24, 2009, a group of young people from Scarborough Seventh-day Adventist Church volunteered their time and efforts towards the Toronto Island Sand Dune Planting event.

They were responding to the challenge posed by The Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation Department for the community to get involved by helping to plant trees and shrubs at Hanlan's Point, Toronto Island. Recognising the importance of helping to keep Toronto green by preserving the landforms, the youth, alongside other members from the community, eagerly went to Hanlan's Point and worked hard to aid in the restoration of the island.

When questioned by others about the group they represented, Scarborough Church's young people were able to share their faith and witness of God's love. It was an invigorating experience in which they look forward to participating again.

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**Three Baptised at Bronte**

The Bronte Seventh-day Adventist Church celebrated a growth in faith and membership on Saturday, May 3, 2009 as Pearson Avelino, Elizabeth Mason, and Bojan Public gave their hearts to Jesus in baptism. The three candidates studied weekly with Pastor Zygowiec before dedicating themselves to the Lord. Matthew 28:19 says, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” These candidates chose to spread God's love and His word with their choice to be baptized.

**Bronte’s ‘Secret Sister’ Grand Reveal**

Celebrating women has always been embraced at the Bronte Seventh-day Adventist Church. The theme of the evening on May 30, 2009 was “Every Woman for Every Woman,” as the women celebrated the secret sister programme with a grand reveal and tea party.

For six weeks prior to the tea party, the Women’s Ministries Department paired women together anonymously to write to one another on a weekly basis. This act of kindness was to show support and encouragement for one another. Finally, after several weeks of encouraging cards and sentiments, it was time for the grand reveal.

The evening commenced with a message from Camille Leslie, celebrating what God has done for women, followed by a music selection from special guest harpist, Chantal Dube. After vespers, the women came together for a beautiful tea party of fellowship. Each woman was encouraged to bring a guest with her and in total there were 27 guests. As secret sisters were revealed throughout the evening, the surprise and thankfulness of all of these women was so positive and good to see. Many women shared experiences of how much God had blessed them during the time their secret sister was writing and praying for them. This was truly an enriching event that brought women together and demonstrated that as women, we should always strive to show God's love towards one another, honouring every woman, as they are special to Jesus.

*Lisa Milovanov*
On May 30, 2009, nine new members joined God’s family as the 22-member Cambodian Congregation celebrated its first-ever baptism. It was the result of two weekend evangelistic seminars held last year and earlier this year by Pastor Sereivudh Ly and the congregation.

“We are so happy for these new family members,” said Ly, “We have to give all praises to God who has worked with these precious souls even before I came into contact with them.”

He was quick to share stories of the new members:

SengHay and his wife Kimleng decided to attend last year’s seminar after being invited by a church member. They wanted to see the difference between Adventists and other Christian churches. They were soon captivated by the scripture-based health message and family life message. They made their decision to be baptized even before the series came to an end. While Pastor Ly was happy for their decision, their limited understanding of Adventist beliefs warranted more time for them to study before baptism. They were ready by May and were among the first to enter the baptistery.

Another family, Seaklay and his wife Vanna, were baptized as Adventists when they were in a refugee camp in Thailand in 1984, but they were encouraged to attend another church when they arrived in Vancouver because of the language barrier. After moving to Toronto in 2001, they began to attend the Cambodian group to worship in the Khmer language. When their two daughters, Sonalis and Solinda, decided to be baptized and become Adventists, they made the decision to recommit their lives in joining the church again through profession of faith.

Another new member is Daniela—a pastor’s dream candidate. Ly likens her approach to learning the Bible to a “sponge soaking up water.” She finished two sets of different Bible lessons and had so many questions that soon led to her baptism.

Vila is another new father who has attended the group worship since the first week he arrived in Canada, a few years ago. He came to know the Lord through his wife.

Lastly, but not the least, is Sokla, a young woman who is recently married and came to accept Jesus as her personal Saviour. She is so determined to learn as much as she can that she still attends the pastor’s Bible class. She hopes that her new husband will also join her in the near future, now that he is attending the worship service. At first, he used to sit in his car after taking her to church. Now he is sitting in the service with her. Sokla is praying that he will also accept Jesus as his Saviour.

The Cambodian group worships on the premises of Willowdale Seventh-day Adventist Church.

On August 1, 2009, Pastor Lyle Notice, assistant pastor at Ottawa Church, happily baptised Rachel Chakasim and Alex Hughie in the Moose River. They are the first to be baptised among a growing number of people living in the far north who are experiencing the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

Cochrane Bible instructor, Alison Down, reports that the work of God is “going forward in the far north and that the excitement grows with each passing month”.

She credits June and Pat, who have been living in Moosonee for the past two years, for the work they have been doing in seeking out people who are receptive to the gospel. Alison studies with them and leads them to Jesus.

Alison said that Rachel Chakasim began studying the Native New Life Bible lessons in the spring of 2008. She and Rachel corresponded through these lessons and finally met in July 2008, when she made the five hour train ride from Cochrane to Moosonee. When Rachel completed the lessons she asked for additional ones. Even before making her decision to be
Bible lessons. Alison reports that three of these people are now receiving the Native New Day lessons while two of her grandchildren are receiving KidZone Bible lessons.

Among Rachel’s friends who started receiving the Native New Day lessons was Alex Hughie, who lives across the river on Moose Factory Island. On Thursday, July 29, Alex indicated that he also wished to be baptized. After he had satisfied Pastor Lyle Notice that he was indeed ready for baptism, final preparations were made, and it was a happy moment when both Alex and Rachel were baptised in the Moose River.

Prior to the immersion, both Rachel and Alex gave very moving and sincere testimonies of how God freed them from alcohol abuse and destructive drug use.

Alison makes regular trips to Moosonee. In early summer, she was accompanied by Pastor Antonio Bueno, who was at the time executive secretary of the Ontario Conference. While there, he presented two evening messages at the Friendship Centre. He also took questions from the people in the audience.

During the time there, they took a water-taxi over to Moose Factory Island to meet with Pauline and Michael Morrison who are also studying the Bible lessons. The Moose River had opened the week prior to their arrival and ice floes were still floating towards James Bay.

Alison indicated that the cost of a water-taxi at $20 each way is expensive, so the small group of interests on both sides of the river have set up a fund to purchase one costing $5,000.00 to help them meet together. So far, the fund has reached $700.

A week after camp meeting in July, Alison returned to Moosonee and conducted five sessions of the WIN Wellness programme. Others are asking for Bible lessons, and with the help of the Galupo family, they will also be able to learn more about God and the salvation only He can give.

To find out more about the work in the far north or if you would like to assist, Alison may be contacted by email: adown@adventistontario.org

It’s Official–Toronto North Seventh-day Adventist CHURCH!

On June 6, 2009, Toronto North Seventh-day Adventist Company ceased to exist. And in its place, Toronto North Seventh-day Adventist Church was born. The congregation, located at the very northern border of Scarborough near Steeles and Markham Road, was organised into a church by the officers of the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Pastors Derrick Nichols, Antonio Bueno, along with ministerial secretary, Pastor Errol Lawrence.

Over 220 members and guests were present to worship God in celebration and to witness the formation of the new church.

Perhaps the greatest celebration came from Joyce Thompson and 13-year old Breyanna Henry who were baptized by Pastor John Scott II, minister of the congregation at the close of Sabbath School.

Afterwards, Breyanna said, “I feel really good. I feel so different!”

The day was rich with music: solos, duets, quartets, the children’s and the church choir, resplendent in its claret-coloured robes.

Pastor Derrick Nichols, in his sermon, congratulated the congregation on its seven-year journey to become a church but raised the question as to its purpose in establishing itself before moving on to challenge each member to become involved in reaching out to the surrounding community.

“Toronto North must be constantly occupied, not with itself,” said Nichols, “but with others outside the church walls in the community.”

He also told them, “It is the responsibility of the church to finish the work Jesus started.

It is not enough for the church to gather for fellowship. Jesus established His church to work.” The organisation ceremony followed the sermon.

A number of other pastors and conference personnel were also among the guests: Pastor Mathew Feeley, assistant pastor at Kingsview Village Church, who was once assigned to the congregation while he was a student, led out in the Sabbath School discussion. Pastors Wayne Martin, Halsey Peat and Mr. Ulysses Guarin, treasurer for the Ontario Conference, were also present.

A delicious lunch was served after the service.
Perth Avenue Church Gives Focus to Community Services

On Sabbath, July 19, 2009, Toronto Perth Avenue Church worship service highlighted the need for involvement in the local community. A number of dignitaries and guests, including Councillor Adam Giambrone, Ward 18, Davenport, Staff Sergeant Peter Lennox, Constables Justin Lurkings and George Reis, and Joe Mitchell, president of the Community Services for the Greater Toronto Area, were also present. The Ontario Conference was represented by Pastor Theodore Sargeant, the church pastor and recently elected Community Services director for the Ontario Conference.

The invitation to Councillor Giambrone, chair of the Toronto Transit Commission and the police officers, was to help them become more familiar with the congregation and its work in the local community. It was hoped that Giambrone’s new relationship with the church would also help to alleviate the parking difficulties experienced by Perth Avenue members when parking their cars on the streets near the church building. It was Giambrone who had spearheaded the council’s action three years ago to restrict parking on the streets, resulting in church members receiving parking tickets each time they drive to church.

Giambrone and Lennox remained for the entire service and participated by assisting in handing awards to various individuals who had made significant contribution to the community through the local church. Among the recipients were Pastor Theodore Sargeant, Pastor Dewaine Frazer and Bible instructor, Norma Haughton, for their commitment to the “Touch of Love” programme. Pathfinder leader, Sandra George Joseph, was also honoured with a certificate of appreciation for the involvement of the Pathfinders in the “Touch of Love” programme.

Giambrone and Lennox acknowledged the work that the church is doing and encouraged further involvement, saying how important community involvement is in making a change and in helping the needy. Lennox added, “When we help people in the community, we are helping ourselves. We are helping to keep them off the streets and out of prisons and making a safer neighbourhood.”

Leah Philips, leader of Perth Avenue’s Community Services Department, expressed her appreciation for the support given to the department and encouraged everyone to become involved in reaching out to those in need. Her words were echoed by Pastor Sargeant’s sermon, “I Saw You” pointing out how God sees the good works done by his people.

Traysee Gelliseau, Communication Secretary

The Character of God Revealed at Thunder Bay Camp Meeting

Over the weekend of May 1-3, Dr. Robert Sheppard and Pastor Ernie Pyle enthusiastically revealed the character of God through His names to an eager and receptive Thunder Bay camp meeting congregation.

The congregation was amazed by the meaning of God’s various names and how they spoke of His relationship with His people. By the close of camp meeting, people were saying how much their relationship with God has been enriched.

Thunder Bay camp meeting is an evangelistic event. Three months earlier, gospel concerts were held every month at the local community centre to culminate at camp meeting. These featured the church’s musical group “Northern Lights” and other gospel groups from the community. This year, the church added a 15-minute “Health Nugget” moment at each concert for people to learn about the benefits of healthful living.

The emphasis on reaching the community continued into camp meeting, held at the community centre on Friday night and at the church building on Sabbath. The weekend was rich with music, feature presentations, a full children’s programme, good vegetarian meals and workshops.

Presentations were given by Mr. Harold Penner, Regional Resource Coordinator, Canada Food Grains Bank; James Astleford, ADRA Canada representative, and Beverly Edwards-Miller, whose two presentations, Healthy Lifestyle lessons, were well received.

Rose LaFontaine
Church News

July 25, 2009 was a special day in the calendars of the Kendalwood and Bowmanville Seventh-day Adventist churches. Pastors Hymers Wilson and Edgar Nunes collaborated in the second of a series of Bible Sabbath, March 28, was a celebration day for the Kanata Seventh-day Adventist Company as Karin, Judy Hannah and Joey were baptised. André who is awaiting a lung transplant could not get in the waters and will be accepted on profession of faith. The Kanata company was excited to see four new members join them and their company grow in the first quarter of 2009.

Special guest, Hart Wiens, director of Scripture Translations for the Canadian Bible Society, presented the very broad and very sensitive topic of Bible translations in an interesting and captivating way. Members learned about the intricacies and nuances of language and the challenges faced by Bible translators who have to make decisions about how to translate not just the exact words used in the old Hebrew and Greek Bible manuscripts, but also the meaning intended by the authors who wrote under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Attendees also learned about the continuing efforts to make translations in modern enough language to reach the common man, especially because of the changing meaning of words like “gay.” Attendees were informed about the latest projects of the Canadian Bible Society to make Bible translations available in the mother tongues of Canadian Aboriginals for the first time ever.

The Bible Forums have been designed to challenge church members to have a deeper and more informed understanding of biblical truth. The Forums have been regarded as vitally important by Pastors Nunes and Wilson, especially in an age where misinformation is so readily available to confuse and mislead our people.

Pastor Hymers Wilson

Prison Ministries Volunteers Honoured

On June 18, 2009, at the Arcadian Court in Toronto, six volunteers were recognised for their outstanding contributions and continuous service to the Toronto (Don) Jail. The recipients of these awards were given lapel pins and certificates for 10 and 15 years of service. They are:

- Isaac Mason 10 years
- Jean Stewart 10 years
- Millie Fearman 15 years
- Brenda Hall 15 years
- Moses Henry 15 years
- Lee Robertson 15 years
- Millicent Fearman, the president of the Ontario Prison Ministry Association of Seventh-day Adventists (OPMASDA) congratulated the recipients for their continued service of ministering in an institution and in the community. Sheri Murphy, volunteer co-ordinator of the Toronto (Don) Jail is to be thanked for recommending these volunteers who are interdependent members of the Ontario Prison Ministry Association of the Seventh-day Adventists. Through their common purpose, collective dedication and commitment, they served with unwavering tenacity as the Holy Spirit ordered their steps.

Three Baptised, Four New Members at Kanata

Karin, Joey & Judy

Sabbath, March 28, was a celebration day for the Kanata Seventh-day Adventist Company as Karin, Judy Hannah and Joey were baptised. After a long period of Bible study with surprising discoveries of wonderful teachings, Karin and André Leblanc, Judy Hannah and Joey made the decision to commit their lives to the Lord and did not want to wait too long to be part of God’s family. The baptismal service of March 28 fulfilled their joy and Karin, Judy and Joey were baptised. André who is awaiting a lung transplant could not get in the waters and will be accepted on profession of faith. The Kanata company was excited to see four new members join them and their company grow in the first quarter of 2009.
Seeking a fulltime camp ranger

This job requires a person who is well rounded in the areas of carpentry, plumbing, electrical, construction and/or mechanical skills. Ability to work with volunteers in a team environment with good communication skills. Individual must be self motivated with a hard working-friendly attitude. The applicant must demonstrate physical ability to carry out the functions of the position and willingness to work flexible hours; valid emergency first aid certificate or the ability to obtain one.

To inquire further into these positions, contact Pastors Cyril Millett or Glenn DeSilva at 705-765-5597

(deadline for application is September 18, 2009)

Seeking a fulltime camp cook to serve at Camp Frenda

Good working knowledge of the operation and maintenance of kitchen/ cookery; knowledge of the Ministry of Health regulations pertaining to food handling; working knowledge of and skills in food preparation for large groups. The applicant must demonstrate physical ability to carry out the functions of the position and willingness to work flexible hours; valid emergency first aid certificate or the ability to obtain one.

To inquire further into these positions, contact Pastors Cyril Millett or Glenn DeSilva at 705-765-5597

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To plan for your estate, contact the Planned Giving and Trust Services Department of the Ontario Conference.
Email: aram@adventistontario.org
Tel.: 905-571-1022 ext. 206

Saying Welcome and Goodbye

We welcome Kwame Brobbey, his wife Naana and their children, Yaw (15) and Daniela (6) to Ontario. Pastor Brobbey is the new assistant pastor at Toronto Ghanaian and Heritage Ghanaian Seventh-day Adventist churches. He comes to Ontario from the United States where he has been working as a youth pastor and a hospital chaplain.

Leaving Ontario

Paul Llewellyn has served in Ontario as a teacher since 1992 at Kingsway College and Crawford Adventist Academy. Since 2005, he has been the Camp Frenda and Men’s Ministries director. He leaves Ontario to take up a new appointment in September as a pastor in the Maritime Conference.

Daniel Saugh has served both Mississauga and Meadowvale churches since commencing work in 2008. He began his internship under Pastor Nerval Myrie at Mississauga before becoming the ‘well-loved’ senior pastor at Meadowvale Church. He will be returning to full-time study.

Hymers Wilson II spent his last Sabbath as Kendalwood’s pastor on August 22, after serving the congregation for the past five years. A former communication, youth and Sabbath School director in the South England Conference, Pastor Wilson has led the Kendalwood congregation to grow in membership by 38% during his time as pastor.

The services of our teachers and pastors are greatly valued, and we give God praise for the work done through them. The work in Ontario has grown because of their commitment, leadership and sacrifice. They will be greatly missed. We pray that God’s richest blessings will be on them as they enter into new areas of life and ministry.

Halsey Peat