All In! - Every Member, a Minister

Inside: Camp Meeting 2011
Adventist Choreography

She failed utterly. She had given her best, but I was a hopeless case. At first, she was beaming with confidence, but she hadn’t counted on my two left feet. I had warned her, but she supposed that I was being modest. So, my dancing lessons came to an abrupt halt forever. I decided not to subject another teacher to the impossibility of my leaden feet.

Growing up in a traditional Adventist home, dancing was alien to me. Neither did I have any inclination to attempt it. I was more comfortable playing sports. However, as I reached my late teens, I allowed peer pressure to nudge me into the company of friends who enjoyed dancing and were very good at it. My abject failure at learning to coordinate my limbs and body with the music ensured that this foray into unknown territory was very brief.

Many years later, I’ve grown to appreciate and enjoy seeing skilled dancers set the stage alight with their faultless and well-coordinated contortions. The popularity of the television show, Dancing with the Stars, suggests that my appreciation is not isolated. It’s hard to view it and not wish that we had the ability to do equally well. It seems so easy, after all. It’s only when I look at all the hard work involved in the choreography of learning the steps and movements that my enthusiasm rapidly evaporates.

While dancing is not readily embraced by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the organisation has its own choreography. Adventist choreography is not something recent, neither is it the creation of a choreographer at one of the church’s colleges or universities. It’s the product of years of distilling its theology, lifestyle, way of worship, attitude, etc.

Having a choreography isn’t unique to Adventists. All religious organisations have their own choreography, their own way of doing things, their own expectations. Some have formalised them as creeds, while others simply rehearse their choreography until everyone understands all the steps and can automatically perform the dance perfectly.

There is no doubt that an Adventist choreography is valuable to our church. It’s one of the means of helping us maintain our identity. Wherever we go, we can recognise other Adventists, and we are able to immediately form a kinship with people who are total strangers. We share the same choreography, the same dance steps, regardless of location or even language.

As useful as the Adventist choreography is, we sometimes allow it to be an obstacle to those we seek to evangelise. In some cases, we teach the choreography as if it embodies the Great Commission given by Christ in Matthew 28. It’s fairly easy to make the mistake because, too often, we equate the choreography with knowing Jesus as our personal Saviour. We confuse our dance steps, that is our Adventist lifestyle, teachings and practices, with experiencing a life-changing confrontation with Jesus Himself. We forget that an Adventist choreography should result from our experience with God’s saving grace and not from an intellectual acquiescence to the requirements of a religion.

It’s not too difficult to live an Adventist lifestyle, including dietary regulations, Sabbath observance, church attendance and financial commitment without the presence of the Holy Spirit reigning in the heart. This is clearly evident when we consider some of the interpersonal problems experienced among church members. The question as to what role conversion has played in the life of our church is a very pertinent one.

It seems that we are so framed by an Adventist choreography that sometimes we have difficulty distinguishing between new converts and mature members. Once a new convert is baptised, he or she is somehow expected to know and begin the steps of the Adventist choreography. Those from Adventist homes usually have it down pat, having learned the steps from childhood, but for those from unchurched backgrounds, our choreography can be overwhelming. They do not know the steps. They are often trying to break life-long habits, and in some cases, addictions. Should we be surprised or indignant when a recent convert is still smoking?

This does not mean that we should not expect change in the life of God’s people. God expects change. Jesus told Nicodemus that a new birth is needed for everyone who wants to see the kingdom of God (John 3:3). However, He was speaking of conversion, and conversion is nothing less than the turn that leaves the believer completely facing Jesus. Jesus becomes the focus, the centre and the point of reference for everything in the believer’s life.

As important as an Adventist choreography is, it’s of little value unless it reflects the life that has received God’s grace and rejoices in the marvellous gift of salvation.

Halsey Peat
Editor
Camp Meeting 2011 to Issue the Rallying Call: “All In!”

A young lawyer came to Jesus, spurred on, in part, by his Pharisee cohorts and by a desire to know the truth. He came asking an important question. He came to the right person to get the answer, as no one could ever be more qualified to answer that question than Jesus. Notice their exchange in Matthew 12:28-34.

One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?”

“The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”

“Well said, teacher,” the man replied. “You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbour as yourself: There is no commandment greater than these.”

When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.”

This young lawyer seeks to stump Jesus. His question is a trick of sorts. For how can one determine which of God’s laws is more important than the others? But Jesus surprises and impresses the young man with His answer. It is simple. It is profound. It is to the point. There is no mistaking God’s priority in Jesus’ response. He says that a person who wishes to honour God must be one hundred percent committed to God: loving Him with all of his/her heart and with all of his/her soul and with all of his/her mind and with all of his/her strength, and loving his/her neighbour as he/she love him/herself. Put simply, we must be ALL IN!

“All In” is a phrase that has been effectively employed by the coaches of athletic teams, seeking to encourage all of the members of the team to commit all of themselves to the team goal. The idea is that all the effort of every person on the team is needed.

The Ontario Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is a big team, covering a large geographic territory and consisting of a diverse membership. As such, it would be easy for members and leaders to take a multitude of paths, or inadvertently fall into practicing apathetic religious routines.

The Danish theologian, Soren Kierkegaard, told a parable of a community of ducks waddling off to duck church to hear the duck preacher. The duck preacher spoke eloquently of how God had given the ducks wings with which to fly. With these wings, there was nowhere the ducks could not go; there was no God-given task the ducks could not accomplish. With those wings, they could soar into the presence of God. Shouts of “amen!” were quacked throughout the duck congregation. At the conclusion of the service, the ducks left, commenting on what a wonderful message they had heard…and waddled back home.

This is neither an appropriate nor a sufficient response to an Almighty God! In Christ’s reply to the young lawyer, we find that God is looking for men, women and young people who will love and live passionately, serving Him and those He places in our lives. God’s call for His people is to spread our wings and soar! His call for the church is to be a witness for Him to the entire world. This can only be accomplished as we are ALL IN— all serving, all involved, all committed, all worshipping, and all looking forward to the coming of Jesus Christ.

Ellen White, in Acts of the Apostles, page 330, wrote:

God could have proclaimed His truth through sinless angels, but this is not His plan. He chooses human beings, men compassed with infirmity, as instruments in the working out of His designs. The priceless treasure is placed in your hands. Use it!”
earthen vessels. Through men His blessings are to be conveyed to the world. Through them His glory is to shine forth into the darkness of sin. In loving ministry they are to meet the sinful and the needy, and lead them to the cross. And in all their work they are to ascribe glory, honour, and praise to Him who is above all and over all.

On Sabbath, July 9, 2011, Seventh-day Adventist members from across Ontario will gather at the Toronto International Centre for camp meeting. It will be a day of corporate worship of God together. It will be a day to celebrate the wonderful things God has done in the past year. It will be a day of sweet fellowship with fellow believers. It will be a day of inspiring and challenging messages from God’s Word presented by Dr. Rex Edwards, Pastor Ryan Simpson and Pastor Ann Roda. But most of all, it will be a day in which all receive the clarion call of God to be...ALL IN.

The King James Version Celebrates 400 Years

On May 2, 2011, the King James Version (KJV) Bible celebrated its 400th anniversary. First published on May 2, 1611, the ‘Authorised Version’, as it is known in Britain, has sold more copies than any bible in history and is the most widely read version.

For many people, the KJV is ‘the’ Bible. From childhood, it was the one they heard read in their homes and in their churches. Their memorization of Scripture was from the KJV. As the British Empire reached across the globe its language was often carried and established with the help of the KJV as missionaries took the Bible to the people of the empire.

Presently, the KJV is read in the United States more than in any other English-speaking country. LifeWay Research, a research group with the Southern Baptist Convention, in a 2011 poll to commemorate the 400th anniversary, found that 62 percent of Americans adults own a copy of the KJV. However, it is still very popular in just about every other English-speaking country and is valued by many Christians as the standard by which other translations are measured. It is not unusual to find some devotees of the KJV find fault with some modern English translations because of their omission of some texts that are included in the KJV.

The story of the King James Version is in part the story of the Reformation and the opportunity for the common man to read the Word of God for himself in his own vernacular. Prior to the Reformation, the only translation allowed by the Roman Catholic Church was the Latin Vulgate and its use was restricted to the clergy. Attempts to translate the Bible into the language of the people was often met with imprisonment and sometimes death. Reformers such as John Wycliffe, John Hus, Thomas Linacre, John Colet and the great scholar Erasmus, all played significant roles in their attempts to put the Bible in the hands of people in their own language. However, it was William Tyndale who first printed the New Testament in English (1525-1526). At first, Tyndale’s English New Testament provoked the wrath of the church and the king (Henry VIII), but the more it was opposed the greater people desired to read it.

Tyndales New Testament was followed by other English Bibles. However, it was Henry VIII’s separation from Rome over his desire to divorce and re-marry that gave new impetus to the widespread printing of the Bible in English. Matthew’s Bible (1537), the Great Bible (1537) and the Geneva Bible (1560) and the Bishops Bible (1568) slowly became accessible to the common person. Each of these proved popular to various segments of society, usually according to the influence of the reigning monarch, and was a source of division within the Church of England.

When King James I ascended the throne of England he convened the Hampton Court Conference in 1604 in order to deal with the divergent views of rival parties in the Church of England. It was here that it was suggested that there should be a new translation of the Bible. King James was very much in favour and gave his royal authority for the translation to be carried out. It turned out to be not so much a new translation but a revision of the 1602 edition of the Bishops Bible. However, all the earlier editions of the English translations were consulted, especially that of William Tyndale.

In 1607, the Authorized Version became the work of forty-seven learned men, divided into six groups at various places in England, working for three years and nine months. The final product was published on May 2, 1611, providing the English-speaking world with the same English bible as a common heritage. It was soon recognized as a literary masterpiece and by sheer merit it began to displace the other popular English Bibles and made its way...
into the hearts and minds of generations of English-speaking people.

Four hundred years later, the King James ‘Authorized’ Version is still showing millions the way into God's kingdom.

**KJV Facts**

The KJV was written in the everyday language of the people in 1611. Words such as, ‘thine’ and ‘thee’ are equivalent to the modern day common use of ‘yours’ and ‘you’. They are not a more reverent way of addressing God.

The original KJV, as did all its English predecessors, included the Apocrypha as part of the 80 book canon. King James threatened heavy fines and a year’s imprisonment if the Apocrypha was excluded. Even after his death, it remained as part of the KJV for over 200 years.

Early editions of the KJV were often carelessly printed. One edition was called the ‘Wicked Bible’ because it omitted the word ‘not’ in the command ‘Thou shalt not commit adultery’.

In the 1700s some amendments were made to correct some translation errors but it wasn’t until 1885 that a full revision, known as the Revised Version, was made.

In 1982, the New King James Version (NKJV) was published as a “Modern English Version Maintaining the Original Style of the King James”.

**Celebrations**

Own a copy of the 400 year anniversary edition. It is the most authentic version of the original 1611 Bible. It uses the same Roman font, includes some of the early page ornamentation and decorative letters, illustrations and the Apocrypha. It is available from the Adventist Book Centre.

Each church may choose to set aside a KJV Sabbath or weekend, when members are encouraged to take their KJV Bibles to church for reading aloud.

Halsey Peat

References and Notes

Endnotes

a. www.lifeway.com/article/170739/

b. The term Apocrypha refers to about 15 books that the Protestant Church of the 1800’s saw as not divinely inspired and having very questionable value to the church. They may be categorized as historical (1 and 2 Maccabees), religious novel (Tobit), Legend (Bel and the Dragon) and prophetic (Baruch). Even in the Roman Catholic Bible, they were not canonized until the Council of Trent in 1546.

Ontario Conference President Speaks at 46th National Prayer Breakfast

Dr. Mansfield Edwards, Ontario Conference president, was one of the keynote speakers for the National Prayer Breakfast, held May 18-19, 2011 at the Westin Hotel in Ottawa.


The National Prayer Breakfast is a yearly event held under the combined authority of the Speakers of the Senate and the House of Commons and organized by a group of dedicated volunteers. Traditionally men and women from differing backgrounds gather together with elected public officials to pray in the spirit of Jesus Christ for Canada.

Dr. Edwards is the first known Seventh-day Adventist to give a presentation at the National Prayer Breakfast.

Pastor Lyle Notice, assistant pastor at Ottawa Seventh-day Adventist Church, was part of the organizing committee for 2011.
‘For Better or for Worse’

Doesn’t Have to Be ‘for Worse’

I’m watching the “marriage of the century” of Kate and Wills as I think about my work as a counsellor in which I’ve met many couples for a variety of reasons. I’ve seen some for premarital counselling and others when their marriages have gone off the boil, and the couple is looking for a way to recover the fires of their love. I’ve seen yet others where one or both of the partners is on the verge of leaving their marriage, and counselling is their last-ditch attempt to save their union or even sometimes to announce once and for all that they’re finished with the relationship.

Here’s what I have noticed in my experience: When a couple start out, it is very rare for them to see anything but the positive side of his or her partner. Not that expectations should be anything but positive, but sometimes they border on pure fantasy. For example, “My partner’s bad habits will disappear after we’ve been

With nearly one in two marriages failing, how can couples avoid becoming part of the statistics of failure? Hymers Wilson, marriage and family counsellor, introduces a new series on marriage and family relationships that could very well save your marriage or help you decide whether or not to continue with your relationship.
married for a while", or “having children will help fix our problems”. I can’t begin to tell you the number of couples I’ve met where even though one partner saw that the other had a serious problem, he or she dismissed it thinking that in time, it would disappear. Sometimes they believed that simply expressing disapproval would influence the other to stop doing the offending thing, but they found, to their dismay, that the opposite happened instead. Hardly any new couples appear to notice serious defects.

I say “serious defects” because no one is perfect, although I did encounter a church member who, with a straight face and blithely unaware of how she impacted others, tried to give me the impression that she belonged to the group of those who hadn’t wronged anybody or committed any other sins. No one is perfect; so please don’t dismiss your partner because he or she makes mistakes like the rest of us mortals. I’m talking, on the other hand, about “serious flaws” which can derail a relationship later on.

For this reason, it is imperative to be observant from day one and not be so desperate for a relationship that you turn a blind eye to red flags, be it the other person’s need for total control, addiction to one substance or another, or his or her dislike and disrespect of your family. Some men or women are unhappy if their partner expresses his or her individuality by going out alone or with friends. They feel threatened or jealous of anyone intruding on the time they want to spend with their partner. They are even jealous of the time their partner wants to spend with members of his or her own extended family. If this is happening at the dating stage, it is a red flag. Seek counselling, discuss it and find out what is appropriate in a relationship, be it a dating relationship or a marriage. If your partner is hooked on alcohol, drugs, pornography, work or the Internet while you are in the dating stage, and you are seeing now how it distracts your partner from investing appropriate time with you, this is a red flag. Again, seek help through counselling.

So, when you’re choosing your life partner, have your eyes wide open to serious flaws. While you’re dating, don’t ignore red flags. If your partner expresses displeasure when you choose to go somewhere without him or her, and when you choose to express your individuality, don’t be afraid to think about it and talk about it. You may want to ask yourself: “Am I working harder than my partner to make our relationship work? Am I investing more than my partner in making connection with his or her family? Am I putting more energy into my personal hygiene and my presentation in terms of what I wear and how I speak? Am I showing more respect for my partner than my partner is showing toward me?”

You will need to be fearless about exploring your need to follow your dreams. You need to assert your need, without trepidation, to maintain your family connections. See what reaction you get. This is precisely the time to be fearless about gently confronting issues. Some hesitate to do so because they’re afraid of upsetting their partner. So be it. At least you’ll know how your partner handles gentle confrontation, and if he or she can’t handle it and responds negatively, then you may need to run with confidence from that relationship.

A marriage relationship that develops normally will, by definition, undergo some serious stresses. Running and maintaining a home is an economic activity which takes a tremendous amount of dedication, patience and mental and physical energy. Coming up with the rent or mortgage on a monthly basis means also having some form of income. Whether you are receiving a pension or government assistance or working for the money it takes to run a home, the fact is a couple needs to apply all its organizational skills and communication skills to do so successfully. Running a home is the closest all of us will come to running a small business. If you’re not communicating well with your partner, if you can’t trust each other with money, because one or other has a serious addiction which bleeds the money, or if you have a partner that’s lazy and shirks hard work, it can put a severe strain on the relationship which is already stretched by the normal stresses of running the home.

Two cannot “walk together unless they are agreed”, and if your partner doesn’t like to spend time with your side of the family, again there’s another stressor which adds to the strain of running that small business called your home.

A relationship can survive the character flaws we all have through love and mutual respect. A marriage can last even though tested by the stresses of running a home if a couple have patience; if each person doesn’t keep score of wrongs but constantly affirm each other.

In the next issue we will look at these ingredients and others that can help a marriage stand the test of the wear and tear of time.

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In further issues, look out for the vital ingredients that maintain a long term relationship, children and transitions, dangers to watch out for, and religion and spirituality.
Before his wedding ceremony began on Friday, April 29, Prince William is reported as telling his bride, Catherine: “You look absolutely beautiful”. The observation was made by professional lip readers for media sources.

Another lip reader, Tina Lannin, reported that William later cracked a joke to his father-in-law at the altar, saying: “We’re supposed to have just a small family affair”.

A ‘small family affair’ is perhaps an understatement when the wedding cost $70,000,000.

The cost of Kate’s dress alone was $400,000. The two cakes, with a tab of $80,000, must have been particularly rich and delicious.

These figures make the $25,000 average cost of a wedding in Ontario seem like the deal of the century. However, for the average bride and groom who do not have millions at their disposal and who are struggling to come up with even half the amount, $25,000 can seem like $70,000,000.

With the 2011 wedding season underway, some of the happy smiles on the wedding day have been replaced by furrowed brows of worry over the debt of the wedding. It’s not unusual to hear of couples starting their married life with both student loan and wedding debt. With financial pressures, a major contributor to marital problems and breakup, it makes sense that couples would want to minimise wedding costs.

Do weddings have to cost so much? The simple answer is no. However, there’s a myth that in order to have a beautiful wedding, it must be expensive. Expensive does not necessarily mean beautiful and a better start to the marriage. Neither does a low budget wedding mean a less-than-beautiful and a poorer start to the marriage.

The wedding day is not the marriage. The faithful steward is keenly aware of how he or she handles the financial resources God has placed in his or her hands. So, how can cost be managed or minimized?

Plan well ahead. The shorter the time, the greater the pressure and, consequently, the cost. Some couples will do just that and then move into the basement of one of their parents because they cannot afford an apartment or a down payment for a house. Some couples find themselves trying to recover some money by resorting to the tacky practice of asking for ‘monetary gifts’!

Weddings tend to be expensive because it’s a multi-million dollar industry that promotes the idea of ‘princess for a day’; and society has succumbed to the concept. The images of Kate Middleton walking up the aisle of the majestic Westminster Abbey to meet her handsome prince is typical of what the wedding industry and Hollywood present as the ideal to which every bride and groom should aspire. It’s an almost overwhelming pressure that many couples have difficulty resisting, and it can cause serious conflict prior to the marriage.

The faithful steward is keenly aware of how he or she handles the financial resources God has placed in his or her hands. So, how can cost be managed or minimized?

Establish a realistic wedding budget and plan the wedding according to the budget. Resist the pressure of family members or friends who urge you to include items beyond your budget, unless they give you the money to do so.

Look at wedding customs of other cultures and see
if any could apply to your wedding. In some Latin countries, a family member or close friend is sometimes asked to be the Padrino (godfather) or Madrina (godmother) of the wedding. It is a position of great honour, and if they agree, they are honoured at the wedding. However, they are required to provide all the drinks and the cake.

Some couples kindly request a friend or two with nice cars to chauffeur the bride and bridesmaids instead of having to hire a limousine. Some kind church members will sometimes offer their cars for this kind of service as a gift to the couple.

Less is often better than more. Keeping things simple is a sure way of avoiding gaudiness, and it is less expensive.

There are some brides who refuse to spend large sums of money on a dress that will be worn only once. Instead they choose to rent one or buy a beautiful gown or dress that may be worn on other occasions.

Receptions do not have to be a formal banquet. Instead, the reception meal consists of finger foods served buffet style.

I remember officiating at two house weddings, where a small marquee for about 40 people was set up in the back garden. Both the ceremony and reception were held there.

Occasionally, a couple will choose to be married immediately after the midday service on Sabbath and have a lunch afterwards. Recently, a couple at one of the GTA congregations said both their baptismal and wedding vows during the same ceremony. While this may not be the choice of most couples, it demonstrates that there are creative ways of getting married and having a meaningful and beautiful ceremony without breaking the bank or going into debt.

With the ever-increasing commercialisation of weddings, it is important that couples, especially Christian couples, be aware of themselves as God’s stewards, keep everything in perspective and not succumb to the pressures of the wedding industry. A beautiful and memorable wedding may be experienced at almost any price range. So, enjoy your day but remember that the biggest investment of effort, energy and finance should be placed in the marriage.

Halsey Peat

“My Church”, Through the Eyes of...

We introduce a new series where members talk about their church in Ontario. This issue presents two views of ‘through the eyes of’. The first is by an early teen and the second is by a new convert.

.... A Teen

I walked into church one Sabbath and noticed that the pews were missing. They had been replaced by chairs. I thought it was pretty sweet. Not only that, but the church was starting a new series and afterwards we would be helping in the community and just helping people in any way we could. A lot of people were grumbling about it, but I was excited.

Yeah, I, as a teenager, feel pretty stoked about that. When I look at the church, I see a group of people that come to be entertained by the music and pastor’s sermon. Why does it have to be the same thing over and over? I almost feel sick of sitting and listening about preparing the world for Jesus’ Second Coming. If I could be in charge of what the church would do, it would not be sitting in a building doing nothing but listening. I do not like just sitting. I’d get everyone outside, walk downtown and see if anyone needs anything. Maybe people would need help repainting their house or putting in a new plumbing system. I’d get a group of people and do it.

I’d rather do than sit. I’m actually very thankful that my church is in the “shadier” part of town. We have a neighbourhood centre that gives me a chance to work to help others. I don’t get paid- and you know, I couldn’t care less. I just like to do that kind of thing. There, I can participate in handing out food boxes and feeding the clientele an extra meal or two. Also, I get to know them by name. It makes it more fun to be able to laugh with them.

I want Jesus to come back just as much as all my other fellow Christians do. I want to go to heaven, and I want everyone else to go with me. That’s why I want to do and not sit and listen. I mean, how many times was Jesus at church, in the synagogue? Seriously, Jesus was out doing. He was helping others, healing them and just hanging out with them. The Bible tells us to be like Jesus. So I’m gonna go out and do. I want us to get outside, feel the fresh air, listen to the people, care for them, and treat them just like Jesus did. I’m gonna do it the way Jesus did.

And I’m stoked about it.

Halsey Peat

...A New Convert

I first attended an Adventist church back in August 2009 while visiting with friends in Long Island, New York. I had heard of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but I did know about the church. Outside the Old Westbury Seventh-day Adventist Church, I was met with a warm greeting of “happy Sabbath, sister. How was your week?” I thought that this was likely another way of saying hello. However, by the sixth or seventh “happy Sabbath”, I realized that this was not just a nicey-clearly this phrase meant something very special.

After the service, I felt I had been a part of something very special, and I was left with a yearning to read and learn more about the Bible, a book that I always carried with me but with which I was clearly so unfamiliar. As I walked back to the car, I
wondered why I didn’t know more passages from the Bible, and why I couldn’t turn the pages to quickly find the books and chapters like so many of those with whom I shared in the Sabbath service that day. I immediately decided that when I returned home to Markham, I would start reading my Bible daily, and I would look for a Seventh-day Adventist Church in Markham that I could attend.

On a cold January morning in 2010, I walked into Apple Creek Seventh-day Adventist Church and sat in a lively Sabbath School class. I attended this class for the next month as I embarked on the quarterly lessons and Bible study. The teacher had a gentle, encouraging way of leading the discussion. Every now and then he would hold my gaze a moment as he realized that I wanted to say something, but he didn’t push. His reassuring nod said, “Whenever you are ready.”

An entire month passed before I learned that there was a class for the newly baptized and visitors. Realizing that I had much to learn, I joined. Like so many “visitors” to Apple Creek, I was warmly greeted with a “welcome” by the teacher, whom I later learned was the senior pastor of our church, Wayne Martin. Pastor Martin asked my name, and then with a big smile said, “Are you happy, Suzanne?” Yes, I was very happy. As the weeks went by, I started to understand the Bible, and I began experiencing a connection with my Lord. I made my spiritual decision on December 11th, and I was baptized on January 15, 2011.

In discussions with one of my fellow newly-baptized church members, Joseph Mwinga, I learned that he too felt comfortable the minute he walked into Apple Creek Seventh-day Adventist Church. Both Joseph and I agreed that the way in which we were welcomed and encouraged by the members of Apple Creek, played a vital role in keeping us on our path as we built our relationship with the Lord. The church members watered the mustard seeds of our faith.

From that first day I arrived at Apple Creek in January 2010, the members demonstrated love and care to me. They remembered my name, asked me about my week, invited me to Sabbath lunch and to vespers, and called me just to ask how I was doing. As someone new to the church, not knowing what to expect, I was amazed by these examples of sincere Christian fellowship.

As a newly baptized member, considering her church, I see the Adventist Church and in particular, the people, the pastors, the choirs, and the Sabbath School teachers all engaged in joyful activities of hope and belief in Jesus’ Second Coming. Apple Creek Church has turned my eyes to God’s Word and opened my heart so that I may know Him and pray for the power that comes through the resurrection of Jesus, to stand and to seek an eternal relationship with Jesus, and I can’t wait to tell others of the good news!

CRAWFORD STUDENT ACCEPTED TO HARVARD UNIVERSITY’S SUMMER SCIENCE PROGRAM

Jyssica, who has been attending CAA since grade 5, was overjoyed when she learned of her acceptance, and she is looking forward to spending the summer at Harvard.

“It’s the opportunity of a lifetime,” she said, “and I can’t wait to meet other students my own age with the same career goals from other countries. It’s hard to believe that I will soon be able to use all the new technology and resources at Harvard.”

Jyssica learned about the program from Mr. Marlon Sargeant, Science teacher at Crawford Adventist Academy in Toronto, when he informed her class. Sargeant also coordinates the enrichment online program that is affiliated with the University of Connecticut for students in the elementary panel, as well as the Advanced Placement (AP) program for grade 11 and 12 students.

Jyssica noted that as prerequisites to the program, applicants must have really good grades, be on the honour roll with a high grade point average and be involved in their communities and extracurricular activities (Jyssica has a 92% overall average). Depending on what course a student applies to take, there are prerequisite courses. Since she applied for the Science program, she had to have successfully completed grade 9, 10 and 11 science credits. Supporting documents include student transcript and four recommendations from key personnel in the school. The program is open to high school students who have reached at least grade 10 and gives them the opportunity to do university level courses in the summer. Jyssica feels blessed to have gained acceptance to the program because thousands of students apply but only a few are accepted.

Jyssica credits CAA for helping her in a number of ways. It has helped her to keep her focus intellectually and spiritually. Furthermore, she has been able to learn about different areas and options, especially in Science, along with the opportunity to explore, meet and speak to new people.

“Crawford has given me an understanding of life,” said Jyssica, “and the teachers are really good and very experienced.”

She appreciates the exposure to programs like the AP program which challenges students to maximize their potential.
Jyssica lives with her twin brother, Jordan, and her mother, Hazel. When asked about the role her mother has played in her education, she replied, “My mother has never pressured me but has always encouraged my brother and me to do our best and to give attention to our spiritual life”.

Hazel is committed to supporting her children’s education and has attended every parent-teacher interview so she could get first-hand information from their teachers.

“Mom always emphasized the value of reading and studying,” said Jyssica. In fact, so strong is Hazel’s belief in using time wisely that she limits her children’s TV viewing time in order to allow them family time, to play games together and engage in conversation regarding various topics of interest to the children.

Speaking with Hazel, she told me that at first, she had concerns about Jyssica’s leaving home to attend a secular university, but her teacher encouraged her to pray and ask for God’s guidance. She then emphatically stated that she now has no qualms about Jyssica’s going to Harvard because she is spiritually strong and has a very good devotional life.

When asked about the cost of the program, Hazel said it is approximately $10,000 - $15,000 U.S. which includes room and board, but she has left it in God’s hands and she trusts Him to take care of that part of the deal.
July 9, International Centre, Mississauga

On July 9, all roads will lead to the International Centre at 6900 Airport Road, Mississauga, for Camp Meeting 2011. Church members and their friends from Adventist churches all across Ontario will gather together for what many consider to be the highlight of the church’s annual calendar.

Camp Meeting 2011 will not be a stand-alone event. This year, it will be the culmination of the eight-week Revive Us Again series that has been running in churches since May 4, as part of the conference’s emphasis on revival and reformation. Ontario Conference president, Dr. Mansfield Edwards, says that church members can expect it to be a time when “we celebrate our commitment to God”.

Stewardship director and conference worship leader, Pastor Dave Schwinghammer, says that members can also look forward to inspirational worship. “We want to do more with worship than what we usually do at camp meeting,” he said, “so this year, we are planning for worship to lead everyone into an experience with God”.

The theme of revival will be clearly evident at camp meeting, and specific emphasis will be given to every member becoming involved in at least one ministry, working for God’s kingdom. This theme has been captured in the motto: ‘All In!’ It is a call for all members, every man, woman and child to be completely and unreservedly involved in fulfilling the mission of the church in Ontario.

The ‘All In!’ theme will lead the focus of the services in halls 5 (adults), 4 (young adults) and 4A (teens). Pastors Rex Edwards, Ryan Simpson, and Ann Roda, will be the featured speakers in the respective halls.

Dr. Rex D. Edwards will be the speaker in the adult meetings. He is a renowned preacher who has served the church on three continents (Australia, Europe and North America) and continues to challenge congregations with his captivating sermons.

Dr. Edward’s ministry has been divided into periods when he worked as a pastor-evangelist, college professor, author, editor, video producer, and university administrator. Presently working out of offices at the Biblical Research Institute at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, he offers professional growth experiences for clergy and lectures on Ecclesiology, Preaching, and Pastoral Leadership. He has three children, Janelle, Paul, and Shane.

Young Adult’s speaker, Pastor Ryan Simpson, is the Youth Ministries and Pathfinder Ministries director in the Bermuda Conference. He is a preacher, evangelist, church planter, motivational speaker, and youth leader. Pastor Simpson is frequently invited to speak for various events in North America and the Caribbean. This will be his first visit to Ontario.

Pastor Simpson loves the Lord, loves people and enjoys his ministry. He is passion driven, vision and mission motivated, and has an indomitable determination to excel. His philosophy is “The Lord empowers whom He calls.”

For the first time at camp meeting, there will be a separate service planned specifically to meet the needs of teens. Pastor Ann Roda, often called ‘Pastor for
Meals

Members attending camp meeting have found it useful to carry their own meals for lunch and supper. No meals will be provided at the International Centre.

Please note that no food is allowed in any of the halls at the Centre. All members are asked to picnic by their cars or at one of the local public parks (Wildwood Park, 3430 Derry Road East at the corner of Derry Road and Goreway Drive; Humberwood Park at Rexdale Boulevard and Humberwood Boulevard).

Exiting the Centre by Car

To reduce traffic congestion when exiting the International Centre by car at lunch time, members are asked to use both exits—the one on Airport Road and the other on Derry Road to the north of the parking lot. It is likely that cars will only be able to turn right on Airport Road. Turning left has greatly contributed to long wait times. Cooperation with the parking attendants and the police will reflect the transforming power of the Holy Spirit in the lives of those attending camp meeting.

Live Broadcast

Camp meeting will again be broadcast live via the Internet at www.adventistontario.org. Both adults’ and young adults’ services will be available for viewing.

New Life and Philadelphia Churches Sponsor Community Children to Camp Frenda

What about your church? Become a community church, sponsor a child from your community to attend Camp Frenda this summer.

For more information, contact: Lila Oliveira, 905-571-1022 or 905-686-5757 (Toronto line), ext. 215 or by email: loliveira@adventistontario.org

Peel Adventist School Banquet

Peel Adventist School cordially invites you to attend their Teacher Appreciation Banquet on Sunday, June 26, at 4:00 p.m. at Destiny Banquet Hall, 4220 Steeles Ave. E., Woodbridge, ON. Featured speaker will be Pastor Garth Geddes. For tickets, please call 905-459-0500.

Children’s Programmes

Provisions are also available for children in Aviation Ballrooms A, B, and C for Kindergarten to Juniors. Parents, please be aware that due to the risk of food allergies, no snacks will be provided for the children. Parents are responsible to provide refreshments for their own children.

Families’ will be the speaker. Recently commissioned to the gospel ministry, she is responsible for families and children from birth through High School at the New Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church in Fulton, MD.

Pastor Roda has three goals in life. The first is to “be still and know God”; the second is to be a fully devoted follower of Jesus Christ, and the third is to lose those last annoying 7 pounds.

God called her to pastoral ministry after she spent 15 years in a corporate career. Her husband Jose Hernandez is a chaplain director with Adventist Health Care.

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Help! How Can I Control My Family Finances?

“I really want to practice faithful financial stewardship,” says Bro. Jones, “but if I tithe and give an offering, I won’t have enough money to live on. I’m struggling just to pay my rent and other expenses. There just isn’t enough money to live on, even with two wages coming in. It’s so hard to manage these days.”

How can we help Bro. Jones? His dilemma is not unique; there are many others, some with less disposable income than he, who reach out to God in faith, practice financial stewardship through their tithes and offerings and successfully manage their personal and home finances. How do they do it?

There is no question that many families have been adversely affected by the present economic climate, increasing food and spiralling energy costs. They are trying to find ways to cut back and save a little money to pay bills and take care of the bare necessities.

Some families may be facing a job loss, a medical emergency or a health scare. As difficult as those things are, there are many ways for families to save some extra money to make ends meet and also remain faithful in their stewardship. The key is to use a budget.

A budget is an indispensable tool that helps you plan and evaluate your expenses. It involves a careful listing of your planned expenditure and your income. It is really a plan for how you use and save your money (See the sample budget, page 15).

You should budget for a specific period of time (such as weekly, biweekly, monthly) according to your pay schedule.

It is important to know that it is not the amount of money an individual earns that brings peace of mind as much as it is having control over your money. Money can be an obedient servant but a hard taskmaster. Be aware that the greater your income, the likelihood is the greater your expenses.

Those who spend more than they earn, even if only by a few dollars, are controlled by their circumstances. Those who structure their standard of living to allow a little surplus, or who spend less than they earn, control their circumstances.

The key to spending less than we earn is simple – it is called discipline, and it is based on contentment. Our society is one where we are constantly bombarded by the pressure of consumerism, but if we are to take control of our circumstances, we must learn to discipline ourselves, our appetites and our economic desires. We must also learn that sacrifice is a vital part of our eternal discipline.

No doubt you are familiar with the story of a college boy who wired home, “No money, no fun, your son”. His father wired back “How sad, too bad, your dad”. We must be honest in all our financial affairs. The ideal of integrity will never go out of style.

In family finances, be quick to learn the lesson that Jesus taught—self-denial. The Saviour said, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me”. This does not mean that we must live in austerity; it simply establishes the principle of self-denial and sacrifice for the greater good.

Most of us tend to live from day to day ‘muddling through’, not having any clear purpose. Our spending habits usually reflect this. We must set goals for ourselves – focusing on what we really want to achieve in our lives. This includes financial goals. If you don’t know where you are going, you are never going to get there.

Perhaps one of the most important lessons we have to learn is, to make a little go a long way.

Jesus wrought a miracle and fed 5,000, and then He taught an important lesson of economy: ‘Gather up the fragments that remain that nothing be lost’.

Take care of the pennies, and the dollars will take care of themselves.

The value of a budget, and some points to consider when making one:

- Distinguish between needs and wants
- The household budget will lessen disagreements about money and make real economic freedom possible
- Live within your means
- Use shopping coupons
- Check for the best deals
- Work and spend wisely
- Live on less than you earn
- Look into a pay-as-you-go cell phone rather than a land line
- Either reduce your cable bill to as little as possible, or replace it with a HD aerial and receive free HD television programs.
- Financial problems are often the cause of many marital break-ups
- Let your budget be your guide.

Consider meeting with a financial consultant to learn how to best establish a budget that will fit your circumstances.

Your Will – A Key Aspect of Family Finances

Continued on page 15
Everyone with a spouse or children should make a will. We could be cut down without a moment’s warning and leave it to the courts to decide how our estate will be distributed.

It is utter folly to deter making preparation for the future life until nearly the last hour of the present life. A will enables you to consider the special needs of your family. For example, you may wish to delay the time at which your children receive their inheritance. Without a will, they would automatically receive their share at the age of majority (18).

A joint bank account is important so that the survivor is able to pay the monthly bills; otherwise, the survivor could be unable to do this.

Without a will, the court will decide who administers your estate, including the well-being of children if underage.

Peter Whitfield

Congratulations!

Hearty congratulations to Pastors David Baker (Richmond Hill Church), Sereivudh Ly (Cambodian Group, Mount Zion Filipino Church), Wayne Martin (Apple Creek Church), and Daniel Saugh.

Pastors Baker and Ly recently gave successful defence of their Doctor of Ministry degrees and are looking forward to graduation from the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University. On April 30, Dr. Wayne Martin graduated with fellow Doctor of Ministry graduates at Andrews University. His area of work focussed on leadership. Dr. Ly’s work was also in the area of leadership while Dr. Baker focussed on family life.

Daniel Saugh has recently completed a graduate degree in Public Health from Loma Linda University. Formerly pastor at Meadowvale Church, he returns to Ontario and on June 1, assumes responsibility for the Elliot Lake and North Shore congregations.
Do More with Skype

Let's face it, we are constantly attacked and surrounded by work, school, bills, stress, entertainment, fear, guilt, expectations, past hurts, and the list goes on. Despite the fact that this is a communal reality, we ignorantly scoff at unbelievers when they cry “no time” after an attempt to connect with them in a meaningful way. However, we're ignoring what for many is a genuine reality.

Pastor Halsey Peat once shared this perspective with me; “It’s easy to become so fixated on giving information that we forget that as a church, we ought to communicate by listening.” How are you communicating the world’s most important message? I mean, are we listening or fixated on being archaic in our efforts?

Technology continues to present us with innovative answers, enabling us to become more accommodating and creative in our approach to ‘evangeliving’. The opportunity to measure effort becomes much easier, and the reality of living in a nation that hibernates for most of the year has less of a crippling effect, as technology simultaneously takes us right into each other’s lair.

Skype is one such piece of technology. It is a software application that makes distance and time less of a worry as you can text, voice and video chat while sharing experiences with people, no matter where they are. Daily, people are using Skype to celebrate birthdays, learn languages, work with colleagues, hold meetings, just about anything you do together, and all you need is a computer and an Internet access.

I've been using Skype to conduct online Bible studies and, with the latest version of Skype, I can video chat and facilitate group sessions as well. Everyone has an opportunity to participate, and with Skype's screen sharing tool, I share my entire screen or specific windows on my screen, allowing me to use imagery to enhance the comprehension of the message. We're all connecting (sometimes for the first time) and growing together, and because participants have the comforts they are used to, like their chair, computer, personal space and attire, we're less distracted and more able to enjoy the fellowship. Oh, did I mention it's FREE?

Are you communicating by listening? More and more people are familiar with many of today's online applications as we've become very dependent on the Internet for many of our day-to-day activities. Numerous online services are now very user-friendly and most that I know love it once they try it. As your understanding of the technology increases so does your creativity.

“Means will be devised to reach hearts. Some of the methods used in this work will be different from the methods used in the work in the past...”—Evangelism, p. 105.

How is God inspiring you to share the world's most important message? I'd love to know. Do share with me. My Skype name is CeejayHorrell and I'm on Facebook at www.Facebook.com/ceejayhorrell. Also, visit me at www.CeejayHorrell.com and at www.StrateUpProductions.com

North-West Brampton Celebrates First Anniversary

Sabbath, February 26, 2011, marked the first anniversary of North-West Brampton Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Councillor John Hutton, Garnett Mannings (former councillor), Pastor Mirthell Mitchell, Elder Hibbert Jones, many members from Brampton and Ruth Seventh-day Adventist Churches, along with numerous visitors were in attendance to share in the celebrations.

John Hutton brought greetings and presented a commemorative plaque to local pastor, Fitzroy Radlein, who received it on behalf of the church.

He also congratulated the congregation on its accomplishment in the community and offered his support as it pursued its dream of worshipping in its own church building.

Hibbert Jones, elder at Brampton Adventist Church, brought greetings on behalf of its late pastor, Orville Brown, and reminded the congregation of its humble beginning and its purpose of soul-winning. He fondly spoke of the role of the late Pastor Carlton Mitchell in establishing the new church of 33 members for the purpose of evangelism.

The keynote speaker was Pastor Mirthell Mitchell of Hamilton East Seventh-day Adventist Church. He also spoke of the work of his late father, Pastor Carlton Mitchell. However, in his sermon, “On the Rock or in the Sand,” he clearly highlighted the assurance that the congregation has in Jesus Christ, the Rock. He encouraged the congregation to build its foundation on Jesus. Only then, can it be certain of growth and prosperity.

Later, the Sabbath celebrations concluded with a short concert followed by a successful fund raising social event.

Judy Williams, Communication
Food Handler Certification in Ontario. It’s the Law!

When church leaders/members are hosting church-sponsored events where food and beverages are served, regardless of location, the law requires that “…at least one (1) certified food handler must be present working in a supervisory capacity in each area of the premises where food is prepared, processed, served, packaged or stored. (Bylaw 678-2006). In addition, the certified individual will have to produce his/her certificate along with a photo ID card when requested to do so by Public Health officials. Failure to comply may result in the issuance of fines or tickets.

The bylaw applies to all church potluck meals, celebrations, picnics, banquets, concerts, committee meetings, fund-raising events, harvest festivals, weddings, miscellaneous social events and special gatherings.

If you are interested in obtaining certification, you may do so by:

(a) Attending a Food Handler Certification Program offered by the Public Health Department (PHD) in your area and pass the written exam at the end of the class
(b) Studying on your own and writing the exam during regularly scheduled exam times
(c) Attending a Food Handler certification course offered by a private company accredited by a PHD.

In each case, course and examination fees will apply and you will be given a valid certificate issued by the Medical Officer of Health attached to the PHD in your jurisdiction. Please contact your local PHD for details.

If you are unable to complete the certification program with a PHD in your area as outlined above, Health Ministries will facilitate the process by working with an accredited Food Handler Training organization to provide training on Sundays. If you are interested in this option, please contact us by July 4, 2011. Contact information: Maria McClean: 905-571-1022, ext 112, or mmcclean@adventistontario.org; Ruth Weidner: 905-571-1022, ext. 13 or rweidner@adventistontario.org.

For those who are already certified, please ensure that a copy of your certificate is submitted to Health Ministries and Risk Management at the Ontario Conference and the clerk at your local church by July 31, 2011. Remember that the Ontario Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church must meet the requirements as outlined in Bylaw 678-2006 and similar bylaws in Ontario, therefore certification is mandatory. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Maria McClean
Director,
Health Department

Seniors’ Seminars
Attendees from Iron Bridge, Elliott Lake, North Shore and Sault Ste Marie at Seniors Ministry Workshop with Pastor Edwards on May 7, 2011

SENIORS’ WELLNESS RETREAT
September 16-18, 2011
Best Western Hotel
559 Bloor St. West, Oshawa, Ontario
Meetings start Friday evening and ends Sunday noon
Inspiring guest presenters
Launching of the Seniors WALKING CLUB
(Sweat suits available for sale; Free T-shirt with every purchase)
Registration forms and further information will be available soon
Contact your pastor, head elder, church clerk, or seniors’ ministry coordinator

Ontario Highlights | Summer 2011 | 17
The Ontario Conference School of Evangelism (OCSE) is growing. Its first graduates, scheduled to graduate in mid-2012, will have the option of taking additional tracks even as they put into practice what they learned in the foundational courses.

The additional tracks being considered are in the areas of Youth, Health, Family Ministries, Institutional and Public Evangelism. According to the coordinator, Pastor Eustace Williams, the new tracks will allow members with a particular interest to develop the necessary skills to become proficient and effective.

“We want to see all our members involved in evangelism,” said Williams, “and these new tracks will really provide a much wider scope for more people to become involved.”

The timetable to implement the new tracks have yet to be determined, but there is a determination on the part of the OCSE to have at least one in place by the time of the graduation of the present students in 2012.

“While there is a demand for growth,” said Williams, “we want to do so carefully and be sure that we are able to provide the best quality our members have come to expect.”

According to the OCSE, these new tracks will only be available to those who have completed the general evangelism track that is presently underway.

The Youth Evangelism track is intended for those who want to work with teens and young adults. It will help provide a clear understanding of the mindset of the 21st century Canadian teen and young adult.

Consequently, students will learn appropriate approaches to specifically reach Canadian youths for Christ.

For those with interest in family ministries, the Family Ministries track will clearly demonstrate the uniqueness of the family with its potential as an effective evangelistic unit. It will provide students with the skills to harness their individual power and that of their families to work with other families for Christ.

In the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the health message has traditionally been called, ‘the right arm of the gospel’ yet, even in 2011, many fail to see it as such, much less to take advantage of its tremendous evangelistic potential. The Health Ministries track will help provide those who see its potential with the skills to effectively use the health message to win people for Christ in 2011 and beyond.

The Institutional Evangelism track is for those who see their ministry as reaching those in institutions such as prisons and hospitals. Given the nature of some institutions, this track is specifically for those who are committed to making it their primary ministry.

Public Evangelism involves far more than preaching. This track involves the planning and implementing of all forms of public evangelisms—seminars, workshops and traditional evangelistic series. Among the many skills that will be learned, participants will learn field preparation, advertising, seminar leadership and presentation, evangelistic preaching, making appeals and much more.

While the new tracks will offer more scope to students, it is clear that the OCSE is not focussing on the classroom.

“Our intention is to raise up a mighty army of witnesses for God,” said Ontario Conference Evangelism and Church Growth coordinator, Dr. Errol Lawrence. “The training we are providing is a very practical, hands-on approach. We expect all our graduates to become involved in ongoing evangelism. In fact, part of our expectation is for each one to become involved in a regular Bible study with a potential convert, even before graduation.”

Presently, there are 242 students enrolled in the OCSE, studying courses such as Bible Doctrines, Church History, How to Give Bible Studies, and Homiletics in the foundation tracks. Members who were unable to register for the present foundation tracks that began on March 27, 2011, will be happy to know that these tracks will be repeated each year.

Registration for 2012 begins on September 1, 2011 for foundation tracks:
1. General Evangelism
2. Lay Preacher’s Certification
2011: The Year of Youth Evangelism—Get on Board!

Like a commuter train leaving the first station, the Year of Youth Evangelism is slowly picking up momentum in the Ontario Conference. The first quarter of the year was filled with prayer and preparation for evangelism. The month of March saw churches wrap up the 777 Prayer Challenge.

“I was encouraged by the youth leaders that used the material we provided to engage with their youth in this forty days of prayer,” said Pastor Cyril Millett, Ontario Conference Youth director. “As a result of the prayer challenge, there seemed to have been more churches than usual conducting a Youth Week of Prayer. And prayer is the best approach to all ministries.”

Elizabeth Johnson Hall

*Toronto Central*

With a base of prayer and planning, some churches launched their youth evangelism series this spring. Toronto Central began the year with the theme, Step Up. Under Adventist Youth leader, Elizabeth Johnson Hall, they have divided this theme into sub-themes to achieve their evangelistic goals. Their first sub-theme, Coming Home, is geared to bringing inactive young members back to church and back to their first love, Jesus.

On May 7th, Toronto Central launched its first youth evangelistic series with four youth speakers. While a baptism is expected, evangelism does not end with baptisms. The youths of Toronto Central Church intend to follow up with their new converts. Under the sub-theme, Friendship at Its Best, there are plans in place to nurture those joining their church family.

**It Is Written Fellowship**

The youths of It Is Written Fellowship prayerfully decided to host a vegetarian cooking class leading into an evangelistic series. Nina Lim, one of the youth leaders, reported that on the day of the cooking classes and evangelism seminars, they held socials to which they invited friends and family members to attend and mingle with church members.

At It Is Written Fellowship, every department of the church is involved in the evangelistic process. “We encouraged the whole church to go door-to-door with us, as we put flyers in mail boxes for our evangelistic series and cooking class,” reported Nina. “This has been a great way for members to get to know each other as we walked in pairs. We even had a non-Adventist friend accompanying us.”

The cooking classes have just come to an end and the New Beginnings evangelistic seminars will commence on June third.

**Toronto Portuguese**

The youths at Toronto Portuguese Church organised a youth evangelistic week followed by an Easter play for both the Portuguese and English-speaking community.

Nightly, a young adult preached the sermon. The play, Second Change - A Cosmic Mystery, was very unusual in that the players were only visible as shadows. It certainly caught and held the attention of the many visitors and friends who attended both the nightly meetings and the play.

The following week, a young girl insisted on being baptized, even though the water was cold.

“The decision to be baptized regardless of the cold temperature,” said Pastor Roger Esteves, assistant pastor of the church, “reminded us of how important Christ’s sacrifice should be for us. It also motivated us to continue to plant the seeds for Christ to reap.”

**Youth Abroad**

It seems that overseas missions will be a big part of the evangelism thrust of our conference this year. Toronto Pilipino Church hopes to have a group going to the Philippines, and there are two conference-sponsored mission/service trips planned for the Christmas break. Another youth group from the Philadelphia Church will be helping with a youth revival series in Jamaica as part of their mission trip there in May, 2011.

Philadelphia does not plan to leave its own territory unattended. August will see them ministering in an evangelistic series. Their theme for 2011 says it all, “Proclaim and Reclaim.”

The Year of Youth Evangelism is already bearing fruit. The prayers continue. The work of training and encouraging our youth continues. The work has started. Like a train that has left the station, the Year of Youth Evangelism is picking up momentum. More and more churches with their youth groups are getting on board—this train that is bound for glory!

We anticipate many new members will be on board with the Ontario Conference before the year is ended.
First Fruits in the Year of Youth Evangelism

On March 19, 2011, Bet-el and Maranatha Hispanic churches presented the first fruits to God in the Year of Youth Evangelism with a baptism of eight persons.

Following the plan given by the leaders of the Ontario Conference, Bet-el and Maranatha Hispanic churches started the Year of Youth Evangelism with a week of prayer led by young people. This event took place from March 12-19 with the purpose of planting in the heart of the church the necessity and privilege of sharing the gospel with other people (planting stage).

Both churches used particular themes to direct the attention of those attending to our purpose. Spanish Bet-el’s theme was “Try Jesus”, and it was the focus of the speaker, Alvaro Jojoa, a minister of the gospel. At Maranatha Spanish, theology graduate, Arturo Jeronimo, nightly spoke on the theme “I am, I am not”.

It was a truly enriching experience. Every night, both preachers motivated the members of the church and friends from the community to have an encounter with the God who changes lives.

At the end of the week, our Almighty God was glorified with a baptismal ceremony where eight precious souls were baptized.

The youth of Maranatha Spanish and Spanish Bet-el churches are committed to youth evangelism.

As pastor of the both churches, I want to give thanks to Greisy Lerma and Patricia Barboza for their excellent work during the week of prayer.

Praise the name of God

Daniel Sanchez
Pastor, Bet-el and Maranatha Hispanic Churches

Fan the Flame “Ravivez la Flamme” Eastern Canada Pathfinder Camporee

On August 1, 2011, all roads will lead to Awacamenj Mino Scout Camp, 143 Chemin McNicoll, Duclos, Quebec, for Camporee 2011.

For the first time, the Ontario Conference Pathfinder Council (OCPC) will be holding its annual camporee outside of Ontario. In doing so, Ontario will be joined by pathfinders from Quebec, Newfoundland and the Maritimes, making it a truly Eastern Ontario Pathfinder Camporee from August 1-7. It is expected that Pathfinders from as far as Barbados and Jamaica, in the Caribbean, and from Rochester, New York, will also be present to give the camporee an international flavour.

Like previous camporees, Camporee 2011, “Ravivez la Flamme” (“Fan the Flame”), will be a week of fun, learning, fellowship, and spiritual refreshment. Ontario’s Pathfinders will meet new friends and, just like the NAD camporee, trade pins with Pathfinders from other clubs or conferences. They can also gear up for adrenaline-pumping activities, such as tower climbing, voyageur canoeing, sailing, kayaking, obstacle course, orienteering, spelunking (caving), hiking, and many more.

Pathfinders can also look forward to a rich spiritual experience with inspiring music, drama presentations, and life-changing messages to be delivered by selected Pathfinder preachers and by the guest speaker, Pastor Paul Smith, youth pastor from the British Columbia Conference.

Ontario Conference Pathfinder specialist, Pastor Edwin Martin, is so excited about this year’s camporee that his advice is: “Be there when it happens!”

Plan to attend

To register, and for more details, go to: www.camporee.ca.
**Building God-Centred Marriages at the 2011 Couples Retreat**

Twenty-seven couples recently learned to have stronger, happier and more fulfilling marriages. They had attended Ontario Conference’s annual Marriage Enrichment Retreat, held April 15-17, 2011 at the Holiday Inn in Guelph. Presenters Claudio and Pamela Consuegra, Family Ministries directors for the North American Division, shared insight into strengthening marriages with God at the core.

Among the couples who left feeling greatly blessed was Katia & Pierre Andre.

“It was our first time that we attended the retreat,” they said. “We were really blessed by the sessions, the speakers, and the fellowship with other Adventist couples.

“After that weekend, we left with great tools that would help us in dealing with some of the issues that may arise in a marriage while maintaining a spiritual and emotional connection with God and with each other. We were able to reflect on the reason we first got married, to re-visit the importance of putting God first in our marriage. We also learned how to recommit to each other on a daily basis, our family, and our legacy.

“We left the retreat on fire for God and excited about what He was going to do in our lives together. Through the teaching, we learned a better understanding of each other.

“At first we thought a marriage retreat was for people who had problems in their marriage, but we soon discovered that this was not the case. It’s for couples who want to learn how to avoid those problems and to strengthen their marriages.

“We were truly blessed, and we are looking forward to going to our next retreat”.

The annual Marriage Enrichment Retreat is sponsored by the Ontario Conference Family Ministries Department. Plan now to enrich your marriage at the 2012 retreat. For more information, call 905-571-1022 ext. 204.

Kristen Bailey

**President Commends Luso-Brazilian Church Transformation**

Ontario Conference president, Dr. Mansfield Edwards, enthusiastically commended the Luso-Brazilian congregation and its pastor, Odair Luca, on Sabbath, April 16, 2011. “You have done and outstanding job!” he said. “It is hard to believe that this is the same building that I came to last year.” Edwards was speaking at the church’s inauguration of its renewed facilities at 122 Mimico Road, Etobicoke.

The transformation of the church building began when a group of members who work in construction freely gave of their time and skill. Often working very late into the night after completing their daily jobs, they dedicated themselves to making their church building a place to greatly enhance the worship of God.

Edwards was clearly impressed by the sacrificial nature of the work and the resulting beautiful sanctuary. “This is the spirit every Adventist Church needs to have”, he said. “You have set a wonderful example for everyone else to follow.”

It was also evident to the president that the members are also approaching evangelism with an equal determination, as the inauguration service included the baptism of new converts. Edwards had the privilege of immersing one of the converts.
Mount Zion Filipino: Ongoing Evangelism

Mount Zion Filipino Seventh-day Adventist Church has just baptized another seven converts, bringing the total to thirteen since the year began. Baptisms were held in January, March and April, reflecting the church’s ongoing evangelistic program.

The congregation is fully committed to ongoing evangelism as an integral part of the life of the church. Among the evangelism outreach held regularly are: a series of Bible studies conducted outside the church, a weekly Bible class held at the church every Sunday afternoon at 4:00 p.m., and sundown worship every Sabbath evening by the Singles Ministry department. Additionally, the Youth Ministries department recently held the 1Way2Life meetings, as part of the Year of Youth Evangelism.

The Personal Ministries department coordinates all ongoing evangelistic outreach activities at Mount Zion Filipino.

Andrew Skytte-Alivio

Ottawa Adventist Pastor Leads Parliamentary Forum on Religious Persecution

On Tuesday, March 21, Pastor Lyle Notice, assistant minister at Ottawa Seventh-day Adventist Church, jointly hosted a parliamentary forum on religious persecution with David Anderson, MP (Cypress Hills-Grasslands) at the National Press Building, 165 Sparks Street in Ottawa.

The forum was organized by Anderson and Notice following news of several recent mass murders and the persistent religious persecution that occurs around the world. “These events”, says Notice, “have shown that individual human rights and religious freedoms continue to be threatened. Christian churches, in particular, have been destroyed and individuals have been attacked simply for their beliefs. It has been reported that Christianity is, arguably, the most persecuted religion in the world.”

David Anderson, himself a Christian from Saskatchewan, decided that he wanted to do something to raise the level of awareness of religious persecution and invited Pastor Lyle Notice to join him in organizing a parliamentary forum on Christian persecution to raise the level of awareness and propose solutions to end religious persecution.

As lead organizer, Notice was pleased to see over 100 participants attend. These included Minister of Immigration and Citizenship, Jason Kenney, and newly-appointed senator, Pastor Don Meredith, as well as a number of other MPs.

The evening commenced with a brief testimony by a Christian farmer from Pakistan whose three-year old daughter had been brutally raped because he would not give up his Christian faith. Following this, Andy Bannister, a Christian apologist and educator from Great Britain, shared important information on the spread of religious persecution around the world and encouraged citizens of Canada to speak up against these injustices.

In the final hour of the evening, a panel discussion featuring speakers from diverse faiths focussed on religious freedom and the role Canadians can play to help combat religious persecution around the world.

After the meeting, a number of participants asked if they could expect similar meetings in the future.

“What you have started on Parliament Hill”, one person told Notice, “is a great initiative, especially in light of the recent bombing of Coptic churches in Egypt. You must continue to fight for religious liberty and the promotion of human rights for all.”

Some MPs asked why such an event had not been planned sooner. Notice hopes to organize additional forums in the new session of Parliament.

It is imperative that the words of the late Martin Luther King Jr. never be forgotten, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere”.

Lyle Notice

Save the date
September 30 - October 1, 2011
Ontario Conference Evangelism Convention
at the BMO Institute for Learning, 3550 Pharmacy Avenue, Toronto, Ontario.

For more information, please contact the Personal Ministries Department at 905-571-1022, ext. 111.

Monte Carmelo Spanish Adventist Company is Looking for the Following Members:


If you have any information, please contact Janie Cruz, church clerk: montecarmelospclerk@adventistontario.org Phone: 905-383-7565.
Thursday, March 24, 2011 was a historic date in the life of the Hispanic Adventist Church in Ontario. Brampton Portuguese Adventist Church, located at 44 Church Street East, opened its doors to the first formal meeting of a group of Hispanic brothers and friends with the firm intention to begin a Hispanic Adventist work in Brampton. Pastor Odair Luca and a group of leaders from the Portuguese Adventist Church warmly welcomed Pastor Daniel Sanchez and a similar group of leaders from the Spanish churches in Toronto. These included Rodrigo Alvarez, Clemente Hernandez, Alexis Guerra and their respective families, and Claudia Ortiz. Luca spoke of the need for a Hispanic work in Brampton and gladly expressed his willingness to support the initiative of the Spanish churches.

In a short devotional, Pastor Luca shared the Word of God, stressing the glorious promise of the coming of Jesus Christ and the need of every believer to be ready and to prepare others for the encounter with the Lord. The proposed project includes weekly meetings on Thursdays at 7 p.m., searching for people who are interested in Bible studies in Brampton and later, the possibility of planting a group that will begin worship services on Sabbaths.

All members of the Ontario church family are asked to join the Spanish and Portuguese congregations in prayer as they cry out to the Lord to send His Holy Spirit to open the doors in Brampton to enable the growth of His church among the Hispanic community.

Daniel Sanchez, Pastor, Spanish Bet-el & Maranatha Churches

Judly 10 track and field. CYSA will be hosting its annual athletics meeting at York University on Sunday, July 10, 2011. It is anticipated that over 20 churches will send teams. Former champions, Apple Creek and Philadelphia, will most probably compete to regain the top club position from Toronto West. For more information regarding CYSA, visit http://cysa.ca/index.php

Toronto Central Seventh-day Adventist Church is the proud winner of the Christian Youth Sports Academy’s (CYSA) second annual Domino Tournament, held on April 2, 2011.

Toronto Central’s lead pastor, Samuel McKenzie, along with team-mate, Leonard Northe, assistant pastor, held off challenges by Ronald White and Winston Whitely of Toronto West Seventh-day Adventist Church (second place) to claim the first place position. Third place went to Trevor Morrison and Herbert Mitchell of Kingsview Village Church. Runner-up at last year’s tournament, Toronto Central was keen to improve and played with great skill and determination.

The competition was held at Toronto Central Seventh-day Adventist Church.

L-R: Leonard Northe, Jacob and Johnathan Corion & Samuel McKenzie

CYSA has been the main organiser of sporting activities for Seventh-day Adventist churches in the Greater Toronto Area. It also hosts the Pathfinder Drill Competition each July and provides academic scholarships.
The sound of powerful motorcycles was heard in the parking lot at Agape Temple on Sabbath morning, May 7, 2011, as thirty-six bikers brought their bikes to church. They arrived for Agape Temple's second annual Biker Blessing ceremony.

The Biker Blessing began in May, 2010 when Agape Temple Seventh-day Adventist Church in Pickering started the unique community project of praying for the protection of bikers as they prepared for the riding season. The service, open to all bikers, consists of a brief message of encouragement followed by the prayer of blessing. The positive response from the bikers last year encouraged the church to make it an annual event.

Agape Temple’s pastor, Harold Johnson, opened the event following the morning worship service by welcoming the bikers. After the opening prayer, the Seventh-day Adventist Choral Ensemble of Greater Toronto presented the song, “Wade in the Water”. Pastor Fred Nichols, former pastor at Agape Temple, held everyone’s attention with a message from Rev.19 about another rider, named Faithful and True. Following the message, Agape Temple’s members and other guests encircled the bikers for the prayer of consecration. Rayon Dove, himself a biker and vocal soloist, and the Choral Ensemble rounded out the program with additional musical selections before the closing prayer.

The upcoming riding season will be the first for some of the 36 riders, while others have been riding for over thirty-seven years. After the service, other bikers roared onto the parking lot hoping to catch the service but were too late. Groups of church members took the time to pray with them. Refreshments were served, and the bikers thrilled several members and guests by taking them for a short ride on their bikes.

Visits between bikers and church members continued for another two hours after the blessing. Smiles, hugs and warm handshakes were exchanged on a warm spring evening as bikers and church members promised to see each other again next year.

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