Revival and Reformation
An Interview with the Ontario Conference President
They had never met. They were from different generations, cultural and ethnic heritages, yet they shared a problem. I met the pastor many years before I met the teenager, but their shared problem reduced the time and their differences into insignificance. The pastor was ready to turn his back on pastoral ministry because each new pastoral district seemed worse than his last. He often complained that the conference sent him to churches with the worst interpersonal issues. The teen was ready to drop out from mainstream society because, according to him, everyone annoyed him, including his parents and classmates. He found it almost impossible to get along with anyone and soon ceased making any effort to do so.

Most of us have met people we have difficulty getting on with. Sometimes, it takes us for one person to make your work or classroom a place of daily misery. Even when you attempt to be friendly and kind, their attitude or behaviour is often less than pleasing. If they are not downright trouble makers, they are irritating and unpleasant, often controlling and demanding.

Given that most of these people do not profess to be followers of Christ, their unpleasantness does not offer any surprises. Yet, we meet some of these same type of people in our churches. They sit on the board, teach a Sabbath School class, serve the communion emblems or even preach. When our local church experience becomes too sore, we sometimes go in search of another congregation only to discover after a while that it also has its share of ‘miserables’.

So, there was my pastor colleague wallowing in his self-pity, bemoaning the difficult people he had to deal with. He even found it hard to believe that two of his predecessor had really enjoyed serving in those congregations. They were surprised by his experience. He failed to see that in all those churches, he was the common factor. It was his own attitude and how he related to people that stimulated their negative response. The teen was also the common factor among his classmates. He too failed to see how he contributed to the problems—in fact, in most cases, he was the problem because of his critical attitude and obnoxious behaviour.

Could it be that we are the problem in our relationships? In our families? In our churches?

We hear of revival and reformation, and we consider it necessary for the church, for others. We pontificate about the lack of spirituality within the church, and we’re quick to echo calls for revival and reformation for our church, but what about revival and reformation in my life? Is it the case that I’m alright, and it’s everyone else that needs revival?

It’s not easy to recognise our faults. We find it difficult to critically engage in introspection and acknowledge the poor character traits that emerge. Often, when we recognise them, we quickly excuse them. Instead, we compare ourselves to others and see them as people who make it difficult for others in church or who prevent the church from fulfilling its mission. I’m never the problem. We’re never the problem. It’s always someone else.

For the past five months, the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church has been responding to its president’s call for revival and reformation. Some members have been asking, “What’s my conference doing? What’s my local congregation doing? I’ve not heard anything said in my church!” Those are, perhaps, the wrong questions. The right questions are far more personal.

The call for revival and reformation must be applied directly to the individual life. I must ask,

“Do I recognise my need for God and seek His transforming power? Does my attitude and behaviour reflect that of someone who is truly converted? Am I a new creation (1 Cor 5:17), or is it the same old me but with intellectual assent to a system of religious beliefs and a habit of church attendance?”

Revival and reformation must begin with me. I really have no business calling for revival and reformation in my local church or elsewhere until it has taken place in my life. And how can I tell that the Holy Spirit is working in my life and transforming me? When the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) is manifested in my attitude and in my life.

It was Jesus Himself who said, “First take the beam out of your eye, in order to be able to take the speck out of your brother’s eye” (Matthew 7:5).

In the words of the spiritual, “Not my brother nor my sister, but it’s me, O Lord, standing in the need of prayer.”

Halsey Peat
Editor
Revival and Reformation: An Interview with the Ontario Conference President

Highlights editor, Halsey Peat, recently sat with Dr. Mansfield Edwards, president of the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, to discover how the Ontario Conference plans to embrace the General Conference president, Ted Wilson’s call for revival and reformation.

Halsey Peat: Over the past few months, our church media has been frequently using the term ‘revival and reformation’. Can you tell our readers what has brought this about?

Mansfield Edwards: This theme was mentioned by the General Conference president, Ted Wilson, upon his election last year at the 59th General Conference Session in Atlanta, Georgia. He made it very clear that he is convinced that this was the emphasis that beckons our attention and focus in this time of the end.

Each general conference session is a time of reflection on how the Lord has blessed His church in the preceding five years, and it is also a time for evaluation. At the recent G.C. session, as the reports of our ministry and our mission were presented, it was abundantly clear that great things are happening within the church. However, it was equally clear that there are some places in which the church is not growing at all. In fact there was a particular concern for those countries that fall within the 10/40 window such as Afghanistan, where we have only 3 members, Saudi Arabia and Yemen, where we have no members at all.

Also of concern are places such as North America, where Adventism began, where the work is obviously stagnating among those born here. Coupled with that, it is important that we interpret the present unrest in the world and the failing economies, political instability as well as signs within nature itself in the context of the end of the world prophecy. We need to give close attention to Matthew 24:14: “This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached…and then shall the end come”. However, the gospel will only be preached by a people who are ready and convicted. So, revival must precede the preaching of the gospel, and I think this is the thrust of this revival emphasis—a renewed attention, a renewed interest in what the real priorities ought to be for our church in these last days.

Peat: For some people, the thought of revival is related to someone who has passed out or is near death and needs resuscitation. Do you think that the call for revival suggests that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is near death or has turned from its mission?

Edwards: I think this is one perspective, but no, the Adventist Church as a worldwide organization is nowhere near dead. As I mentioned earlier, there are places where the work is going forward in a blaze of glory. We should consider revival in terms of a “renewed attention to or an interest in something”.

This is the definition found in Webster’s dictionary, and I think this is the thrust of this revival emphasis—a renewed attention, a renewed interest in what the real priorities ought to be for our church in these last days.

Peat: When the G.C. president called for revival and reformation, did he clearly define what he meant by it?

Edwards: He ‘couched’ his call for revival and reformation in a pertinent context by quoting Ellen G. White where she says: “The revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this, should be our first work”.

This clarifies that giving revival and reformation our highest priority is unquestionably appropriate. In a subsequent article, our world president was more detailed, stating that revival should reflect an increasing evidence of humility, earnestness in prayer and a greater commitment to God through richer personal devotions. I think he clearly defined his theme.

Peat: How would you describe your vision to facilitate revival and reformation in the Ontario Conference?

Edwards: I am glad you asked. Firstly, it must be clear that revival and reformation cannot be voted nor legislated; it must be desired, inspired and encouraged. As such it must be clear that while we may vote this as a necessary emphasis for our churches, it must be roused and energised at the level of our local congregations. Having said that, I believe we must approach it strategically.
My vision to facilitate revival and reformation in our conference must begin with us as workers. All workers—pastors, teachers, Bible instructors and support staff—must sense the need, and cherish the desire for it. There is a powerful thought by an anonymous writer, “If you must lift me, you must be on higher ground; if you must lead me, you must be ahead of me.” In our strategy to challenge our workers, we engaged the services of Dr. Ganoune Diop of the G.C. who challenged us through presentations such as:

1. What leaders need to know about what really matters to God
2. Understanding God’s ultimate purpose
3. Antidote to end time deceptions
4. Not just any kind of leadership: a prophetic leadership

We are building on this foundation.

Secondly, my vision is for us to grow healthy churches. We are beginning to focus on the local congregations. We are actively considering a survey tool, called Natural Church Development (NCD) that is designed to measure the spiritual health of each local congregation.

One of the problems with the Laodicean Church according to Revelation 3 is her inaccurate self-concept. We cannot fool ourselves into thinking that we are in great shape when we are not. It is absolutely necessary that each congregation evaluates its spiritual health. This will help us understand our strengths and needs in order to be effective in ministry.

In an effort to supplement the spiritual enrichment offered by local pastors, we appointed for the first time a worship leader at the conference level. Pastor Dave Schwinghammer has been conducting meaningful worship seminars, helping our members understand worship. Worship was a major issue in the beginning (Genesis 4), and it’s predicted to be a major issue in the end times (Revelation 19 & 20).

Additionally, my vision is to see our camp meetings so designed as to call our people to understand the times in which we live and the urgency of a full commitment to Christ.

The upcoming camp meeting on July 9 of this year will strongly emphasize the need for revival and reformation. We will especially emphasize the Bible as the basis for revival. Its primacy in the life of each member cannot be emphasized enough. Also, we’ve got to get back to what we are slowly outgrowing, to include the significance of personal devotion and the value of the inspired writings of Ellen G. White. There is a reason why Ellen White is the most translated non-fiction author in the history of literature.

Two months prior to camp meeting, May and June, we are planning to have every church in the conference participate in a series of revival prayer meetings, using Mark Finley’s book, Revive Us Again. Each pastor already owns a copy. Each church will design how the series will be executed. Camp meeting will be the great culmination of that experience.

Peat: There is a possibility that some members might expect revival and reformation to be a return to what they imagined the church was like at the end of the 19th century. Can they expect this?

Edwards: I would encourage members to look beyond our recent history. The prophetic book of Revelation points us back to the early church as the model church. In Revelation 6:2, John describes it as a pure white horse that went forth conquering and to conquer. It is on the early church that the Holy Spirit was poured. This is the quality of revival that we must pray for, one accompanied by the outpouring of the Spirit. We should not expect anything less.

Peat: As each church family and individual in Ontario experiences revival, how do you foresee our church in the next five years and beyond?

Edwards: A revival of necessity has a powerful impact on ministry and mission. Wherever there’s revival, there’s power. The church is healthiest when it is strong in ministry and mission. Revived people will be united, excited, empowered, and confident. Revived people are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, nor ashamed to be children of God. The disciples who, after receiving the Holy Spirit, became powerful witnesses. Revived people cannot be stopped.

I foresee a mighty army within our conference, making powerful and positive inroads in sharing the gospel with the 13 million people of Ontario, regardless of community or region.

It is God’s work, and He will work to bring it to an end. We must be prepared to have Him work through us. We can be confident that wherever God’s Spirit is poured out, there is power, and that’s why the early church is described as going forth conquering and to conquer.

I covet this experience.

The more we invest, the more our return.

Peat: Thank you.
UK High Court Suggests Christian Beliefs Harmful to Children

“Fostering by Christians Now in Doubt,” Says Christian Concern.

Christian Concern, an organisation of Christians in the United Kingdom that seeks to introduce a Christian voice into law, the media and government, recently reported that a February 28, 2011 judgement by the UK High Court could make it difficult for Christians to foster children.

The report on their website, http://christianconcern.com, says, “In a landmark judgment, handed down this afternoon (28 Feb), the High Court has suggested that Christians with traditional views on sexual ethics are unsuitable as foster carers, and that homosexual ‘rights’ trump freedom of conscience in the UK. The Judges stated that Christian beliefs on sexual ethics may be ‘inimical’ to children, and they implicitly upheld an Equalities and Human Rights Commission submission that children risk being ‘infected’ by Christian moral beliefs. ‘Today’s judgment strongly affirms homosexual rights over freedom of conscience and leaves the Johns currently unable to foster a child as desired, despite their proven track record as foster parents. There now appears to be nothing to stop the increasing bar on Christians who wish to adopt or foster children but who are not willing to compromise their beliefs. The summary contained in the judgment sends out the clear message that Christian ethical beliefs are potentially harmful to children and that Christian parents with mainstream Christian views are not suitable to be considered as potential foster parents as this does not accord with diversity and equality policies’.

At present, there is no knowledge of any similar cases in Canada, but the clash of some values between Christianity and some special interest groups suggests that it could be just a matter of time. "Halsey Peat, PARL Director"

Saskatchewan Adventist Wins Fight Against Union Membership

An unnamed 24-year old Seventh-day Adventist woman recently won her fight not to join a union. The story by Ron C. Sillag was published by the Religious News Service and reported in the online edition of the Adventist Review on March 10, 2011.

According to Sillag, the woman was granted exemption by the labour relations board in Canada “because of her religious beliefs, raising questions about whether religion should trump labour laws.” Labour laws in Canada tend to favour unions so the ruling is very significant. Unions are very hesitant to grant exemption from membership and will readily fight each case at tribunals and in the courts. However, the federal government and most provincial governments have opt-out clauses from union membership.

Church members in Ontario who face problems with union membership should first speak with the local church Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL) leader and then contact Pastor Halsey Peat at the conference office. Tel: 905-571-1022, ext. 202.

What is Your Church Doing for Earth Day, April 22?

‘Earth Day’ is not a term frequently found in Adventist vocabulary. Normally associated with environmentalists since its introduction in the United States on April 22, 1970, Earth Day is intended to create awareness and to help foster an appreciation for the environment.

However, more Adventists are beginning to recognise that stewardship of our environment is an important part of our stewardship of God’s creation and ownership. Earth Day is now celebrated in more than 175 countries every year and with the United Nations’ designation of April 22 as International Mother Earth Day, Sabbath-keepers have a wonderful opportunity to draw society’s attention to the Creator of the earth. Additionally, the Sabbath can be presented, not only as the symbol of God’s creation and ownership but also as the symbol of man’s commitment to serve Him as stewards of His creation.

What plans are you and your church making to celebrate Earth Day in your local community?
I remember sitting in a waiting room watching two young children play with multi-coloured building blocks. Both simultaneously reached for the last remaining red building block. That once harmonious and joyful experience quickly turned into a shouting match. Amidst the frustration could be heard expressions like, “It’s mine!” “No, it’s mine!” “I want it!” “Give it to me or else!” and the battle raged on. Each one claimed ownership of something that was clearly not theirs to begin with.

**Our Owner**

The battle of selfishness and greed has been raging throughout the ages. Some have called it the “I must have it or else” syndrome. These are the words that Lucifer used when He wanted to rule God’s kingdom. He said, “I will ascend into heaven; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God;…I will be like the Most High”. 1 Lucifer was in essence saying that he wanted “it”. The “it” was not a red coloured building block, what he wanted was the entire kingdom. He wanted to sit on the throne of the universe— that which rightfully belonged to the Creator and Sustainer of all. Lucifer wanted to claim ownership to something that wasn’t his nor ever could be.

The first book of the Bible affirms that “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth”. 2 David writes, “The earth is the Lord’s and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein”. 3 Isaiah describes God as the “everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth”. 4 The first angel of Revelation 14 announces “…worship Him who made the heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water”. 5 **Bottom line: God created everything and God owns everything, not some things or certain things, everything!** That includes you and me.

**Our Identity**

Have you ever looked over the fence and thought to yourself, “I need to have ‘that’.” When you eventually got one, you still found yourself looking over another fence wanting the next best thing. We live in a society that is built on acquisition of stuff. Perhaps you’ve read the bumper sticker that affirms this reality, “He who dies with the most toys wins!” Sadly, our socioeconomic status is determined by what we possess. Quite often our identity is based on what we drive, where we live or the labels on our clothes. Thankfully, we don’t have to look at created things (stuff) to determine our identity. We look to the Creator who owns us and re-created us. Paul declares, “In Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ”. 6 Our identity is found at the cross, where we’ve been redeemed at the highest price. “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold all things have become new.” 7 Paul describes us as children of God, heirs of God, citizens in the household of God, ambassadors for God and God’s temple and dwelling place. 8 **Bottom line: we are children of the King, citizens of the kingdom, and the King has chosen to dwell among us.** Now that’s an identity that money cannot buy!

**Our Privilege**

The day after my sixteenth birthday, I received my driver’s license. I remember getting my own set of keys to the family car with permission to use it at my discretion. I was trusted with something I hadn’t purchased. Although I quickly added a powerful stereo and low profile tires, I knew early on that it was a privilege that I did not want to abuse.

As members of the family of God, we have been given everything we need to experience life to the fullest in His Kingdom. He has given us a measure of faith, along with family, fitness and finances. We have not done anything to deserve them! They are not attained by works but rather by the grace of God to those who have accepted His Lordship over their lives. **Bottom line: It is our privilege, as citizens of God’s kingdom, members of God’s family, to enjoy these blessings.**

**Our Purpose**

With privileges come responsibilities. “As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” 9 We are called by God to manage and steward the gifts He has given to us. This is not only our privilege, it is our purpose. God created a perfect environment for Adam and Eve and gave them the responsibility to “rule over it.” 10 The only model they had to understand this mandate was how God ruled over them. They were to copy His Lordship. “Lordship in Eden meant the cherished opportunity to care for another as God cares for all creation...It was a call to be caretaker, nurturer, provider, enabler and empowerer. This is how Adam and Eve knew God, and that was all they knew of Lordship... To be “Lord in Eden” was to act for others and all creation like God acted towards His creature and creation. To be Lord and Servant was to be a Steward.” 11
John the Baptist preached about God’s kingdom. Jesus came to preach the good news of the kingdom. Many times throughout the gospels Jesus used the expression, ‘The Kingdom of heaven is like.’ His disciples were commissioned to go and preach the good news of the kingdom. After Jesus’ death and resurrection, He appeared and for forty days spoke about the Kingdom of God. Paul and the others passionately shared about God’s Kingdom.

Jesus made it clear that the good news of the kingdom will be preached throughout the world before the end comes. That’s where we come in. We all have a part in advancing God’s Kingdom. Before Jesus left the disciples, He gave them a final charge, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to every creature.” That’s why God has entrusted us with time, talents and treasures, for the sole purpose of kingdom life and when this love enters into the experience of His followers, they will identify their interests with those of their Redeemer. Their work will be to build up the kingdom of Christ. They will consecrate themselves and their possessions to Him, and use both as His cause may require. The love of Jesus in the soul will be revealed in word and deed. The kingdom of Christ will be paramount. 

Bottom Line

The bottom line is really this: God wants to be Lord of our lives. He asks us to return a tenth of our increase for the advancement of His work and to worship Him with our offerings. He invites us to partner with Him to develop the gifts and talents with which He has blessed us for the spreading of the good news. Nothing is ours. Not even that last red building block. All things belong to God and His Kingdom for His purposes. Enjoy! God could have reached His object in saving sinners without the aid of humanity; but He knew that we could not be happy without acting a part in the great work. May God richly bless your journey of faith as His stewards of the kingdom!

5. What offerings can you present to the King in response to His goodness and blessings?

Endnotes
1. Isaiah 14:13, 14
2. Genesis 1:1
3. Psalm 24:1
4. Isaiah 40:11
5. Revelation 14:7b
6. Ephesians 2:13
7. 2Corinthians 5:17, 18a
8. Romans 8:12-17; Ephesians 2:19; 2 Corinthians 5:20; 1 Corinthians 2:16
9. 1 Peter 4:10
10. Genesis 1:28
12. Matthew 6:33
13. Matthew 3:2
15. Over 10 times in Matthew alone.
17. Acts 1:3
19. Matthew 24:14
20. Mark 16:15
23. Ibid, S. 55

Stewardship Director

Bottom line: We are called to “rule over” God’s “stuff.” Isn’t that amazing! Nowhere in Scripture is this an option for the child of God. It’s part of our DNA. We have the responsibility to take care of and nurture all that God has entrusted to us, not to possess it. Thank the Lord it’s not up to a few to accomplish this task, but rather everybody has a role to play. That’s all part of kingdom life.

Kingdom Life

What’s all this talk about the kingdom? Here’s how it works. God is King. Giving our allegiance to Him makes us citizens in His kingdom. He offers to be Lord of every part of our lives, if we let Him. Bottom line: We are called to put God’s kingdom first in our lives. 

Personal Application

1. Thank God for His blessings and your identity in Him.
2. What can you do to draw closer to our King and sustain a relationship that’s vibrant and authentic?
3. Are you managing your faith, family, fitness, and finances for kingdom purposes?
4. Are you returning to the King the tithes and all He asks of what is rightfully His?

Save the Date!

July 9, 2011
Ontario Camp Meeting
International Centre
Renewing Congregational Worship: Putting It All Together

This is the concluding article of a four-part series for worshippers who desire a renewal of congregational and personal worship in their lives. The previous article, Renewing Congregational Worship: The 2Rs of Worship Planning (Winter 2010), identified the revelation of God and the response of worshippers as the key considerations in worship planning. It raised the question as to which elements of worship serve to reveal God and which allow the response of worshippers. The following article looks at the final aspect of worship planning—putting it all together so that worshippers may experience a personal and corporate encounter with the King of kings.

The worship planning committee is ready to plan the next two or three worship services. It knows all about revelation, respect, reverence, ritual and response in worship. It understands the components normally associated with worship but now faces the task of putting it all together without regressing into the usual programme composed of various components.

However, it must first recognise the final ‘R’ of worship—relevance. For worship to be meaningful to worshippers, it must speak to their needs. As worshippers approach God to offer Him worship, praise and thanksgiving, they should also come away with their needs filled by His all-sufficiency. The worship of God should leave worshippers with a sense of fulfilment that is unlike any other experience (Psalm 84:10). Worshippers cannot come to the all-giving God in sincerity and leave feeling empty or neutral, as if nothing happened. We serve God with our praise, but it was His intention that in worship we find joy, blessings, fulfilment and purpose.

So the worship planning committee considers the composition of the congregation, recognizing that “one size does not fit all”. Among the questions it asks are: “Is this congregation multi-generational?” and “Is it multi-ethnic?” Plans are then made accordingly.

Perhaps one of the most perceptive considerations is to recognise that the congregation also includes unchurched potential believers and others. The planning committee plans the worship service with the expectation that unchurched visitors will be present at all services, and directs worship leaders, including the pastor, to approach worship with an attitude of inclusiveness. The congregation is never addressed as if it is composed only of its own church members. Even the language used should easily be understood by people who are not Adventists. For this and other reasons, the worship service should be used to point people to the glory of God and not for church business or similar distractions that are not understood by visitors.

With the ‘R’ of relevance firmly in place, everything is presented to God. As the committee awaits the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it asks questions similar to these:

1. How shall we honour and glorify God in our upcoming worship?
2. How may we offer Him our best praise?
3. How shall we reveal the truth about God?
4. How shall we edify and inspire both believers and potential believers (visitors) at the worship service?
5. How may we facilitate response?

Those questions should be asked of all worship services, including prayer meeting, seasonal events such as Christmas, thematic Sabbaths (such as ‘Personal Ministries Day’, ‘Community Services Day’, etc.) and church-like evangelistic meetings. They are like railway tracks on which the worship service runs. As the worship planning committee responds to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and prayerfully answers the questions, the structure or outline of the service emerges.

In some cases there could be a temptation to use the existing order of service as a guide. This should be avoided unless it resulted from an approach that is similar to what is being introduced in this article. Even then, it should be clearly evaluated against the answers to the questions above to determine which changes are necessary.

As the order or outline emerges, the placement of each item should be clearly determined by a specific purpose. For example, if an answer to the question, “How may we offer Him our best praise?” includes singing, use of relevant Scripture passages and personal testimony, the committee has to determine how and where in the outline these may be placed. It also has to consider whether the singing is to be used to reveal the truth about God, to offer praise and thanksgiving, or both.

Worship planners are faced with the task of outlining services where God is revealed, and worshippers are inspired to respond to Him with praise, thanksgiving, confession and commitment. A worship service would then reflect cycles of revelation and response. For example, as God is revealed in His glory and justice, worshippers are able to respond with praise, humility and contrition. These responses may take the form of hearty, joyful singing, recitation of appropriate Scripture, eating/drinking the communion emblems,
silence, prayer, the raising of hands, moving to the front of the church, and other forms of expressions.

The ways in which revelation and response occur will sometimes vary according to the theme of the service and the needs of the congregation. However, the service should have a smooth flowing, unbroken, natural feel to it, where all the components are directly related to each other. It should not reflect the random and unrelated components often seen in many church services today.

Creating an outline for a worship service does not mean that the outline is set in stone. While it is prayerfully and reasonably structured, it should be flexible enough to be adjusted even while the service is taking place. If, for example, during a period of praise, the pastor strongly senses a change in the mood of the congregation that people are likely to be responsive to the Spirit’s prompting to accept Jesus as their Saviour, he or she may very well invite them to do so, even before the sermon—a means of revelation—is preached!

A newly-created outline for worship does not become the ‘order of service’ for the next ten years. It will alter according to the changing needs of the congregation and the type of service needed.

With the creation of the worship outline a team of worship leaders, fully briefed by the planning committee (often, the team leader is part of the planning committee), become responsible for leading worship according to the outline. How well they do so is often determined by personal spiritual preparation and the quality of their rehearsals.

The final act in ‘putting it all together’ is the evaluation of the service. Some of the questions that some find useful include, “Did it achieve all that was planned? Was God truly glorified? Was Jesus the central focus? Were people edified and inspired? Was it relevant to all who were present?” And, perhaps the question that sums up this brief series on worship, “Did they experience God’s presence and, like Isaiah in vision, see ‘God high and lifted up’ (Isaiah 6:1-7) in such a way that they committed themselves to follow God’s commands and invitation to serve Him?”

Halsey Peat

“Praise Teams, We Want to Worship Too!”

“Dear Praise Team leader,

Thank you for your kind devotion and commitment to leading the praise we offer God in worship. Your role in worship is so important and you will often sacrifice time and energy to make our praise and worship very special.

We have just one request: Please let us join in the singing! While you sing great, we sometimes get a little frustrated because we want to join in the singing but sometimes find that far too many of the songs you select are best suited for solo artistes or groups but unsuitable for congregational singing.

Please select songs with easy melodies that will encourage our enthusiastic praise. It’s not even about contemporary songs versus hymns because the hymnal also has many songs that are more suited for solos, duets and choirs, rather than for congregations.

If a new song is introduced, the melody should be simple and ‘catchy’ enough that the congregation is able to follow it after hearing it just once or twice. Please be sensitive to the congregation. If we are not singing, do change the song to something we enjoy singing.

We really want to worship too.”

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Halsey Peat
FEATURE

Only Healthy Churches Grow--How Healthy Is Yours?

Let’s face it. Your church is not really growing, is it? Perhaps you attend a large church in the GTA area, and 20 new members were added in 2010, but when you consider that the membership of your church is more than 500, how significant is 20?

In some areas of Ontario, some of our churches have not seen any growth in 2010. No one was baptised or transferred in. Unfortunately, these two scenarios are evident in other areas in North America.

A careful look at the statistical reports of our denomination in North America shows no significant growth since 1992. Any observable growth* is the result of membership transfers from other parts of the world among immigrants and refugees. We are not even keeping up with the biological 2% growth as we lose our youth at, what some consider as an alarming rate.

A recent doctoral dissertation by Pastor Rodney Mills at Andrews University showed that numerous programs, initiatives, and seminars on church growth, training laity for evangelism and innovative efforts of nationwide evangelism have been largely ineffective and yielded inconsistent results as most congregations still are not seeing the desired growth.

The reason suggested for lack of growth is simple – the unhealthy condition of local churches. Over a century ago one of our pioneers, Ellen G. White, warned church leaders to “put intelligence into your work, and seek to bring the church of God into a healthy condition” (Review and Herald, June 19, 1888 par.17).

So, how healthy is your church?

Contrary to the expectation of some, evangelism alone is not enough to cause the church to grow in a community. Sowing seeds does not guarantee growth. Growth requires a holistic approach, where conditions of the ‘soil’ and many other aspects should be considered. This amounts to considering the ‘health’ of the church.

Leaders have emphasized that these eight areas are indispensable for every church. Both, the biblical support and the spiritual counsel of Ellen White have been presented in support of this evaluation tool. However, godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love” (2 Peter 1:5-7 KJV). Peter ends with a categorical statement: “If these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacks these things is blind, and cannot see afar off…” (2 Peter 1:8-9, KJV).

I had first learnt this list as a “ladder” of virtues with successive steps to become a loving Christian but later came to see it as a comprehensive list of qualities necessary for a balanced Christian life, and thus for a balanced church.

There are eight qualities, exactly matching the quality characteristics outlined by Schwarz in measuring the health of a church through NCD. Peter begins with a call for diligence, making effort, being earnest in accomplishing, promoting, and striving after the ‘purpose’. That is a beautiful picture of Empowered Leadership. The Bible speaks of diligence as the main quality of successful leadership (Proverbs 21:5). The Apostle Paul refers to them as spiritual gifts of leadership (Romans 12:11).

Next, Peter introduces the ‘purpose’ — evangelism, sharing the faith, and in doing so, one must add virtue and...
goodness. This is not simply a sterile statement of beliefs, disconnected from life, but a genuine care for the needs of people. A Need-oriented Evangelism of offering goodness, a faith with virtue. The method Jesus used when He “mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me’" (White, Maranatha, 1976, p.103).

Doing the good works of evangelism flows from personal giftedness; therefore, knowing one’s gift is important. Peter says that we must have knowledge added to the goodness of our faith-sharing. When ministry is informed by awareness of God-given gifts, it becomes truly effective. Gift-oriented Ministry is an essential requirement for genuine ministry.

The spiritually gifted life will manifest true Passionate Spirituality, self-control, and submission to the Spirit, where carnal desires and sensual passions are under disciplined control of the Spirit. Patience is the product of spiritual discipline. Patience is used as a defining label of sainthood spirituality when John the Revelator states “Here is the patience of the saints” (Revelation 13:10; 14:12). It is patience that perseveres and collaborates with other believers, making the Body of Christ structurally fit and effective. Functional Structures are the norm for a living Body. It is impossible for a healthy church to be dysfunctional. That would be a contradiction of terms.

Next, Peter speaks of godliness which is just a synonym for a worshipful life. A life of devotion is not formality but is inspired by God’s presence. It presents such an Inspiring Worship, where even an unbeliever observing will end up worshipping, by falling on his face and saying “Truly God is among you!” (1 Corinthians 14:24-25).

In addition, Peter speaks of brotherly kindness, describing the ideal of Christian fellowship as a community created through Holistic Small Groups, where total care and nurture are provided. The philadelphia "brotherly love" concept is not just an act of kindness, but the “one-anotherness” principle, where koinonia (fellowship) supplies total mutual care for individual needs. All this is possible through Loving Relationships, the agape love, which crowns the Christian life.

So, how is your church doing? Is your leadership empowering? Are your structures functional? Do your evangelistic efforts consider a variety of people’s needs? Do people in your congregation know their spiritual gifts and participate in ministries accordingly? Is your worship inspiring? How about passion of your personal spirituality? How loving are the relationships among the people in your church? Are people cared for in small groups setting? If even one aspect is lacking – according to Apostle Peter – such a church is blind, barren, can’t see afar, and lives in sin. It’s time for the “church health” check-up! NCD is designed to give your church a check-up.

*National Council of Churches 2011 Year Book suggests a 2.5% growth

Is Soy Safe?

From time to time, we hear that soy foods are unsafe. What is your take on this? Soy foods are varied and range from the whole, cooked bean to highly processed and refined products. Soy has been popularized, especially by Adventists, who find it a suitable source of protein. Amino acids, the building blocks of protein, occur in most of our foods, and the only problem a vegetarian is likely to experience with protein is if one’s diet is not varied and balanced.

Vegetable sources of protein often lack an essential amino acid or two, and soy beans are one product that provides a more rounded amino acid profile. The use of animal products provides a good range of amino acids within the single food, but such an advantage does not hold when compared to a mixture of foods. For the vegetarian, mixing grains with legumes and nuts provides a full spectrum of amino acids that is totally satisfying to all kinds of people—athlete, growing adolescent, or even the pregnant mother-to-be.

This means that soy products, as good as they are, do not have to be a part of the vegetarian diet for it to be satisfactory.

In all probability, however, there is an advantage to soy that transcends amino acid content. While there is evidence for several advantages to soy, this evidence is not of the most compelling order because studies on food effects are very difficult to perform. Nevertheless, it’s probable that soy offers protective isoflavones and other such phytochemicals to decrease one’s risk of cancer. For men, this appears to be the case for prostate cancer, with a glass of soy milk a day providing a modicum of protection.

The anti-soy lobby brings all kinds of arguments to support their condemnation of soy. Some cite situations in which birds fed an essentially total soy diet developed crooked beaks. Others quote studies that suggest an increase in dementia for those consuming large quantities of soy. The important thing is to recognize that these are

Continued on page 12
inconclusive studies and are being given disproportionate weight by those quoting them.

A few months ago, there was a very well-conducted study of sufficient numbers and controls reported in The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA, December 9, 2009, vol. 302, no. 22) on soy food intake and breast cancer survival. This study, conducted on women in China, was able to separate breast cancer survivors. Because this study is of high quality, it has significant meaning for breast cancer survivors and is encouraging to those who utilize soy—particularly whole soy—as part of their diet.

While benefit in this one situation does not necessarily apply across the whole spectrum of potential advantages or disadvantages, it is supportive of our recommendations that moderate amounts of soy be utilized in a balanced vegetarian diet.

By Allan R. Handysides and Peter N. Landless.

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Allan R. Handysides, M.B., Ch.B., FRCPC, FRCSC, FACOG, is director of the General Conference Health Ministries Department. Peter N. Landless, M.B., B.Ch., M.Med., F.C.P.(SA), F.A.C.C., is ICPA executive director and associate director of the Health Ministries Department.

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**Revive Us Again**

Imagine what could happen if God’s people would commit to journey together for eight weeks up a mountain of spiritual renewal called “Revival and Reformation”? Imagine if God’s church in Ontario would resolve to gather to pray, praise and prepare for a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit. What could happen if our July 9 camp meeting in Mississauga was the mountain peak and climax of this transformational expedition? This journey begins in the first week of May.

All churches are invited to join in this journey. Whether at prayer meeting or some other time, pastors have been asked to lead their congregations into an eight week period of revival.

The book suggested for this is Mark Finley’s ‘Revive Us Again’, available from the ABC for approximately $5.00. The ABC has obtained over 5,000 copies to help each congregation. The collection of the ABC for approximately $5.00. The collection of the ABC for approximately $5.00.

The suggested dates are:

- **May 4:** Prayer and Revival
- **May 11:** The Holy Spirit and Revival
- **May 18:** The Urgency of Revival
- **May 25:** True and False Revivals
- **June 1:** The Promised Revival
- **June 8:** Evangelism and Revival
- **June 15:** Revival and a Finished Work

On June 22, preparation is to be made for what is called the “All In” commitment. “All In” simply refers to our united commitment to be ‘all involved’ in revival, reformation and evangelism. At camp meeting, the climax of the revival series, we want to celebrate our commitment to God by:

- Acknowledgment of our gifts from God
- Commitment to use our gifts for God’s Kingdom
- Presenting our gifts and giving a kingdom sacrificial offering of $1,000,000.00 as a goal towards a major project.

The collection of the kingdom sacrificial offering will begin at camp meeting and continue throughout July in local churches or by online giving.

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**Crawford Homecoming 2011**

Honoured classes: TJA Gr. 10 Classes of ’76 & ’71; CAA Gr. 12 Classes of ’01, ’96, ’91, ’86 and Gr. 11 Class of ’81.

The 3rd Annual Vernon Langdon Golf Classic, Friday, May 27, 2011, Station Creek Golf Course. Alumni Sabbath, May 28, 2011, 10:00 a.m. at CAA, Guest Speaker: Dr. Carlton Byrd, Sr. pastor at Berean Seventh-day Adventist Church, Atlanta, GA and speaker/director, Breath of Life Telecast. Walk’n Roll 4 Education, Sunday, May 29, 2011.

For more information, contact Derrick Hall, VP of Advancement at 866.960.2125 ext. 234. dhall@tadsb.com or Judy Cardona Gamez, ext. 248; jgamez@tadsb.com or on the web www.tadsb.com
To Disciple or not to Disciple? That Is the Question

Do we have a choice? Jesus clearly gave a command that everyone who accepts Him should go and make disciples, baptize them and teach them (Matthew 28:19, 20). Referred to as “The Great Commission,” this passage of Scripture does not give a choice. Simply stated, everyone who accepts Jesus as his or her Lord, basically has no choice but to carry out His command—to disciple others. I like to think of it as growing spiritual giants, especially as we think of children, or little Christians as someone called them.

During Jesus’ ministry on earth, children had a special place. He commanded the Israelites to teach (disciple) their children (Deuteronomy 6:6,7). On one occasion when mothers were carrying their children to Jesus for Him to bless them, the disciples began turning them away; but Jesus was very clear in declaring that He wanted them to receive the blessings He had in store for them. He sternly rebuked the disciples and firmly stated that it was important for the children to spend time with Him; that it was important for them to come to Him so they could learn from Him (Matthew 19:14).

Whose responsibility is it to disciple children? Should discipling (making disciples) be done at home by parents, at church, by the leaders or at school, by teachers? Let me take away the guesswork and very definitively point out that it is the responsibility of all three entities. Discipling begins in the home, supported by the church and the school. Of course I am referring to Adventist schools. Students over the years have stated that they valued the spiritual nurture (an integral part of discipling) in our schools.

How does one disciple children? By intentionally teaching, modeling and providing opportunities for them to clarify and strengthen their relationship with God. By combining theory with practice, children can be discipled so that they will be able to articulate their beliefs, live and share their faith with others.

Parents, children’s ministries leaders, Adventist education leaders, pastors and Bible instructors, if you are desirous of learning more about discipling children and building spiritual giants, please take advantage of the upcoming education/children’s ministries convention on Sabbath, April 30. At the convention, you will be introduced to the Kids in Discipleship (KID) program and follow-up materials to make this work at your churches and in your homes. Space is limited, so register online or mail in your registration form to the Office of Education today.

Janice Maitland
Superintendent of Education

According to CognitiveGenesis, a 4-year study of 30,000 North American Adventist school students, grades 3-9 and 11, each year at an Adventist school improves students’ average scholastic achievement. This research, conducted at La Sierra University, is validating what parents, teachers, and students involved in Adventist education have known for years—that, overall, Adventist school students perform better than the national average.

Check it out at www.adventisteducation.org
Children in Cyberspace

Often, the impersonal nature of technology can give us a false sense of security, but although no one can physically attack us through a computer screen, it is known that some predators use the Internet to seduce children into meeting them.

Our children are using the Internet, and we must not be intimidated. However, we must be steadfast in our effort to have a good understanding about the issues and the safety steps to help keep our children safe.

Consider the following proactive steps:

• Learn everything you can about the Internet
• Set standards for what your children can and cannot do online
• Keep personal information private (especially on social networking sites such as Facebook).
• Encourage your children to come to you if they encounter a problem online
• Consider blocking, filtering, and rating content
• You’re not alone. There are a lot of tools out there; www.TheDoorThatsNotLocked.ca is a great place to start. This site is easy to navigate and user-friendly. The Goodwill Community Foundation International also has an amazing website with provision for free innovative online learning resources. You may also want to visit GCF’s Internet safety course at www.gcflearnfree.org/internetsafety.

If you aren’t prepared, then neither are your children! Whether you’re a grandparent, an aunt or an uncle, teacher or perhaps a family friend, if you have children in your life, it pays to be up-to-date. Here are some simple rules (see www.gcflearnfree.org/internetsafetyforkids/1.5) you may want to consider before letting your children have unsupervised access to the Internet:

1. Keep the computer in a common room with lots of traffic...not in a child’s bedroom or a secluded area of the house. Get to know their “online friends” just as you get to know all of their other friends.

2. Create a family “terms-of-use” agreement, clearly stating what children can or cannot do on the Internet, i.e. tell them not to give out private information and what sites they cannot visit. Ask them to save emails and give you access to their files, etc.

3. Install a filtering, monitoring, or blocking feature to manage your family’s Internet traffic.

4. Install anti-virus software to scan all downloaded files before opening. Teach your children how to be aware of viruses in emails. Warn your children of the inherent dangers present in downloads.

Why not make Internet time family time? Play games and learn about new places and people or plan a family trip. Learn as they learn and discover how computer-savvy your child really is. As I write I’m reminded of the Scripture passage found in Deuteronomy 6:6-9, so why not begin your Bible adventure today; www.Paliwaalz.com, www.AmazingFactsKids.org and www.KidsTime4Jesus.org are great places to start... safe surfing.

Cyril ‘Ceejay’ Horrell
www.StrateUpProductions.com
www.CeejayHorrell.com

There’s an App for That! Ontario Conference App

At the end of April, the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will be launching its first applications for iPhone, iPad and Android phones and tablets.

The apps, developed by the Information Technology department, will allow users to easily access the conference website, view upcoming events, read news, access the conference directory, find directions to churches, and a number of other functions associated with the website.

After April 31, be sure to visit the apps stores at iTunes, and Android Marketplace for the appropriate free app for your phone, or tablet.

Follow the Ontario Conference on
twitter.com/OntAdventists
The Year of Youth Evangelism is starting with many young people surrendering; they are surrendering to the Lord on their knees. Teens and young adults across the conference are humbling themselves before God because they know they have no help but God if they are to be used by Him in the work of evangelism. Prayer is taking many forms and across the conference, there is an anxious anticipation to study, to serve, to share, and to speak up for Christ.

The young adults of Richmond Hill Church are responding to the 777 Prayer Challenge. They plan to start the prayer challenge concurrently with the Experience the Joy Bible talks. This innovative doctrinal series combines short video clips with Bible study. Experience the Joy is a great way to engage today’s young people through media and dialogue with a solid series of Bible lessons.

In the Kitchener-Waterloo area, teens and young adults invited their friends from other area churches to join them for a day of study. This group spent a day prayerfully reflecting on the teachings of the recently released Ellen White compilation, “True Revival.” Teens and young adults are seeking a spiritual experience that is, “much higher, deeper, broader, than many have yet thought of having” (GW274).

As our youth start the year of evangelism, they are praying and preparing to reach out to friends, family and strangers. Some are working under the guidance of seasoned pastors/evangelists to organize preaching services that impact their communities. The youth of Philadelphia Church in Scarborough will be conducting an evangelistic series in August. This church is also planning a second series this year with a visiting evangelist sharing the Advent message.

Some young adult groups, like The Refuge from College Park Church, will be targeting inactive young adults as they seek to create a family environment where young adults are positive about their church experience. They are facilitating a deeper knowledge of the Word and instilling a passion for Jesus Christ, His ministry, and His church while connecting with their community through service and making disciples. They are successfully reclaiming young adult Adventists and getting them involved in ministry.

There are mission trips being planned that will see Adventist youth and their leaders from Ontario going to Columbia, Jamaica, the Philippines, St. Lucia and elsewhere around the globe to take the message of salvation to the people of the earth. They have a sense of calling to follow the aim of our denominational youth movement to share, “the Advent message to all the world in my generation.”

Others leaders are working side by side with their young people to serve in Ontario. Through the adventure of service projects, youth of several churches are reaching out to seven communities including Cayuga, Cornwall, Cochrane and Moosonee. Wherever our youth go, they intend to be witnesses for Christ.

Few churches have the same evangelistic template because each church, each community and each youth group is unique, yet we have all been called to share God’s Word with others. Adventist teens and young adults in Ontario are eager to tell others of the end-time call to come out of religious confusion and accept God’s gift of eternal life through Christ. Many youth groups are prayerfully working in preparation to serve and evangelize. At the close of the year, we hope to celebrate victories in Christ across our conference. We look forward to hearing the reports of lives changed, young people re-committing their lives to Christ and baptisms as youth and adults enjoy a new walk with the Saviour. We look forward, even more, to hearing Jesus declare, “Well done!”

The youth of Ontario are eager to do their part in evangelism with the support and help of their pastors and other members. They are committed to work for the Lord in 2011 and on until He comes.

Cyril Millett
Youth Director
Nearly 170 eager Bible students arrived at Kingsview Village Seventh-day Adventist Church on March 27, 2011 to begin their first class as the first students in the first school of evangelism for the Ontario Conference. A further 55 from across the province and as far as British Columbia sat behind their computer terminals, ready to participate in the first course, church doctrines. The Ontario Conference School of Evangelism (OCSE) was open for business.

Three weeks earlier, on March 5, at Willowdale Adventist Church, the school was officially launched by Pastors Mansfield Edwards and Daniel Linrud, president and executive secretary, respectively, of the Ontario Conference. They were joined by Pastors Errol Lawrence, Halsey Peat, Theodore Sargeant and Eustace Williams, the organisers of the OCSE and over 220 registered students, OCSE teachers and others.

After a very spiritually uplifting worship led by Pastor David Schwinghammer and his team, keynote speaker, Dan Linrud, highlighted the need for the school of evangelism and the lay evangelists and Bible instructors that it will produce.

“People are now in need of rescue more than ever before”, he said, “and this school is designed to equip people to rescue the perishing.”

He took time to warn of the sacrifices that must be made in order to connect with people, and the imperative to meet people where they are. “The difficult thing about rescuing someone”, he noted, “is that we have to go where they are and to communicate with them in a way that they can understand.”

Concluding, he charged everyone to be fully committed to God in reaching out to people to lead them to Christ. Quoting 1 Corinthians 15: 58, he said, “Stand firm, let nothing move you. Your service in God is not in vain, so stand firm. God wants to use you to rescue the perishing.”

After prayers of dedication for both teachers and students, conference president, Edwards, cast a vision for the school of evangelism in which he saw a church mobilised, members and pastors together, working to win people for Christ.

“For too long”, he said, “we have failed to practice what we believe—the priesthood of all believers. Every member is a minister!”

At the conclusion of the meeting, quite a few of the congregation who had not previously registered felt so motivated by the worship, sermon and vision that they lined up to register, hoping that room could be found for them.

A number of those who attended the launch at Willowdale were able to register and were among those who attended Kingsview Village for the first class.

As they moved to class some told the Ontario Highlights why they had registered for the OCSE.

“I have a passion for witnessing, and I believe that God is calling me to win souls for Jesus.”—Paulette, Perth Church.

“I was motivated by what Pastor Edwards said about all members being ministers.”—Samanta, Philadelphia Church.

“I thought it very important to push myself to get trained and equipped so that I can really do what’s on my heart—which is to tell others about Christ.”—Ceejay, Barrie

The school of evangelism will initially offer two tracks, Level 1 General Evangelism and Level 1 Credential Lay Preachers courses. The Credential Lay Preachers course will include all the General Evangelism subjects. The two-term level 1 course may be completed in approximately sixteen months. It is possible that shorter intensive courses and tracks may be added at a later date and offered in different regions of the conference. Some of these could possibly include tracks on health evangelism, family life evangelism, institutional evangelism (prisons and hospitals) as well as tracks specifically for youth and young adults. There is also a possibility that a level 2, or more advanced studies of level 1 courses, could later become part of the curriculum.

The school of evangelism will be an ongoing programme in the Ontario Conference. While everyone is encouraged to fully participate in the OCSE, it is anticipated that over the years, all local elders will achieve at least level 1 certification.

Registration for the 2012 intake will commence in September 2011.
Ten Pastors Invested as Master Guides

The ranks of Master Guides in Ontario have been swelled by the unprecedented investiture of ten pastors and two other Master Guides-in-training (MIT) in 2010. They were invested by Pastor Edwin Martin, Ontario Conference Pathfinder specialist and Pastor Cyril Millett, conference Youth director, at three different ceremonies during November and December.

In the last ceremony, held on Sabbath afternoon, December 11, at Toronto Central Seventh-day Adventist Church, Russell Lambert, executive coordinator of the Ontario Conference Pathfinder Council (O.C.P.C), and Lydia Francis, area coordinator for the Metro Central region of the O.C.P.C, joined Martin and Millett in the investiture service.

Millett, in his charge to Pastors Jakov Bibulovic (Barrie Church), Leonard Northe (Toronto Central), Jiwan Moon (Kitchener-Waterloo), Sereivudh Ly (Belleville) and theology graduate, Janice De-Whyte (Toronto Ghanaian), urged them to be door-keepers as Master Guides and not simply tent-dwellers. “Be door-keepers to keep the doors open for young people,” said Millett. “We don’t need leaders who slam the door shut in the face of young people and keep them out. We want you to have an open door policy that says, ‘welcome.’

Most of the pastors who were invested on the two other occasions were also present to share in the joy of their colleagues. Resplendent in their newly-minted green uniforms, Pastors Omar Palmer (Meadowvale), Orlando Pule (Willowdale), Travis Afflick (Mississauga), and Joel Nembhard (Mississauga), accompanied by wife, Deidre, who was also invested on November 20, 2010, represented a group of dedicated leaders for the youth in the church in Ontario.

Executive Coordinator Lambert was clearly happy that so many pastors have been invested. “Today is a wonderful day, a new era in Pathfinder ministry,” said Lambert. “In the past some of our pastors absented themselves from Pathfinder days and activities. Today, we have pastors who are involved in the Pathfinder ministry, and we are excited about what will happen in the future.”

Area Coordinator Francis was equally happy. “I am overjoyed”, she said, “because this is something I’ve always asked for. It’s a dream come true to see our pastors as Master Guides.”

The new Master Guides did not need to be convinced about the value of Pathfinder ministry. They started the Master Guides-in-Training (MIT) programme because they saw its great value.

“Their is value and virtue in Pathfinder ministry,” said Pastor Omar Palmer. “It’s something we should all strive to become”.

“It has a lot to offer to pastors,” agreed Pastor Orlando Pule.

Pastors Garth Dottin (Immanuel) and Joseph Amankwah (Philadelphia) were the other two pastors who made up the group of ten pastors invested. It is expected that a second group of ten pastors plan to complete the MIT course requirements in time to be invested early in 2011.

Halsey Peat

If you would like to learn how you may become a Master Guide, contact your church’s Pathfinder director. If your church does not have a Pathfinder ministry, contact Pastor Edwin Martin, Ontario Conference Pathfinder director at emartin@adventistontario.org or by phone: 905-571-1022; Ext. 223.

Personnel Changes

The Ontario Conference is happy to welcome to its rank of workers Pastor In Pyo Hong and his wife, Anna; their son, Sung Moon, and daughter, Elina. He recently assumed his responsibilities as assistant pastor to Pastor Dae Doo Seo at Toronto Korean Seventh-day Adventist Church. He is a recent theology graduate, and we are happy that he is able to serve in Ontario.

Returning to Ontario is Pastor Oleg Zhigankov and his wife, Elena, after a period of service in Russia. Formerly, pastor at Barrie Church, Pastor Zhigankov now serves the North Bay and South River congregations.
Over fifty Adventist students attending public colleges and universities across Ontario congregated in the quaint, snow-covered town of Minett for a four-part seminar entitled “Just Walk Across the Room”, March 5-7, 2011. Held at Camp Frenda, the annual retreat was organized by the Youth and Campus Ministries director of the Ontario Conference, Pastor Cyril Millett, under the Adventist Ministry for College and University Students (AMiCUS). Students gathered together for a weekend of fellowship, spiritual reflection, and the opportunity to discuss the day-to-day challenges they experience attending public institutions across the province.

For many students, sharing God’s greatest gift to man, the gift of eternal life, has become the main challenge in an increasingly secular society. The underlying consensus in most of today’s western societies is that religion should remain a personal and private matter. Add smart phones, social networking sites, and reality television shows to that equation, and you simply have more students unwilling to engage in spiritual conversations.

During the retreat, Pastor Richard Roschman of Heritage Green Seventh-day Adventist Church challenged students to reach out to non-Christians outside traditional forms of evangelism. Rather than handing out tracks and conducting door-to-door outreach, he emphasized the importance of getting to know non-Christians on a personal level. More specifically: (1) taking the time to develop meaningful relationships by listening to their life stories and (2) sharing God’s love through our own faith stories when prompted by the Holy Spirit.

Joshua Tim, an engineering student at McMaster University, chimed in, “As Christians, we are there to fill the void in people's hearts and bring them closer to God through love because God is love.”

Building Christ-centered communities on secular campuses seems out of reach for many Adventist students. The four-part seminar showed otherwise. It can begin by simply walking across the room and extending a hand to another.

Joann Ban
McMaster University

## 2011 Schedule of Regional Seniors Ministry Coordinators’ Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>District/Church</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 20</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Hamilton Church</td>
<td>Southern Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 10</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>London Church</td>
<td>Western Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 15</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Kingston Church</td>
<td>Kingston, Belleville, Brockville &amp; Addington Highland Company</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 22</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>College Park Church</td>
<td>East Central Ontario</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 5</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Barrie Church</td>
<td>Near North</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 19</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Nepean Church</td>
<td>Eastern Ontario</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 23</td>
<td>3:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Willowdale Church</td>
<td>Metro East, Metro North Central, Metro South Central, Metro West, Metro West Central</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 2</td>
<td>2:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Timmins Church</td>
<td>Timmins &amp; Haileybury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 31</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>North Bay Church</td>
<td>Timmins &amp; Haileybury</td>
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(Except Timmins & Haileybury Churches)
Five-Hundred Attend ‘Year of Youth Evangelism’ Launch

Nearly five-hundred teens, some in Pathfinder uniform, and young adults, attended the ‘Year of Youth Evangelism’ launch at Willowdale Seventh-day Adventist Church on Sabbath, March 19, 2011.

According to Pastor Cyril Millett, youth director for the Ontario Conference, the ‘Worship, Word and Witness Rally’, as it was called, was planned as a time of prayer and consecration for the Greater Toronto Area. “We wanted to bathe our evangelistic efforts in prayer and commit ourselves to God,” he said, “and I believe that we did just that.”

Also present was Ontario conference president, Dr. Mansfield Edwards; conference directors, Dave Schwinghammer and Edwin Martin, and keynote speaker, Pastor Kenton Perrin, youth pastor at Apple Creek Adventist Church.

Pastor Dave Schwinghammer, along with a team of young adults from College Park Adventist Church, led the first section of worship and prayer before Pastor Kenton Perrin, referencing the fabled ‘Chicken Little’, challenged his listeners “not to be afraid as Chicken Little, but to be bold for Christ” in their witness.

Following Perrin’s sermon, the inspiring testimonies of three young adults, Charmaine, Patricia and Sam, of what God has been doing in their lives served to motivate others to embrace active witnessing.

Dr. Edward’s closing words echoed the message of the testimonies and charged all teens and young adults throughout the church in Ontario to move outside the Adventist Church to share their faith. “Despite the upheaval in the world,” he said, “we cannot be insular with our faith and experience. We must get involved in the life of our community and share what God has given us.”

After the close of the meeting, Pastor Millett expressed his confidence that 2011 will be remembered as the year when young people in Ontario began and led an evangelistic revolution that changed the face of the Adventist Church in Ontario.

Stephen Bohr Returns to Thunder Bay Camp Meeting
May 6-8, 2011

Pastor Stephen Bohr will be returning to Thunder Bay for its camp meeting, May 6-8, 2011. Bohr, pastor of Fresno Central Seventh-day Adventist Church and director of Secrets Unsealed, will be making his second appearance as the camp meeting speaker. His first appearance was in 2008.

Pastor Bohr has dedicated years to the study of the prophetic messages of the Bible and best known for his groundbreaking video series, “Cracking the Genesis Code”.

Attendees can look forward to hearing Bohr’s 5-meeting series, “The Robe”.

Friday service will be held at Oliver Road Community Centre at 7:00 pm. Sabbath, May 7, and Sunday (a.m.) services will be held at Thunder Bay Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Southern Ontario Regional Camp Meeting
June 10-11, 2011

The churches of Southern Ontario will be holding their annual camp meeting on June 10-11, 2011 at Norfolk County Fairgrounds, Simcoe.

Main speakers, Pastor Lonnie Melashenko (adults section), former Voice of Prophecy speaker/director, and Pastor Sung Kwon (youth and young adults section), executive director of Adventist Community Services, North American Division, will speak on the camp theme, “Young Enough to Serve”. Dr. Mansfield Edwards, Ontario Conference president, will lead the adult Sabbath School lesson discussion.

The Friday evening services will be held at Simcoe Seventh-day Adventist Church, located next door to the fairgrounds. Sabbath services and workshops will be held at the fairgrounds.
Company Status for Addington Highlands

With the presence of Pastors Edwards and Linrud and Brother Guarin, Ontario Conference executive officers, on January 22, 2011, Addington Highlands officially became a company. It was a wonderful occasion for the twenty-eight members of the new company since its humble beginning as a house group in the living room at the Lax family home in Flinton nearly 11 years ago.

The worship service and accompanying ceremony was a time of praise and thanksgiving to God. It included a wonderful sermon by Pastor Edwards, aptly titled “This Is God’s Church” and a stirring call to worship God by Pastor Linrud with a response from the congregation to live by God’s Word. The offertory prayer of thanksgiving by Brother Guarin echoed the hearts of all present.

The journey to the present location at Madoc Wesleyan and Free Methodist Church has been a long and winding one, from renting various buildings to even purchasing a building very early in its existence. However, none was suitable. They have been worshipping in Madoc since they held an evangelistic series there in 2010 and believe that it is God’s plan for them to serve Him there.

It is interesting to note the mission story for Sabbath, January 22, 2011, was of Dorothy Burton, one of Addington Highlands’ members. It was written by Phyllis Vallieres, another member of the congregation. The prayer of the congregation is that God will continue to bless it with growth as the members continue reaching to the local community with the gospel.

Phyllis Vallieres

Agape Temple’s Biker Blessing

Late April or early May is typically when road signs start warning automobile drivers to watch out for motorcycles as the two wheeled chariots come out of hibernation. Recognizing the danger on the roads that bikers face, Agape Temple will hold its second annual Biker Blessing on May 7, 2011 in the parking lot at the church in Pickering.

The first Biker Blessing was held on the first Sabbath of May 2010 when the congregation invited bikers from the surrounding community to a special service when the church would ask for God’s guidance and protection for bikers during the riding season.

On that occasion, Agape Temple members enthusiastically greeted the bikers, of whom nearly 75% were from the local community. Canadian University College’s touring choir, under the direction of Dr. Wendolin Munroe, provided a wonderful musical tribute that particularly touched the congregation. The then local pastor, Fred Nichols, called on God to bless the riders and their machines as they joined the congregation in prayer.

Herson, a sports bike rider, attended the blessing service even though he only knew one person there but said that the warmth of the people, the genuine friendliness of everyone at the church was wonderful. He is ready for the upcoming Agape biker blessing on May 7.

Last year’s event demonstrated that there are many practical ways by which a church can reach out to the local community with the love of Jesus. Agape’s members are eagerly anticipating the second annual Biker Blessing at 4:30 p.m. on May 7. You may know someone in your church, or you may have a friend who rides a motorcycle. Pray for sunshine, and invite them to come with you to support a unique way of reaching out to those in our communities.

Agape Temple Seventh-day Adventist church is located at 1999 Fairport Rd, Pickering, Ontario (South east corner of Fairport Rd. and Finch Ave. in Pickering).
Six Baptized at Western Korean Church

Six precious souls at Western Toronto Korean Seventh-day Adventist Church have been born again as children of God on September 4, 2010 and were baptized in the beautiful Lake Simcoe.

Jong Kyu Choi first came to know the Adventist Church through his friend in Chicago and later found our church on the Internet. While attending our church, Mr. Choi realized the Adventist message was correct and decided to be baptized.

Chung Won Kwan and his wife, Sung Mi, heard the Adventist message through Deaconess Mi Jung Kim of our church. He, his wife, and his nephew, Yong Kook Kim, attended the health evangelism held in May, and their hearts were deeply moved by the message. After the event, they started to attend our church, and through sermons and Bible studies with our pastor, Yeong Jae Yang, they decided to be baptized.

Ken Chen is Chinese and was evangelized by one of the youths of our church. In turn, he zealously evangelized his parents regarding what he learned. His inclusion made this our first multicultural baptism.

Ju Ho Lee is a youth who has inherited his mother’s faith. He has energetically involved himself in every church activity and had eagerly looked forward to his baptism. His baptism was a moment of great joy for him.

Since then, each of these newly baptized has been happily serving God and helping the church with its activities. They are enjoying a new life as members in their new family--Western Toronto Korean Adventist Church

Please pray for these new saints who are daily learning to trust God and to live out their beliefs as Seventh-day Adventists.

James Jang
Communication

The Blessings of Faithful Service

The apostle Paul stated a fundamental truth when he declared, “There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them…is the same God at work” (1 Corinthians 12:4-6). Throughout the centuries, this scriptural truth has inspired and motivated millions of Christians for service to Christ and His church. One of them is BrotherHarry Horricks, a member of Bowmanville Adventist Church, who back in the early eighties responded to God’s call to serve Him as treasurer of the said congregation—a responsibility that he faithfully fulfilled for the past 28 years, in a quiet and unassuming way, until the beginning of this year when he decided to step down, passing the responsibility to a younger person.

At a brief ceremony held on January 29, 2011, Brother Horricks was presented with a plaque in recognition of the 28 years of uninterrupted service as treasurer. A letter of congratulations from Brother Ulysses Guarin, Ontario Conference treasurer, was read and the grateful feelings of the congregation were expressed, highlighting the precision and promptness with which Brother Horricks did his work.

In his humble way, Brother Horricks’ response echoed the words of Paul, “I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service” (1 Timothy 1:12).

Although Brother Horricks’ length and quality of service are outstanding, we praise God also for the thousands of dedicated Christians throughout the Ontario Conference who serve Christ and their local churches to the best of their abilities.

Pastor Antonio Bueno

Who Else Needs a Writer to Hire?

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Pastor Chet Damron’s Sabbath sermon, “The Return of Shonkwaya’tisyon”, struck a chord with his hearers at Six Nations’ Native Spiritual Gathering held on August 21, 2010 at the Six Nations Polytechnic in Ohsweken as he spoke of the return of the ‘Creator of the world’, Shonkwaya’tisyon. He was speaking of the return of Jesus Christ.

Perth Avenue’s members are overly excited! After a four-year search for a new place of worship, they will be moving to a new location at 220 Bethridge Road, near Rexdale Blvd. and Highway 27 in Etobicoke.

Perth Avenue’s senior pastor, Dr. Nerval Myrie, explained that the new location has much to offer the congregation.

“Our members are excited about the potential for growth and development,” he said. “Its 200-slot car parking immediately solves the car parking problem we face every Sabbath at our present location, and our youth are looking forward to having a gymnasium.”

He also explained that the new building, a former car showroom, will provide easy access for wheelchairs and for those who have difficulty climbing stairs. There are also areas for a possible day care centre and a banquet hall.

“I’m sure that other churches may also benefit from this building,” said Myrie. “We’ll be happy to host their events.”

The new building was purchased on August 10, 2010, and they held their first prayer meeting there the next day, August 11.

Since then, church members have been working hard to transform the building into a place of worship. Presently, prayer meetings and board meetings are held there but as work progresses, the church is able to use it for other activities. The first such activity was a well-attended Valentine’s brunch held on Sunday, February 13, 2011, and organised by the seniors group, Golden Voices, as a fundraiser for the church building.

The transition from Perth Avenue to 220 Bethridge is just a few months away, and the members are longing to have their first Sabbath celebration there. The church will change its name from Perth Avenue Seventh-day Adventist Church to Toronto Perth Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Information supplied by Pastor Herb Sormin

Damon, a retired veteran missionary to Thailand, Indonesia, and Singapore, and former chaplain at Andrews University, was among the guest speakers for what has become a very significant evangelistic outreach in the Six Nations community. The spiritual gathering was a full day of worship, fellowship, learning and a time when visitors shared in the life of Six Nations Church. The other guest speaker was Pastor Ed Dunn, Native Ministries coordinator of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada.

The spiritual gathering was the beginning of a very busy period of evangelistic activities that lasted until the end of the year. It was followed by a vegetarian cooking school held at Six Nations Community Sports Den on two consecutive Tuesdays and Thursdays during the last two weeks in October.

The vegetarian cooking school, facilitated by Su Sormin, Elinor Kotanko and Sislyn Brownlee, attracted nightly attendance of 15-20 people and was so successful that the participants requested that it continue in early 2011. The church decided to run a ‘Tasty Thursday’ monthly to see the demand. On the first night, on February 24, 2011, sixteen people attended.

During November 10-20, 2010, Pastor Ed Dunn returned to Six Nations Church and held a series of health-based meetings, “Health for Today and Hope for Tomorrow”. The nightly attendance of 10-12 people was very encouraging. However, as soon as Pastor Dunn transitioned from physical, emotional and mental health to spiritual health, the attendance dropped. The members are not discouraged. The year 2010 brought a close to the calendar year but it has not dented the desire of the members of Six Nations Church to win people for Christ.

Information supplied by Pastor Herb Sormin

Sunday, February 13, 2011, and organised by the seniors group, Golden Voices, as a fundraiser for the church building.

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Traysee Gelliseau
Sex Before Marriage: Are You in Control?

Teen Pregnancy Prevention and Intervention Seminar at Ottawa French Church

“Nearly half of all young adults in the Adventist Church are ignoring the principle of ‘no sex before marriage’”, said Judy Hutchinson-Boye in her sermon to a packed congregation at Ottawa French Seventh-day Adventist Church on Sabbath, November 14, 2010. She was quoting the most recent Valuegenesis survey (a research study into the faith and values of young people attending Seventh-day Adventist high schools in North America) to highlight the need to educate teens of both genders in regards to sexual abstinence prior to marriage.

Hutchinson-Boye’s sermon was part of a teen pregnancy prevention and intervention seminar at Ottawa French Church at which over 60 teens and young adults attended over the weekend.

In addition to the sermon, four seminars were presented ranging from topics such as Dealing with Sexual Urges to Sexual Myths and Sexually Transmitted Infections. The theme for the weekend was “Are You in Control?”

During the sermon, Hutchinson-Boye, lay co-ordinator of Teen Pregnancy Prevention/Intervention (TPPI) Ministry of the Ontario Conference family ministries department, advised the congregation that “addressing the issue of teen sexuality at an early age is very important because of the results of the Valuegenesis survey”. She also told them that early discussion can help in delaying or preventing premarital sex, as revealed by statistics showing the positive influence of faith-based groups when they facilitate open discussion and deal with sexual issues.

One of the seminars, “My Life Is a Testimony”, was presented by Khalilah Bruzual of Kanisa Fellowship in Toronto. She discussed her personal experience and hardships and how she continues to overcome through a close personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

The young people of Ottawa French Church were very receptive to the seminars and eagerly asked questions, wanting to learn more about the topics presented.

Scarborough’s Percella Harrison Celebrates 100th Birthday

Percella Harrison celebrated her 100th birthday on February 20, 2011, surrounded by loving relatives and friends. Many came from great distances including, England, Jamaica and the United States, for this memorable occasion. Also in attendance was Dr. Mansfield Edwards, president of the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Many kind words were spoken of her. She was especially honoured for her kindness and honesty. She was fondly recognized as being a strict disciplinarian.

Sister Harrison was born on February 23, 1911 in Clarendon, Jamaica. Part of a large family, with 14 brothers and sisters, she is the mother of 4 children, grandmother to 20, great grandmother, and great-great grandmother.

“It’s a cause to celebrate, and she is stronger than I am,” said her daughter. Her family doctor also says that she is very healthy. She attends church and prayer meeting every week and credits her longevity to her faith and trust in God.

Thunder Bay ADRA Concert

Saturday, December 11, 2010, was the second annual ADRA fundraising evening filled with the Christmas spirit as the community of Thunder Bay gathered at a local community centre. Everyone shared in the singing of Christmas carols and enjoyed a variety of talent from all ages. Robert Silvester and Bob Sweeney hosted the fundraising event and raised approximately $230.26. A great evening was enjoyed by everyone.
When you hear the name ‘Rexdale Outreach Choir (R.O.C.)’, what comes to mind? It probably isn’t Roy Thompson Hall. For many of us R.O.C. members, that would have also been the last thing to cross our minds—until January 17th, 2011. That was when Ashley Ingram, Grammy award-winning songwriter and founder of the Ashley Ingram School of Language, invited R.O.C. to perform at one of Toronto’s premier concert venues, the 2,800-seat Roy Thompson Hall.

What an experience it was! On that day God proved, using our choir, what is possible with motivation, hard work and faith. Who would have thought that little R.O.C. born out of a tragedy when 18-year old Amon Beckles was shot dead on the steps of the Toronto West Seventh-day Adventist Church in 2007, would be performing at Roy Thompson Hall!

What an experience it was! On that day God proved, using our choir, what is possible with motivation, hard work and faith. Who would have thought that little R.O.C. born out of a tragedy when 18-year old Amon Beckles was shot dead on the steps of the Toronto West Seventh-day Adventist Church in 2007, would be performing at Roy Thompson Hall!

We were first introduced to Mr. Ingram in late 2010 and even then, God was working on something for R.O.C. much bigger than what we could think of or imagine. After attending only one of our rehearsals, Mr. Ingram was so captivated by R.O.C. that he wanted to “highlight” the choir in a show dedicated to the memory of Martin Luther King. That is what he did, and we were so blessed to let Christ’s light “shine” through us.

We are truly blessed and highly favoured by a mighty God to have been honoured with such an opportunity. Overall, it was an amazing learning and growing experience for all of us. Throughout the day, we experienced highs and lows. We felt so proud, yet humble because we know our origin—birthed out of tragic circumstances—yet, we have come so far. Only a God as great as ours could make such great things possible! And this is only the beginning. Continue to pray for and support Rexdale Outreach Choir as we reach for new heights for His glory.

Cassy Woodley (R.O.C. graduate and board member)

Rexdale Outreach Choir
Performs at Toronto’s Roy Thompson Hall

The new church buildings for Ruth and Scarborough congregations are gradually rising from the ground and taking shape.

**Ruth’s church building** at 10755 Torbram Road now has windows and a roof and is set to be occupied by an eager congregation in June of this year.

The two-acre property was purchased in 2005 and ground was broken four years later on November 1, 2009. Presently, the 387-member congregation worships at Hearth Lake Presbyterian Church on Ruth Avenue, Brampton.

The members of **Scarborough Seventh-day Adventist Church** are equally excited to see their church building being erected. The 2.3-acre site at 4346-4354 Lawrence Ave. East, in Scarborough was purchased in 2004 and ground was broken on a rainy Sunday afternoon on August 8, 2010.

Local elder, Robert English, described the ground-breaking ceremony as “joyous” because it signalled the beginning of the fulfilment of their dream to have a new facility. The present property at 235 Poplar Road has not been able to meet the needs of the 563-member congregation for many years.

English was keen to recognise the help of the Ontario Conference and others for the financial support given to the building project and added, “We continue to look to their support for the completion of the building and to the occasion when they and the civic dignitaries will join us, not to another ground-breaking but to the opening of our new church building in September of this year.”

Ruth’s building under construction

Scarborough’s future church building
North American Division Church President Visits Harmony Church/Italian Company

Ontario since he was elected president of the North American Division (NAD) at the 59th General Conference Session in Atlanta, July 2010. Previously, he served as president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada and was very familiar with the vagaries of a Canadian winter. However, he did not anticipate the presence of ice below puddles of water and slipped in the parking lot of the rented church. He was unhurt.

“I took a tumble in the parking lot”, a smiling Jackson told the congregation, “but I still managed to hold on to my umbrella.”

As president of the North American church, Jackson has the opportunity to see the work of the church across the entire continent and is able to quickly put it all in proper perspective. He used his sermon to emphasize the need for God’s people to seek revival in their lives.

“There is a need to recapture a sense of urgency”, he said, “because we are living in the final days of our history.”

He spoke of the value of genuine worship as part of revival, saying that “it implies a connection to God and a submission to Him”.

He strongly encouraged the congregation to enter into a life of self-denial, unreserved service to God and faithful, trusting submission to Him.

“Your safety is in God,” he said. Jackson’s message harmonised with the inspiring worship, led by Lavelle Lindo, and the receptive congregation, some of whom had travelled from as far as Owen Sound to listen to the North American Division president, was greatly encouraged.

Harmony Church and the Italian Company worship as one congregation, led by Pastor Frank Dell’Erba, at Wellspring Worship Centre, 89 Centre Avenue, North York. It is a welcoming multi-cultural church that seeks to grow God’s kingdom through its members.

Visit Harmony online at www.harmonysdachurch.org

“Senior Moments,” Not Alzheimers, Barrie’s Seniors Learn

Barrie’s seniors breathed a sigh of relief when they recently learned that momentary memory loss or what is commonly called “a senior moment” is not a precursor to Alzheimer’s disease. The seniors were attending the first meeting of the brand new ministry for seniors at Barrie Seventh-day Adventist Church on January 24, 2011, during which Laura Lyn Baurassa of the Alzheimer Society of Greater Simcoe County was present.

After a hearty lunch, the group settled down to a most interesting and informative presentation by their guest speaker, Laura Lyn Baurassa.

Using both technical help and spontaneous interaction with the group, Laura outlined valuable information, such as the cause of Alzheimer’s, the fact that it is incurable, strikes the aging, and that it affects mostly women.

The group also learned that this disease of the mind can be slowed or prevented through diet and lifestyle and that though mostly seniors are affected, it is not always the case. The youngest known patient was a thirty-nine year-old male.

As seniors learned of the ravage caused by Alzheimer’s they were relieved to learn that those memory loss moments experienced by many seniors did not signal the onset of the disease. They were also encouraged by the useful information regarding how it may be both slowed and possibly prevented.

Barrie’s seniors are truly appreciative of Frank Mojzes, Marion Charlton, and the executive members of their brand new seniors’ ministry for their work in making a much-needed ministry a reality in their church.

Michelle Wilson, Communications.
As a young man growing up within the Seventh-day Adventist Church, I found myself constantly living and fighting on the battlefield of faith, struggling for spiritual survival. Living out my faith in Christ and surrendering to Him daily was pitted against the hostile attitude toward the message of Christ and my own selfish desires to enjoy the so-called delights that the world had to offer.

During my senior year of high school, I read the biography of Eric Liddell, the “man who would not run for His king”. I was so impressed with the conviction and the commitment of this devout Christian man who, because of his faithfulness, became a legend in his time and a hero for future generations.

I would like to invite every man, especially young men to read the story that became the inspiration for the 1981 Academy Award winner for best film, “Chariots of Fire”. The film finished with him as an Olympic champion. However, the story of Eric Liddell only gets better after the movie’s conclusion. This humble Olympian traded in his track cleats for mission service to the peoples of northern China. Liddell would eventually pass away while still serving as a missionary until his very last day of life. He would give his all for the sake of the gospel to experience the hope that Christ shares in Mark 8:35 “Whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel’s, shall save it”.

We all have battles to fight and races to run. I want to be able to sing with my brothers in Christ that old Adventist youth favourite, “I’ll be True, Precious Jesus”. The lines, “there’s a race to be run; there’s a victory to be won, every hour by your power, I’ll be true” hit a nerve within me every time I sing them, they demand my very best for Jesus.

The mission of the Men’s Ministry department of the Ontario Conference is to motivate men to love and to use their energy and resources for God, family, church, and our community. These core values should become the sole reasons for the existence of Men’s Ministries in every church, company and group. If your church does not have a ministry for men, I strongly encourage you to begin one. We need more men like Liddell among us. Are you willing to be such a man?

I would like to challenge and inspire my brothers in Christ to run the race and fight the battle that is set before us, seeking one day to hear those joyous words from our soon coming King, “Well done good and faithful servants”.

Glenn DeSilva
Associate Director
Men’s Ministries & Camp Frenda

“Chariots of Fire”
Liddell, a Model for Men’s Ministry

Pastor George Ivkov is moving and would like to make his valuable “pastoral” books available to you for a good price. Some of the books are:

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Cornerstone Adventist Elementary School. What a pleasant surprise it was for the principal, Mrs. Sogusa Joseph, as she was informed that the little school had emerged winner of the Bon Soo contest in Sault Ste. Marie. Several schools competed to decorate their classrooms using the theme chosen by the Bon Soo committee: “Snowflakes and Hearts”. Guided by the art teacher, the students put forward their best effort and decorated the room.

The second part of the contest was for students to prepare a paper to present to the judges as they visited the school. Each student who presented used a different subject to show the relevance of the theme to their chosen subject: Social Studies, Science, Literature and Art. After the judges deliberated, they declared that our school won the contest. They presented a plaque and a cheque for $100 to Cornerstone School for their excellent representation of the theme. The students were complimented for their thoroughness and their level of articulation during their presentations.

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“The Lord would have His followers dispense their means while they can do it themselves,” counselled Ellen White, nearly 150 years ago. “In the matter of wills,” she said, “it is our responsibility to exercise our own intellect and ‘secure to the Lord His own.’”

Every year some members choose to include the Ontario Conference in their wills. Other donations allowed for the further spread of God’s work in the following areas:

To learn how you can protect your family and further the ministry of the Ontario Conference and your local church, Contact the Ontario Conference Planned Giving and Trust Services today
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Quick Start Guides are a series of booklets designed to help local church leaders start or revitalize a ministry. Each Quick Start Guide contains a job description, instructions for getting started, tips for maintaining a successful ministry, troubleshooting suggestions, recommended resources, and more. Whether you’re new to ministry or a seasoned volunteer, Quick Start Guides will inspire you with ideas you can immediately put to use in your local church.

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