“Stones,”
NAD President’s SDACC Message
Editorial

Why Do I Do What I Do?

I’ve been asking myself some questions recently. Well, it’s that time of the year—Christmas, the end of 2011 and the beginning of a new year, 2012—so it’s okay to ask some questions.

It’s not too hard to ask questions; it’s the answers that tend to be bothersome—especially when I realise that I don’t really have an answer, or the answer turns up an unpleasant truth or two. The temptation is to take the safe route and not ask the question in the first place. But ignorance is never blissful for the Christian. It’s important to ask questions and seek out compelling answers because it’s almost certain that someone will ask me the questions.

As a child, I simply accepted what my parents and teachers told me. After all, they had the market on knowledge and determined what was right from what was wrong. As an adult, I’ve learned to ask, “Why do I do what I do?” or “What’s the origin of this practice?” It’s important to know. We should have good reasons for our beliefs and practices, otherwise, we live shallow lives, easily uprooted by persuasive people and their enticing arguments.

When I hear others make statements they hold to be factual, my response is to ask, “Who says so?” My intent is neither facetious nor impudent; rather it’s a desire to determine the origin of a practice or the validity of the statement because we tend to repeat what we have heard.

I smiled when I first heard the story of a little girl who was helping her mother to make a cake.

Observing that her mother separated the mixture and placed it in two shallow cake tins and placed them on separate shelves in the oven, the little girl asked why. Her mother responded that it was because modern ovens are much larger and can accommodate a single large cake tin.

It’s easy for us to accept practices and beliefs that have been handed down by authority figures, such as pastors and elders. They are our teachers. They have the knowledge. The problem is that each successive generation moves further from the reason a particular practice was introduced in the first place. Quite possibly the reason or context no longer exists, but we still perpetuate the practice simply because we do not ask the question, “Why do I do what I do?”

Very early in my adult life, I discovered that it was not just my generation that tended not to ask the important questions. Too often, when I asked authority figures why we followed certain practices, some were unable to respond with a reasonable argument. Neither were they willing to admit they did not have an answer. It was clear that they had never asked the question. They had simply inherited a practice and unquestioningly followed it.

Culture often plays a significant role in what we believe and practice. We need to remember, that what was practised as Adventists in one location was often the result of the application of a biblical principle to a particular context. In a different geographical location or time period, the application must change because the context is different. Asking the question, “Why do I do what I do?” clearly helps us to determine how we’re to apply our Christianity to a new context.

Asking questions demands thinking and not simply embracing someone else’s thoughts. Ellen White’s counsel is that our youth (by extension, all of us) should be trained “to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men’s thoughts” (Education p.17). To think demands the use of our God-given faculties. It’s not easy and valuable answers are like gold—they have to be mined, often from inhospitable places. So, we ask ourselves, “Does this make sense to me?” If it does, identify the reasons. If not, search out those reasons.

We must be thinkers. We must never be satisfied to unquestioningly accept what others tell us, regardless of their persuasiveness or authority. Can we be certain that they asked the appropriate questions before they accepted it? Or, are they applying their cultural understanding to ours?

The apostle Paul spoke highly of the noble character of the Berean Jews because they “examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true” (1 Thess. 17:11). We may also apply Paul’s principle of dealing with prophecies to everything else: “Test them all; hold unto what is good, reject every kind of evil” (1 Thess 5:21).

It’s only as we question and seek out answers that we’re able to give valid and scriptural reasons for why we do what we do and believe what we believe.

Halsey Peat, Editor
Dear Editor,

I was baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church 4 years ago, and it has been a wonderful journey with the Lord. However, I have recently been expressing to my network of support the same things you address in your article. Like you, my first step in assessing the root of my feelings was to examine my work in various ministries. I am not an individual who waits until Sabbath arrives to attend church for myself. I am not an individual who walks through our church doors is exposed to, introduced to and taught the love and joy of the Lord.

My conclusion is that my church is too busy putting on a “program” every Sabbath. There is no connection between one item to the next on the program, and everything is structured with ‘actors’. People are becoming tired of the routine, as is visible by the dwindling attendance each week as the issue continues to be ignored.

I have asked God to help me be a bigger blessing to my church family through my work in various ministries. Each of us has a part to play in ensuring that every individual who walks through our church doors is exposed to, introduced to and taught the love and joy of the Lord.

MT, Toronto

Together, We Can

Dear Editor:

The message of the article that together as a group of Christian believers with the help of our Lord, we can contribute to the growth of God’s work was appropriate. However, I was smitten by the crassness of the publication of percentages, showing how each congregation in the conference either exceeded or fell behind the preceding year’s tithe giving. Bartlett’s Quotations cites a number of authors who subscribed to the idea that “comparisons are odious”. I suppose the publication of the statistics was intended to spur the membership on to greater dedication and giving. As well, perhaps it was intended to encourage the togetherness of purpose that the article spoke about. How is that possible? No reasons for the changes in giving by the various congregations were considered. Perhaps some congregations declined in size due to the moving away or death of some members. Others may have given less because of the loss of jobs. As well, incoming members or better paying jobs may have resulted in greater giving by other congregations. Altogether, the article lost its positive tone by the “odious comparison” that can only contribute to resentments rather than togetherness.

Jo Koehn

The Road Ahead: A New Strategy for a Changing World

Dear Editor,

Congratulations on the quality of the communications you send out.

I am looking forward to the integrated training, facilitation, and implementation of REACH. Within this framework, Ontario may be ahead, as is evidenced by the bold and audacious step forward in faith made by Maria McClean and her team at the CNE. As one of the volunteers, I was truly blessed on the Sabbath I joined Maria at the CNE, and will continue to pray that we embrace a coordinated ministry approach to reach people where they are situated nationally, regionally, and locally.

Keep up the great work. God Bless you... Maranatha.

M.A.B

---

Upcoming Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>REACH Convention for Church Officers--Hamilton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master Guide Winter Camping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal Ministries Leaders Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ministries Leadership Training (GTA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Webinar for New Communication Leaders: “The Role of the Church Communication Leader”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Master Guide-led Prayer Meetings (Conference-wide)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Northern Ontario – Pastors/Elders Workshop (Sudbury)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conference-wide Pathfinder Bible Experience Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GTA Workshop/Rally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AMiCUS Retreat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family Emphasis Week (Churches)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Western Ontario Workshops SS CS ADRA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lecture Series “Health Impact of Indoor Air Pollution or Addictions” (Ottawa area)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master Guide Winter Camping – 2nd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FAY Symposium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Southern Ontario Workshops SS CS ADRA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Webinar for Communication Leaders: Writing for the Media</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following is an abridgement of the sermon preached by Pastor Dan Jackson, president of the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists, at College Park Church on Sabbath, September 24, 2011 during the SDACC Constituency Meetings.

Some time ago I wrote an article about membership in the church and called it, ‘Eighteen Inches on a Pew’. It’s really true—it doesn’t matter who you are or who I am, how much money you have or do not have, or the level of your intellect—when you come into the church, you take up just about 18 inches on a pew.

1 Peter 2:4-10 tells us that God is building a house—His church. It also tells us that He is a master builder, and that He is solely responsible for its construction. He chooses which stone goes where and who does what! Another person was disfellowshipped because he attended hockey games. One of the first things we did in that church was ask for God’s forgiveness. I made it a mission to find those people.

One night, my mother, who was visiting us, treated my son and me to a hockey game. She was a conservative Seventh-day Adventist who had absolutely no interest in hockey, but she wanted to please both her grandson and her son. While we enthusiastically watched the game, my mother sat there knitting. It was a good game until the referee made a really bad call and being the ‘timid’ man that I am, I jumped to my feet and yelled, “You bonehead…” The man sitting next to me said, “That was a bonehead call”. We began to talk, and he soon asked what I did for a living. I told him that I was the pastor for a Seventh-day Adventist Church in Penticton, B.C. The colour drained out of his face and he said, “I was disfellowshipped from your church for watching hockey games!” I was quick to respond, “I’ve been looking for you because I want to invite you to come back to church”. He did, and remained until the day he died.

What I’m saying is this: God knows how to work with people who disfellowship others because they think God gave them the right to do so. I believe it was George Knight who made the comment that sometimes we use the standards of the church as tools to get rid of people whom we didn’t want in the first place. But God is building a church; He can take a congregation that has purged itself, and He can take a person who has great love for hockey and he can take a bone-headed preacher who yells at other people and shape them and use them and put them in the house.

One of the greatest needs we have as Seventh-day Adventists today is to understand that it’s God’s responsibility to build the house, not ours! If you are a very conservative person, and you worship and honour God that way, I want to rejoice with you and praise God for you. If you, on the other hand, sit on the more liberal side of the church and you have some questions about the theology and the thinking of the church, understand that you are also my brothers and my sisters.

God never told me or gave me the authority to push out the conservatives, nor those in the centre nor even those on the left of the church. Like the Master Builder He is, God picks up the stone, brushes it off and looks at it and chips away at it and finds the right place for it in His building.

Now, 1 Peter 2:4-10 does not give this general idea; it gives some specific ideas about what the church is and what it ought to be. There are three things that we’re told about the church. First, the church is a commonwealth. Peter says that you are built together into a spiritual house. There
are no superstars in God’s church. The success of the church is not dependent on a great evangelist or a powerful president or a strong lay group. The strength of the church is found in the unity of the church. God does not identify superstars. We see in Scripture a record of men and women who permitted the Holy Spirit to fill them, and they were used in a mighty way, but God does not set them up as king-makers or builders. There’s no glory in human flesh; the glory is in God. The nature of church, the strength and the power and the potential victory of the church is not found in one person or in one group of people. It is found in the unity of the church.

Ephesians 2:13-19 says, “But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ… Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household”. By grace, we have been saved by faith. As God looked at you on the very worst day in your entire life, He said: There’s a place in My house for you. Jesus gave His blood for you, living stones. Verse 19 speaks about the household of faith that God is building that no man ought to mess with in terms of individual stones.

Secondly, Peter also tells us something about the function of the church. He says, “You’re a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation; God’s special possession” (1 Peter 2:9). You are a royal priesthood… that is, together you become a royal priesthood. In Old Testament times, the priest mediated between God and man, but Peter tells us that together, individually and collectively, we become a royal priesthood to mediate something to a world in need.

“And I saw another angel…to every tongue and kindred and nation and people”. The angels of Revelation 14 are mediating something, but it’s not judgement; even though judgement is a part of the three angels’ messages; They’re not mediating a health message; even though the health message is a significant part of what we do.

“I saw another angel… having the everlasting gospel to give to those who dwell on the earth.”

You and I have been called upon to mediate the grace of God to the world. We are to give the everlasting gospel which tells us what God did for you and me (and which we could never do for ourselves). We must declare that He is willing and prepared, if we allow Him, to lay the glory of man as mediators of His grace. This means being gracious to everyone outside and inside the church. We must be gracious to the person sitting beside us every week who still eats meat. It means being gracious to the brother who comes to church with a woman who isn’t his wife. While we can never accept immoral behaviour for the church as a whole or compromise with it, we are still called upon to be gracious to that person and extend the love of Jesus to our fellow human beings.

A brother once asked me to remove his name from church membership. I asked, “Why would I do that?” He replied, “I still smoke and I come to church membership. I asked, “Why would I do that?” He replied, “I still smoke and when I come to church, people can smell my sin and it’s become embarrassing and humiliating for me”. I told him not to remove his name because there was only one difference between him and the person sitting beside him, and it was that the person could not smell his or her sin. If God were to put a distinct, unique odour on every sin, and it was that the person sitting beside him, and it was that the person could not smell his or her sin. If God were to put a distinct, unique odour on every sin, it wouldn’t be difficult for us to be humble. The only difference between us and that brother is that no one can smell our sins. I’m not talking about open compromise, dropping standards, or throwing things out. I’m calling for the generation of the culture of grace within our church where we know how to treat each other, the way Jesus treats us. Even in His sternest rebuke, Ellen White tells us of Jesus, there was “a tear in His voice”. The function of the church is to be a community of grace, a group mediation of grace.

Finally, the glory of the church is simply the last half of the verse. It really tells us what the cacophony of sound around or atmosphere in the church ought to be. Peter says, “That you may declare the praise of Him who called you out the darkness into His marvellous light”.

First Corinthians 3 contains an important and significant passage that we often misinterpret. There’s a similar passage in 1 Corinthians 6 that deals with health and how our bodies belong to God, but 1 Corinthians 3 is not talking about our physical body. Verse 16 reads, “Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple…” Notice the word “yourselves” is used. It’s saying, ‘you together are that temple. Using sanctuary language, Paul is speaking, not about the outer court but about the most holy place,
the place where the glory of God was seen only by the high priest. Paul says to us, “Don’t you know, individually and collectively, that you’re the one place on earth where God really needs to be seen?”

God calls on you and me to intensify our commitment to Him, to grow into grace, to be a community of grace, to acknowledge our interdependence upon one another and demonstrate what God is really like.

In spite of the fact that God has gifted our church with an uncompromising message of truth for the last days; in spite of the fact that the 28 fundamental beliefs of our church represent a complete understanding of the Word of God, we will never finish the mission that God has given to us until we understand this passage and experience it. Until the church becomes the place on earth where the glory of God is seen within its walls, and as it impacts its community, the Seventh-day Adventist Church just isn’t going anywhere.

If it’s easier for you to fight, then switch; if it’s easier to get into brawls over carpet and theology (I’m not saying we should not defend the faith once delivered to the saints), then do that. However, remember that our Lord Jesus, in the last moments of His life, pled with His heavenly Father that all may be one. We need to plead with God’s Spirit to inculcate that value into our innermost being so that we will never allow diets and food, theology, race, gender, age, or economic disparity break the unity of the church. There’s never a reason to break unity, in terms of what the Bible says. This does not mean we don’t have frank, honest and open discussions and that we do not have to correct one another from time to time, because we do. I’m not eliminating any of that, but let this mind be in you and in me which was also in Christ Jesus Who, being found in fashion as a man, humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death even the death of the cross.

Jesus said, “I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me”. Stones… he calls us… stones, but he calls Himself the Chief cornerstone.

“Help! I’m Being Discriminated Against!”

Canada, like many Western democracies, is a wonderful place in which to live and raise a family. Citizenship affords us unmerited rights through the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Provincial laws, such as the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC), also provide us with undeserved equal rights and opportunities without discrimination. Both the Charter and the Code are designed to protect us from discrimination because of race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, etc. However, Sabbath-keepers are still faced with discrimination at the hands of some employers who are either unaware of the Code or choose to ignore it. Discrimination usually begins when you have indicated that you are unavailable for work during the Sabbath hours. Some employers, especially in small businesses, are not always aware of the provincial employment laws, so their response is usually one of ignorance. If they are reasonable, once they are aware of the law, they will grant accommodation for your religious beliefs. Other employers will sometimes intentionally discriminate against you and will try to bully you into resigning. Others attempt to pressure you by changing your hours to unfavourable ones or until you are left without any meaningful work or you are given a position that is substantially less in terms of quality and pay than what your contracts states. At this point most people tend to resign. This is sometimes referred to as ‘constructive dismissal’.

The employer will sometimes dismiss you and claim that his or her actions were simply a business decision and had nothing to do with your request for accommodation for your religious beliefs. Such claims are often suspect, especially if you are the only person being laid off and no redundancy announcement had been previously made.

Most employers recognise that it is their duty to accommodate your religious beliefs and they are either happy to grant you time off or at least do so grudgingly.

It is important to recognise that the duty of employers to accommodate is not limitless.

If your accommodation causes ‘undue hardship’ for the employer, your rights to employment and to accommodation may no longer be guaranteed. However, the burden of proof of ‘undue hardship’ rests with the employer.

What should I do when faced with a Sabbath conflict?

1. Act immediately. Do not delay.
2. Take the initiative and request accommodation in writing. Every communication should be in writing. If you are given a verbal response, write a written response explaining what you understand by what you were told verbally. It is very important to have a written record in case the matter goes to a tribunal.
3. There are several form letters on the conference website that you are able to copy and modify to suit your situation. Visit: www.adventistontario.org/parl/ and

[Image 37x270 to 215x406]
select the letters tab.
Your letter should show that you are flexible and that you are willing to work in good faith to find a suitable accommodation.

4. If you are refused accommodation, speak with your religious liberty secretary at church for assistance. Sometimes a supporting letter from your church is all that is necessary. If this is refused, contact the conference religious liberty director. You will receive the necessary guidance to resolve the matter with your employer. It may not always be resolved to your satisfaction, but every attempt will be made to do so.

I work in a health care institution; am I entitled to Sabbath accommodation?
Caring for the sick on the Sabbath is a clear principle outlined in Scripture (Matthew 12:1; Mark 3:1-6). It is in harmony with Sabbath-keeping and hence the religious teaching of the Adventist Church.
The Adventist Church operates health care institutions globally and these are staffed daily, including Sabbaths. The church does not distinguish between its health care institutions and those run by others, in terms of required Sabbath work. Therefore, workers directly involved in the care of patients in health care institutions should not expect that the church will work on their behalf to secure accommodation.

As a health care worker in Ontario, you may request accommodation and obtain it based on your personal religious conviction, regardless of the position of your church. However, you may very well require the assistance of a lawyer, at your personal cost, to secure accommodation.

Halsey Peat
PARL Director

A World of Opportunities-
Religious Liberty Day,
January 28

You may never get another opportunity like this because things are changing every day. You never know when the various levels of government will enact laws that can affect your freedom to freely live and practice your faith. Unless policy and law makers have an understanding of the value of religious freedom, prohibitive laws affecting your freedom could be passed unopposed.
Religious Liberty Day is when you can invest in your future. The offering you give on January 28 will go towards making it possible for Liberty magazine to be sent to policy and lawmakers in your city, province and country. Liberty contains valuable articles that are written to inform and enlighten policy makers and those in positions of power. Those are the individuals who make the decisions that govern your employment, health care, social and religious freedom, among others.

Why not subscribe to Liberty yourself to learn more about current religious liberty issues? It’s not expensive, costing less than $10 yearly for six issues. Some members also choose to buy subscriptions for their local councillors, MPPs or MPs. See your religious liberty leader today to find out how you may buy subscriptions. It’s your future. Invest in it!

Ontario Conference School of Evangelism

Cost: $200.00  LIVE TRAINING
Session 1 begins Sunday, March 18, 2012,
at Toronto Kingsview Village Adventist Church
70 Kingsview Blvd., Etobicoke

Learn to:
Use Your Spiritual Gifts
Successfully Win People for Christ
Experience Revival and Reformation
Become a Credentialed Lay Preacher
Having raised three children who are now adults, I have learned that raising children takes constant adjustment. What is appropriate for a one or two-year old is certainly not a fit for a seven or eight-year old. As children go through their developmental stages, parents have to adjust their approach to guiding and training them.

Training children involves a process of discipline. Children have to be disciplined, but it starts with careful attention paid by parents to disciplining themselves. Teachers will tell you that when they notice children at school acting out and being difficult, very often it can be traced back to the indiscipline of the parents. However, the same principle is true here as I mentioned previously. Parents who are in charge of themselves and are in full control of their emotions are able to discipline and to lead their children effectively.

Now, discipline does not mean spanking, neither should it be confused with punishment. It refers to the process of guiding and training children so that they will learn self-discipline. Using reasonable force to direct your children, allowed for under section 43 of the Criminal Code of Canada, should be a last resort, and in my view, reserved for those times when a child could be in danger to him/herself or to others if not physically restrained.

Note carefully: While section 43 of the Criminal Code protects parents against being charged with criminal assault when directing their children through physical force, the Children’s Aid Society has what amounts to a zero tolerance to spanking. They have the force of other laws behind them enabling them, with the assistance of the police, to intervene and take children from their parents if spanking is suspected. In other words, although you may have the right under law to use reasonable force to restrain your children, you could find yourself going through a humiliating process of seeing your children taken away and temporarily placed in care while you try to argue your case with Children’s Aid or in the courts to get your children back.

If you are part of a two-parent family raising children, be sure to present a united front to them. Children are extremely skilled at seeing and exploiting division between parents.
Make your decisions about the children only after thoroughly discussing them together so you’re on the same page when dealing with them.

If you are a lone parent, you are spared this problem, but you often have to cope with dealing with your child without the support of another parent. You have to be on your guard against impatience and frustration caused by fatigue and the feeling of being overwhelmed.

Raising children requires patience, great skill and creativity. I believe successful parenting is firmly grounded in a healthy understanding of spirituality.

There are numerous myths about spirituality. Some believe spiritual people are always praying; they look holy; they’re always talking about God and always smiling. Others believe that it means being serious about life, seldom smiling, in keeping with the serious times, the last days in which we live.

Biblical spirituality on the other hand involves a strong, purposeful link with the Holy Spirit, according to Galatians 5:25, 26. There’s no mystery about what that means because a few verses earlier in Galatians 5, verses 22 and 23 make it very clear. Being spiritual is about having the fruit of the Spirit, which means being loving, kind, self-controlled, gentle, peaceful, humble and joyful.

A marriage rooted in healthy spirituality will flourish as the partners relate to each other and their children in a loving, kind, gentle and self-controlled way. It means that each partner will be quick to build up and not tear each other down. Each will be accepting of the other and be quick to forgive and not to sit in judgement of each other. Very seldom do two people think exactly the same thoughts and act in the same way. Marriage partners may not be exactly at the same place in terms of their religious knowledge or practices, but paying attention to being kind, loving and self-controlled will bring two different minds together and promote harmony in the home.

This is especially important at the stage when your children arrive at the threshold of adulthood. They begin to discover their own individuality and their own values which may not be the same as their parents’. A shift has to take place in the way you relate to your children. While you maintain your authority as heads of your household, you need to begin to relate to your late teens as you would to an adult. It may mean balancing respect for their choices, with requiring respect from your young adult for the rules of your home. It means never abandoning relating to them with spiritual graciousness even if they decide they no longer believe the things you believe.

I hope this three-part series on marriage has been useful for you. I have given you the broad principles by which to guide your marriage. If you follow them, the details will take care of themselves. If you encounter roadblocks and challenges which are too great for you to handle, do not hesitate to get counselling from trustworthy therapists. Do it quickly before the problems become intractable and impossible to solve because of a deep well of resentment and bitterness that has been allowed to fill up over an extended period of time.

The Ontario Conference is seeking a Web Developer/Support Specialist

The Ontario Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is seeking a committed and highly motivated web developer and support specialist to assist in the Information Technology Department. He/she must be knowledgeable, well rounded, flexible, and willing to assist in various I.T. related areas.

The successful candidate will, among other responsibilities, be responsible for proposing technologies that can be utilized on the web to meet the objectives of the organization; create and maintain websites, applications, and services as determined by the departmental director; maintain the messaging system used by the organization, and troubleshoot and provide technical support with hardware and software issues within the office.

To view the full job posting, visit www.adventistontario.org/jobs

Please send your resume to the Human Resources Department c/o jkapusi@adventistontario.org. Only suitably qualified candidates will be contacted.
REACH: “A ‘Must’ for Ontario Adventists,”
Says Conference President

“REACH is a ‘must’ for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ontario,” urged Dr Mansfield Edwards, Ontario Conference president. He was addressing the directors of the conference at the start of their weekly strategic planning session at the church headquarters in Oshawa.

“For too long, both at the conference and local church levels, we have simply busied ourselves with well-intentioned programmes without making any significant and long-lasting impact on our communities,” he said. “We have not planned for long-term outcomes. We have not sat down and prayerfully set out clear and measurable objectives. We have approached our mission with a ‘hit or miss’ attitude, and unfortunately, we have often missed.

REACH offers us an amazing opportunity to bring about a radical change in the life of our church membership and in our communities, and I am excited by it. I am convinced that when our pastors and local elders share this with the congregations, they will receive overwhelming support because the church will have a clear direction as to where it is going.”

REACH is the acronym for the North American Division’s new evangelism strategy. It highlights five areas: Revival and Transformation, Education for Discipleship, Alignment Within the Church, Community Outreach and Evangelism, and Healthy Leadership and Management.

Each conference and each local church is challenged and encouraged to embrace REACH and establish big and audacious goals. It is anticipated that these goals will direct the work of both the conference and the local church.

Edwards notes that the process requires a lot of hard work that some may find daunting, but he is quick to give assurance that the result will more than justify the effort.

“Sometimes we find it difficult to stick to anything that requires time and hard work,” he says, “because we want to see immediate results. REACH will require each congregation to spend a number of months to thoroughly prepare for some exciting results. Understand, however, that the results will not come without the work.”

Presently, the conference departmental directors are working hard to establish clear and measurable goals in the areas mentioned in REACH.

“Prayer and seeking God’s guidance in regards to REACH is the foundation of all our work,” says Edwards, “and we are confident that as we embrace this way of thinking and operating, we will see the hand of God performing a mighty work in our lives and across this great province.”

“If Christians were to act in concert, moving forward as one, under the direction of one power, for the accomplishment of one purpose, they would move the world.” Gospel Workers, pp. 277-278.

Halsey Peat
F E A T U R E

If your church projects hymns on screen, it may need a licence in order to do so. If a hymn or song is in public domain (when the copyright has expired such as many hymns written before 1940), it may be copied and projected or used as part of a compilation of songs in a song book created by the church. If a song is still subject to copyright, an annual licence from Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI) or a similar organisation is needed.

The copying of copyright music for print or for projection on a screen is illegal and is subject to a fine for each infringement. In some places, criminal sanctions may be applied.

Even though the hymns projected are usually from the Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal, the Review and Herald does not necessarily hold the copyright of all the hymns in the hymnal.

A similar licensing requirement is also applicable to the photocopying of other music, say for use in a choir.

If your church broadcasts its services via the Internet or by any other means and songs that are still under copyright are included, a separate broadcast licence is required.

Some time ago, CCLI cited the example of a church where a soloist sang a song for the service.

Like all published contemporary songs, it was still under copyright, and it is quite in order for such songs to be sung without need of a license. However, the service (including the song) was later uploaded to the church’s website. The placing of the song on the website without a broadcast licence made the church liable for breach of the law. It was fined over $50,000! In another case, filed on October 28, 2011 in the United States, a music company is suing a church for using two of its composition on its website without a licence. The company is seeking $150,000 for each infringement in addition to attorneys’ fees.

If your church does not have a broadcast licence, it can still stream its services, but it must not include the streaming of any music that is not in public domain.

The same principle may be applied to the creation of CDs or DVDs of church services or other occasions.

Reproduction, loan, rental and sale of such media, regardless of their purpose, must not include any copyright music, the exception being for shut-ins, missionaries or others outside the church.

With a licence, a church may do what is usually done with music—copy, print, create song books, project onto a screen, etc. You may even record your worship services (audio or video) provided you only record live music. Accompaniment tracks cannot be reproduced. If your church decides to sell CDs or DVDs of its programmes, it is allowed to charge up to $5 each for audiocassette tapes and CDs, and $15 each for videotapes and DVDs (without accompaniment tracks).

How much does it cost?

The annual fee is dependent on regular attendance, not on membership. CCLI’s website, www.ccli.com, lists the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-24</td>
<td>$57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-99</td>
<td>$119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-199</td>
<td>$205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200-499</td>
<td>$270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500-999</td>
<td>$365</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Broadcast licence may only be obtained if your church has a copyright licence.

CCLI maintains a list of songs that are in the public domain. If all of the songs that a church uses are in that list, then it does not need to pay the CCLI licence fee. As of July 15, 2007, CCLI’s list contained 7,270 public domain songs.

For all the information needed, visit www.ccli.com

Important Message for All Church Officers Regarding REACH

Dr. Mansfield Edwards, president of the Ontario Conference, cordially invites all elders and all elected church officers to attend an important meeting to share in the strategic direction of the conference. The meeting will also clarify how you may apply the REACH template in your local church.

Dates and locations:

Southern Ontario – Sun., January 22, 9:30 a.m. - 12 noon (Hamilton Mt.)
Western Ontario – Sun., February 12, 9:30 a.m. – 12 noon (South London)
GTA – Sab., March 3, 3:30 - 5:30 p.m. (Crawford Academy)
Ottawa – Sab., March 17, 4:00 p.m. (Benjamin Ave.)
North – Sun., April 15, 2:00 p.m. (Sudbury)
Family Life Profile

Meet the individuals who unselfishly give of themselves in order to help build strong families in our churches. These men and women seek to enrich their own families and are passionate to see families in which the presence of God results in happy, loving relationships. The first person in this series is Kristen Bailey.

Kristen is the secretary in the Family Ministries Department of the Ontario Conference. Five years ago, she married Darren. They have been blessed with two children, two-year old Evan and his sister, Emma, who was born in September.

Kristen was not an Adventist when she met Darren just before her high school graduation but accepted his invitation to attend New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church in Oshawa.

“I was surprised to be greeted by so many friendly people,” she says. “The passionate music and message gripped me, and I continued attending. The church elders encouraged me, and I soon learned to volunteer my skills. In no time I began to see Jesus working in my life.”

Kristen was baptized in 2003, and New Life became her church.

Getting married, and later becoming parents, is an exciting time of life for Kristen and Darren. She says that each turn in their lives teaches them something new and brings new challenges, but they realise how important it is to keep God at the centre of their lives.

“As new parents, we pray together a lot,” she says. “It helps us keep calm when we’re frustrated or feel upset, or too tired to go on. It’s important for us to take our children to church each Sabbath for corporate worship and for fellowship. At home, we’re busy building Sabbath traditions. Darren grew up with the My Bible Friends books, which we now watch on DVD. We also read Bible stories to our 2-year-old and practice prayers we found in My Little Book of Prayers, a book for toddlers. Evan loves to recite his letters, including J for Jesus and G is for grandma and grandpa and God.

“We especially love singing at home. We want the children to grow up hearing God being praised. Darren enjoys singing, Power of Your Love. The lyrics talk about being close with God and how His Spirit and love lead us on. Evan has a teddy bear that sings Jesus Loves Me, This I Know. We sing it a lot! When I put the children to bed, I often sing Through It All to them because it’s a beautiful reminder of our Saviour’s love.

“These activities really work for us, and we believe that other young Christian parents would also find them useful to help them keep God at the centre of their lives.”

Since having their children, Darren and Kristen, like all parents, have their hands full. There is hardly any time for anything other than caring for them, doing household chores and fulfilling church responsibilities. However, they do not see themselves as being deprived of anything.

“We just enjoy when we’re all together at any point of the day,” says Kristen. “Whether it’s having a quick lunch when daddy is home for lunch, going to the park, or playing peek-a-boo with the kids while folding the towels, we love being together. These moments won’t last so we enjoy them while we can.”

The Baileys have also seen the need to develop a ministry for their family. They see their ministry as one where they use both music and friendship to win others to Christ. Kristen is now learning to play the piano and has even played in worship at her church.

They really enjoy their friends, and they see building friendships as a way to serve as Jesus did. They intend that their home will become a place where friends and others will experience the presence of Jesus.

Submitted by Joan Rogers
Family Ministries Director
“Expect Churches to Grow,” Says Ministerial Director

“We can now expect our churches to grow,” says Dr. Errol Lawrence, Ministerial director and Evangelism coordinator for Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. “The enthusiasm with which our pastors have embraced this concept is exactly what we were hoping for. The harvest for which we have been praying is now within reach.” Lawrence was referring to the two-day training, held at the conference office, November 28-29, for twenty-four pastors as Natural Church Development (NCD) coaches. The training was led by Pastor Tom Evans, an associate director at the North American Division Evangelism Institute (NADEI), and a certified NCD coach.

NCD is the name for a process, or in the words of its creator, Christian Schwarz, “the label for an approach to the Christian life”. It seeks to apply God’s creation principles to the life, health and reproduction of the church. It is based on the observation that healthy churches are growing churches. It identifies eight characteristics of healthy churches and provides tools that address the issues preventing churches from being healthy.

While many congregations recognise that they have various problems, they are often incapable of clearly identifying the real issues preventing them from being healthy and, consequently, growing churches. Even those that experience above average baptisms are not necessarily healthy, and baptisms do not always translate into disciples. More often than not, they need the help of someone from outside the congregation. This is where an NCD coach comes in.

The training of twenty-four pastors and three departmental directors as NCD coaches is part of the Ontario Conference’s REACH strategy.

“In order to reap the benefits of REACH,” says Ontario Conference president, Dr. Mansfield Edwards, “the health of each church must be measured. We need a starting point in order to determine what steps need to be taken to make the church healthy and to see how well each one is growing once we implement the tools of NCD and the plans for REACH. When we think of REACH, we also need to think of NCD. It’s all about preparing the soil so that the Spirit of God can grow healthy churches.”

NCD coaches are indispensable to churches that plan to evaluate their health and learn to become growing, happy, healthy churches. Coaches assist, support and affirm churches in a process that involves evaluation and implementation.

The recently trained NCD coaches, strategically selected from each region of the conference, are excitedly looking towards 2012. They are keen to implement NCD in their own congregations and to give support to others as coaches. They recognise that some congregations might be suspicious, thinking this to be yet another conference programme and reluctant to embrace it. Some even expressed that this was their view before they attended the training. However, as each new coach spoke of what he gained, Pastor Joel Nembhard’s three-word response, “I’m a believer!” summarised the opinion of even the most die-hard sceptic.

Converted NCD sceptic, Pastor Kossovan from Windsor, said, “I’m excited to implement this in my local church because I now understand the importance of NCD, and I cannot wait to find out how well my church scores in the evaluation.”

Pastor Gerry Pasikatan from Toronto was equally enthusiastic.

“NCD will show our weaknesses, but it will also help us develop and become healthy and strong. I’m looking forward to seeing our church grow spontaneously and naturally,” he said.

Although NCD did not originate in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Adventist church leaders recognise its firm biblical foundations as well as in principles clearly outlined in the writings of Ellen White. Former General Conference president, Robert Folkenberg, Jr.’s book, Health for the Harvest and Russell Burrill’s Creating Healthy Adventist Churches Through Natural Church Development are just two Adventist books that have taken the NCD principles and adapted them for Adventist use. These are the principles that are being used in the Ontario Conference and, when applied, will result in growing churches, actively preparing for the Second Coming of Jesus.
Welcome to this new feature of Ontario Highlights where you may ask your questions regarding the Seventh-day Adventist Church at all its levels. Send your questions to sgouda@adventistontario.org. The editor reserves the right to determine which questions are included.

“What is the job description of a pastor? As a church member I’m not sure what is reasonable to expect from my pastor.”

Pastor Errol Lawrence, ministerial director, answers: “While it is fairly easy to list the duties of a pastor, they are just labels of responsibilities that are often far more detailed and involved than they appear.

Your pastor’s role is primarily that of a worship leader to prepare and lead the congregation in worship. This involves planning, co-ordinating and implementation. He or she is expected to prepare and deliver sermons and other spiritual presentations through which the congregation is spiritually uplifted, intellectually stimulated and evangelistically motivated.

Your pastor is expected to be knowledgeable of God’s Word and an interpreter of biblical doctrines. Consequently, he or she is able to effectively instruct people who seek conversion to the Seventh-day Adventist faith.

Pastors are sometimes called ‘under-shepherds’ in that, like the Shepherd Jesus, they care for His flock. Church members should expect to be cared for, nurtured, taught and organised for involvement in the mission of the church. In order to accomplish this, your pastor will facilitate and participate in home and hospital visitation. He is especially responsive to the needs of the poor, elderly and sick and organizes for their care.

You may look to your pastor for spiritual counsel and when bereaved, comfort. He or she will assist you in planning for and officiating at significant services such as weddings, house blessings, baby dedications and funerals.

Your pastor also functions as an overseer of religious education in the church and promotes Adventist education and strong family values.

Pastors are expected to be the face of the Adventist church in the community. He or she will write articles for publication and engage in interfaith, community, civic, educational and recreational activities sponsored by or related to the interest of the denomination.

Pastors plan for and lead the church in evangelism. The administration of the church centres on the church’s mission for evangelism. Your pastor’s administration of the church with its various committees demands his or her regular attention.

On any given day, your pastor will spend time in personal devotion, sermon or other spiritual preparation, personal study and development, church administration (related to boards, church building, finance, membership details, etc.), visitation, meetings, community events and, if wise, time with his family.”

“Exactly what role do the different levels of church organization play? I have been attending my current church for the past fourteen years and we have never had a visit from a division or general conference person. How do they know what is happening at the local church level and the concerns of members?”

Pastor Daniel Linrud, executive secretary, answers: “The reason you have not had a visit from the leaders from the union, division or general conference is because your pastor has never invited one or, if one was invited, a mutually acceptable date was not found. Leaders from the various entities are generally only an invitation away.

With regards to the role of the different levels of church organisation, we have to consider our history. When God called the Seventh-day Adventist movement into being, it was to transcend the provincial precinct of 1840s northern New England in the United States. His message through this prophetic movement was to spread not only across North America, but to encircle the globe, reaching into teaming cities, tiny villages and remote outposts around the world. Hence, we see the methodical establishment of a global educational system, hospital network, publishing associations and evangelistic expansion.

In His divine wisdom, God gave clear and precise direction to our Adventist pioneers within the framework of an 1863 organisational structure.

Keeping such a diverse and large body connected could only be maintained by the concentric circles of organisational structure with the local churches enveloped by conferences; conferences enveloped by unions and unions enveloped by divisions of the world church (the General Conference). This means that a collection of local churches make up a conference, and a collection of conferences make up a union, etc. A conference represents churches, and a union represents conferences, etc. Even though the unions or divisions may seem distant from the local church, the local church is connected to its world body through this structure. So, while it is impossible for leaders of unions, divisions and the General Conference to be personally present in each local church, every pastor, Bible instructor, teacher and member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is a local representative of the worldwide movement. Consequently, information regarding the situation of the field in which the local church is situated flows upwards through the various levels of church organisation. Each concentric circle of conference, union and division has the responsibility of unifying the church within its designated territory and safeguarding her mission, members and material matters for God’s purpose and glory.”
You’re most probably reading this at the end of 2011 or at the beginning of 2012. The end of an old year and the start of a new one is always a good time to re-evaluate our commitment to God and to His work. It’s also a good time to re-examine the effectiveness of the tools we’ve been using for His work.

The Roman road system was a strategic tool in spreading the gospel throughout the then known world, and today the Internet continues to be foremost in facilitating effective communication of the gospel to a worldwide network—one made up of our very own neighbours, friends and family members. For many, it is the only way to stay connected with loved ones.

In 2012, why not resolve to commit to one or all of the following:

1. Write a blog, share your thoughts, experiences and testimonies of what God has done for you. It’s quick, easy, inexpensive, and leads to relationship-building.

2. If you’re already on a social network like Facebook, why not start a video blog, podcast or weekly discussion group? I love video blogs because they are like weekly parables. This is not a new idea. Jesus often used parables. If you are camera shy, you can always find amazing video shorts at any one of the following sites: www.DanStevens.com & www.SpiritClips.com. Be sure to screen the clips properly, to ensure they are in agreement with your own biblical views.

3. Help the Audiovisual Department of your church record, post and distribute services on the church website, to shut-ins and to the community. Be creative. They can even be mailed or emailed to guests as gifts, a reminder that you’re thinking about them (great way to get contact information).

4. Start a Skype or Google+ Bible study group in your church and invite non-members to join. This is a great way to build relationships as participants meet at a convenient time and in the comfort of their own homes.

5. Work with the Communications & Youth Departments of your church to start and creatively maintain a Facebook page for your Church. Just last month my church had an interested person contact us through this medium.

6. Volunteer for the Internet evangelism committee of your church, or help to start one. Remember, Internet evangelism is not an event; it’s a lifestyle that reflects the initiatives, goals and activities of the church to an audience that’s tuned in 24/7.

7. Help to plan an Internet evangelism awareness program in your church. Use it to communicate the outreach potential of the Web to the entire church, and be sure to demonstrate the many ways in which everyone could be involved. Make it an annual event!

We’ve been bought with a price, set apart to fulfill His purpose, compelled to make a difference in the world around us. May God richly bless you and your efforts in 2012.

By Cyril ‘Ceejay’ Horrell
On November 5, 2011, Ontario experienced its first annual Stewardship (Faith, Family, Fitness and Finance) Symposium. The journey began at the Willowdale Seventh-day Adventist Church during the second service with a powerful time of worship in song and prayer. Pastor David Schwinghammer, Ontario Conference Stewardship director, passionately shared the message, Life in the Kingdom of God, that outlined stewardship principles for living as God’s children. Following the church service, registered attendees enjoyed a delicious lunch before proceeding to Crawford Academy’s Gymnasium for the afternoon seminars under the theme, Empowered Living.

Dr. Daniel Linrud, executive secretary of the Ontario Conference, launched the first of four workshops with the emphasis on living an empowered life of FAITH. In his workshop, Walking with God, Keeping Faith Fresh: A Journey of Renewal and Growth, Dr. Linrud explored various portraits of God that encourage participants in their walk with the Lord. The following workshop was conducted by Dr. David Sloan. He gave a very interesting and engaging seminar on how to live an empowered life of good health and FITNESS. Dr. Sloan also shared principles that he has gleaned from his practice of natural medicine, as well as from his personal journey of good health.

The final workshop, Principles of Personal and Family Finances was conducted by Ulysses Guarin, treasurer of the Ontario Conference. His workshop explored the principles of empowered FINANCE, as well as practical elements of how to manage personal finances to experience financial freedom.

Many took advantage of the excellent resources that were provided, along with the practical tools to implement the principles that were shared throughout the day. One participant said, “I love this balanced approach to stewardship; my life will never be the same; I can’t wait until next year!”

The evening concluded with a light supper and a final gathering of praise and powerful worship. The evening keynote speaker, Dr. Mansfield Edwards, Ontario Conference president, enthusiastically spoke of God’s desire and plan for His children to experience the empowered life.

Organiser, Dave Schwinghammer, took time to express his appreciation to the presenters, to Rose Dunn-Kalynko, and to the Stewardship Council team (Chad Scarlet, Dan Oteng, Dr. Mansfield Edwards, and Jennifer and Sean Desmond), for their unwavering commitment to make the first symposium become a reality.
With the launch of the long-awaited walking club and the theme, ‘Walking in His Steps,’ there was little doubt what the organisers had in mind for the second annual Seniors Wellness Retreat, September 16-18, 2011. According to the ministry coordinator, Dr. Mansfield Edwards, the retreat held at the Best Western Hotel, Oshawa, was about having a “healthy body and a strong spiritual life”.

After news of last year’s successful inaugural retreat for seniors, held at Camp Frenda, was published in Ontario Highlights, it was not surprising that 140 seniors registered for this year’s event. That’s 100 more than last year! Credit must also be given to Dr. Edwards as he motivated the seniors everywhere he went.

It was clear that the seniors at this year’s retreat were well-motivated because they arrived from across the entire province, even from as far as Thunder Bay, eager to begin the weekend.

“We could feel the energy in the large banquet hall,” said one attendee. “It was difficult to tell if there were seniors in the room because everyone looked so young and bright, eager to experience ‘walking with Jesus’.”

Early arrivals on Friday were treated with a health screening by Dr. Paulette Higgins-Gray and her team, followed by a five minute massage. She gave out the results of the screening on Sunday, prior to her presentation.

Later on Friday evening, the seniors were taken on an emotional and moving parental journey by Pastor Roy West, speaker for The Quiet Hour (Canada). He shared how he struggled with God after his son died from cancer and how the Holy Spirit restored him to faith and confidence. As the devotional speaker, Pastor West also delivered the sermon in the main worship service.

Other presenters included Dr. Ruth Ali from Alberta, Alvin Ram, Trust Services director, Ontario Conference; Dr. George Sanz and Sgt. John Keating, senior support coordinator for Durham Regional Police. Dr. Ali spoke of the need for seniors to become aware of their environment, senior abuse, and care for the physical, mental, and spiritual being. Alvin Ram spoke about the need for careful estate planning. Dr. Sanz had everyone laughing with his presentation on the health benefits of laughter, and the witty Sgt. John Keating continued the humour, with the aid of his son and daughter, to demonstrate the serious subject of how seniors are often ‘hoodwinked’ and exploited by other people.

Like last year’s retreat, laughter and good fellowship characterised the weekend. Vernon Langdon, social coordinator, even hosted the seniors’ SNL or Saturday Night Live. He stimulated their brains with ‘brain-teasers’ and numerous games. The participants were sharp, versatile and quick-witted. Prizes were given to the winners.

For the launch of the walking club on Sunday morning, everyone turned out in their brand new track suits for a morning stretch and a walk around the block. Higgins-Gray declared that the club was officially opened.

Dr. Edwards encouraged everyone to spread the word about the seniors’ wellness retreat and to return to their churches and begin walking clubs there.

After posing in their new track suits for a group picture, there were the final hugs, kisses and tears, as the seniors reluctantly left each other to return to their own homes. Some were already speaking about meeting for next year’s retreat.

Marjorie Williamson
Immanuel Church
Ontario Conference Ordains Goran Zivkovic

Hands were laid on Pastor Goran Zivkovic as he was ordained to the gospel ministry during a specially held ordination service at Toronto Yugoslavian Seventh-day Adventist Church on Sabbath, October 22, 2011. The ordination was performed by Ontario Conference officers, Pastor Mansfield Edwards, president, and Pastor Daniel Linrud, executive secretary.

The two Conference officers and their respective wives were warmly welcomed by a capacity congregation of members, former members, friends and a number of pastors.

The ordinand, Pastor Goran Zivkovic, arrived in Ontario in the summer of this year and was introduced to Toronto Yugoslavian Church as its new pastor on July 18. His ordination to the gospel ministry was supposed to have taken place this year had he remained in Serbia, but his move to Ontario occurred before the appointed time.

The Ontario Conference board of directors voted to ordain him shortly after his arrival.

The ordination service, held in the intimate atmosphere of a church building rather than at a huge event such as camp meeting, was especially meaningful, as the entire congregation was able to rejoice with its new pastor, his wife, Branka, and their young daughter, Sarah. An orchestra comprised of over 30 young people presented two musical pieces. Shortly after, the majority of the orchestra put down their instruments and were joined by a few other members to form a choir that rendered the majestic choral piece, “Gloria”. The choir was conducted by Ljiljana Markovic.

Taking his text from 1 Peter 5:1-10, Edwards gave a brief homily describing the work to which pastors are called.

“The pastor is on an assignment from God,” he said, “and his job is to keep you faithful!”

Pastor Edwards also gave the ordination charge. Pastor Linrud introduced the ordinand, read his biographical sketch and offered the ordination prayer. Floral bouquets were presented to both Branka and Sarah.

Confused About Pastoral Titles?

Have you ever wondered what all those different pastoral titles mean? Confused about ‘assistant’ and ‘associate’ pastor? The following explanations may help:

Assistant Pastor: This is a ministerial intern, someone who has provisional employment by the conference. Interns are neither commissioned nor ordained. Their credentials are limited to ‘ministerial licence’. Consequently, they do not possess the authority to perform baptism without permission from the conference administration. However, they may assist an ordained or commissioned pastor in a baptismal service. Interns may only officiate at a communion service if they have been ordained as an elder. However, they may preside over weddings if they are registered marriage officers.

In North America, an assistant pastor is referred to as ‘Pastor’, whereas in the United Kingdom and some other places, he or she is called ‘Brother’ or ‘Sister’, respectively.

Associate Pastor: The associate pastor is someone who has been either ordained or commissioned to the gospel ministry and serves as part of the pastoral team of a church. He or she will normally have completed an appropriate Master’s degree from the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary or other accredited institution. The associate pastor holds ‘ministerial credentials’ and may perform all the functions normally associated with an ordained minister.

Lead Pastor: This is the new designation for what was previously termed ‘senior pastor’ when there is more than one pastor serving a congregation. He or she is either an ordained or commissioned pastor and has the responsibility of leading the congregation as its pastor. He or she will direct the other pastors in the pastoral team. When an intern or assistant pastor is assigned to a church, the lead pastor has the responsibility of mentoring him or her.

Pastor: The title given to the person who has normally undergone theological training and is employed by the conference in either an elected or appointed position. He or she may be placed in any of the categories above. He or she either has care of a congregation or wider care of a region or conference of churches. Theology students are not given the title of ‘Pastor’ until they are employed in a ministerial capacity. Individuals who have previously served in other fields as pastors but are not employed (received credentials) are termed ‘Brother’ or ‘Sister’, not ‘Pastor’.

The exception is for retired pastors who receive honorary credentials from their local conference and live within that conference.
On Tuesday, September 27, 2011, twelve pastors demonstrated their support for Adventist education by attending Crawford East’s consecration service. The pastors from various Adventist churches in the surrounding area joined the parents, pupils and teachers who turned out for the 6:30 p.m. service.

One of the highlights of the evening was when school chaplain, Pastor Patrick Jacques, placed all the students’ names on a stone. Each staff member (bus driver included) and student, along with their parents, came to the front and added their stone to a bowl representing their part in building a firm-Rock-foundation for both now and the future. The visiting pastors then encircled the staff, students and parents and presented them to Lord in prayer.

Following the service, many of the pastors remained and engaged in meaningful discussions, played games and had a snack with the students while the parents met for their monthly PTA meeting. The pastors’ attendance meant a great deal to the staff, students and parents as it set an excellent tone for the school year. Their attendance also reinforced the importance of the home, the school and the church uniting for the purpose of preparing and saving souls for Christ’s return.

Wendy Hutchinson
Principal

Peel Adventist Elementary Sings Anthem at Hockey Game

Peel Adventist Elementary School located in Brampton, Ontario, sang “O Canada” at the Brampton Battalion Junior “A” hockey game on December 1. The 31 students from grade K-7 were thrilled to sing at a hockey game. The game was broadcast over Rogers Cable 10. With hundreds of people attending, it was a huge PR event for Peel.

The invitation to sing at the game came after Sam Carrick, Brampton Battalion’s team captain, and his assistant, visited the school and had heard the children sing. According to Principal Leonard Hild, the students were inspired to strive toward their goals.

Since the Peel School building burned down in 2008, the school has been meeting in a building owned by another religious organization. The Toronto Adventist District School Board (TADSB) is in the process of searching for a new location for the school that we can call our own.

Peel Adventist Elementary Sings Anthem at Hockey Game

Sogusa Joseph, principal/teacher

Presently, the school uses the facilities of Cornerstone Seventh-day Adventist Church. However, as the school grows, it is hoped that it will soon be housed in its own building. The school board is already working on a strategic plan to accomplish this dream.

Cornerstone Doubles Its Enrolment

The smallest school in the Ontario Conference has doubled its enrolment from four pupils to eight.

Last year, the school board of Cornerstone Adventist Elementary School, located in beautiful Sault Ste. Marie, decided to knock on their neighbours’ doors and introduce themselves. The ancient practice resulted in four new pupils at enrolled at the school.

“It’s so exciting to see the school growing and thriving,” said Sogusa Joseph, principal/teacher.
Crawford’s Spelling Bee Hat-Trick

Crawford Adventist Academy continues to dominate the Ontario Conference's Spelling Bee contest with its third consecutive win. This year’s contest was held at Peel Adventist School on November 5 and featured grades 1-6 pupils from College Park, Crawford, Crawford East, Grandview and Peel elementary schools. Grandview was runner-up.

In its first year, April 2010, the contest was only open to grades 3-6 pupils. Since then, in response to requests by parents, grades 1 and 2 have been included.

Eliminations for the contest are held at the school level, and those who placed first, second or third become the finalists for the conference level. Every contestant receives a certificate. Students in third place receive a bronze medal, those in second place a silver medal, and first place contestants receive an award.

Ontario Conference Education superintendent, congratulated Crawford and Grandview for their placement and all the other teams for their effort and team spirit. She also expressed her appreciation to the principals, teachers and parents for how prepared the children were.

“Let’s encourage our children to improve their literacy skills by reading and practicing their spelling and grammar,” she said. “Our vision is to see our pupils become contestants at the Canadian Spelling Bee Ontario division.”

The contest was judged by Mrs. Margaret Lazarus, a principal with the Durham District School Board; Dr. Dennis Marshall, SDACC Education Director, Ms. Marsha Birkett, teacher with the Toronto District School Board and well-known Toronto Star columnist, Mr. Royston James. It was co-ordinated by Mrs. Audrey James and Mrs. Sarah Mora.

Janice Maitland

Baptism as Mt. Olive Hosts Youth Evangelism

Two young persons were baptized at Mt. Olive Adventist Church at the conclusion of a two-week youth evangelistic series in October 2011.

The series, part of Mt. Olive’s ongoing emphasis of evangelism as a life-style, coincided with the GC Year of Youth Evangelism. The speaker was Dexter Smith who expounded on the theme “Moving Forward”.

The pews were filled as people came from near and far anxious to hear God’s Word and to receive a blessing. On the topic “The Right Fight”, Smith referenced several biblical texts from which he drew a number of significant examples and he showed their relevance to today’s life experience.

Janice Maitland

Book Review

“The Seventh-day Ox and Other Miracle Stories from Russia”

By Bradley Booth, Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2011

Available from the ABC, price $16.49.

The Seventh-day Ox and Other Miracle Stories from Russia is a remarkable book of three stories about unfailing faith, enduring loyalty and victory.

The first story, The Seventh-day Ox, is about Nickolai Panchuk, a Seventh-day Adventist pastor who was serving eleven underground churches when he was asked by the KGB to turn over the list of members. Despite persistent threats and intimidation by KGB interrogators, Panchuk refused to betray his members. Considered an enemy of the state, he was exiled to a labour prison camp in Siberia.

The tinned-roof and tundra sod-walled prison room designed to hold 10-12 inmates billeted 20 other prisoners in addition to Panchuk. The only space he could call his own was his own bunk which was a little more than five feet. Escape was out of the question.

On his first day, Panchuk was assigned to work with Vadeem, the prison carpenter. During the afternoon, he noticed an ox being mistreated by its driver. He intervened and started talking to and stroking the ox. He learned later that the ox, Maksim, was God’s way of helping him to keep his faith and the Sabbath!

Booth takes the reader through the ordeals of Panchuk, including a severe beating by a guard on his first Sabbath that left him unconscious when he refused to work on a Sabbath, being imprisoned in a wooden box where he couldn’t move for ten days at a time. He traces how God worked miracles for Panchuk by using an ox and a Russian officer and leaves the reader with a strong conviction that God is still able to perform miracles for His people today.

The other stories are also strong faith-builders. They are amazing, inspirational and provide the reader with hope and encouragement.

The Seventh-day Ox and Other Miracle Stories from Russia is an exciting read for adults, young people and even younger readers. The book comes in an easy-to-read format and makes a good gift for friends who are not yet Seventh-day Adventists.

Reviewed by Herbert Sormin, pastor of Six Nations Seventh-day Adventist Church, Ontario, Canada.
Nepean Members Sing a New Song

Nepean Church members were the first people in the world to publicly sing the new Sabbath hymn “I Ask Myself.” The lyrics, crafted by a member of the congregation, Frank A. Campbell, were written to be sung to Finlandia, better known as the tune of “Be Still My Soul.”

As a writer and editor for most of the past 50 years, Frank has written nonfiction prose. Although he has also written a few poems and the lyrics for a couple of songs, he admits, “I don’t consider myself either a poet or a songwriter.”

Nonetheless, he “felt inspired,” he said in an e-mail to Ontario Highlights, to write the song during a “Sabbath walk” on Saturday, June 4, this year. He said he was surprised and gratified by the passion with which his fellow congregants seemed to embrace the song, the passion with which they sang it, and the kind comments they made afterwards.

Earlier, he had shared the lyrics with a small number of musicians, communicators and theologians. Their response to his writing of the new lyrics to an old and familiar tune varied from “good” and “theologically correct” to “inspired,” “a blessing” and “praise the Lord!”

Frank also received a couple of suggestions for improvements, and he readily incorporated these improvements into the text.

Here, then, are the lyrics of the first two of six stanzas of “I Ask Myself” by Frank A. Campbell. The complete song may be obtained from the Highlights’ editor.

I Ask Myself

I ask myself
What need have I of Sabbath
If not for rest
And healing of my frame.

The God who made me
Says I need repose—
Six days to work,
One to revive again.
I give God thanks
For His consideration.
Nothing I lose
And a new strength I gain.

I ask myself
What need have I of Sabbath
If not for rest
And healing of the mind.

I spend all week
Thinking too much the world’s thoughts
But then on Sabbath
Think the holy kind.
I sing, I pray
I search the Holy Word
The peace of God
And sweet relief to find.

© Frank A. Campbell

Brampton Church Makes Bible Bowl History

Youth Director Bowled Over with Growth

Brampton Church continues to make Bible Bowl history by being the first church in Ontario to have two teams in the same age-group (Junior Youth) play in the conference finals. Brampton Church teams also placed third in two of the five different age categories when they represented Ontario, competing with eight other conferences, in the Nationals in Detroit, Michigan, on October 21 and 22. Mount Zion Filipino’s pre-junior team also placed third at the Nationals.

Twenty-eleven was a bumper year for Bible Bowl with a record breaking registration of 17 churches and 47 teams in this year’s Ontario games, held at the Toronto West Church, on July 17 and 23.

“We cannot thank God enough for the continued phenomenal growth of Bible Bowl in Ontario,” said Pastor Cyril Millett, Youth director for the Ontario Conference. “This is what we have been praying for and working towards—our children and youth in the word of God daily.”

Next year, two veteran Bible Bowl students, Freddie Guthrie, from Brampton Church, and Orville Rey, from Mount Zion Filipino, decided to retire from playing in the games in order to help promote Bible Bowl in Ontario. They will help encourage and build Bible Bowl teams in any church wanting to develop Bible study skills among members.

“We are anticipating an even larger number of requests for Bible Bowl promotional visits,” said Pastor Millett.

Continued on back page
Berea Members Walk to End Childhood Obesity

On Sunday, September 25, 2011, thirty-six members of the Berea Seventh-day Adventist Church in Toronto participated in a two-mile (3.2 km) walk to end childhood obesity. The event was organized by members of the Health and Temperance team as part of the church’s involvement in the North American Division’s (NAD) “Let’s Move Day”. On the morning of the walk, the participants were blessed with good weather.

As the group gathered before the walk, the presence of a number of children made it a festive occasion. The festive spirit remained during the walk, making it a wonderful experience. During the walk, a number of people from the local community encouraged the group for what it was doing to end childhood obesity.

The participants enjoyed themselves so much that they are looking forward to next year’s event and are hoping that many more people will take part.

The NAD’s Let’s Move Day is part of the Adventists’ InStep for Life initiative and represented the Adventist Church’s alignment with some fifty other faith and community organizations’ support of the United States First Lady Michelle Obama’s initiative in February 2010, to end childhood obesity.

Pastor’s $100 Investment Challenge Results in “Back to School” Project

As summer drew to a close, Pastor Carter Stanley of Bracebridge Adventist Church gave three of his church leaders $100 each. As they eagerly accepted the money, they soon learned that it came with a condition. He challenged them to ‘pay it forward’ by finding a way of multiplying it and using it within the local community.

As various ideas were explored, one of the $100 dollar recipients, Curtis Minder, thought of the idea to provide supplies for students who may need a little extra help. He approached the other two recipients, and they agreed to add their money to his. The challenge was to get other members to grow the seed money. In almost no time, the original sum was almost tripled with donations in cash, materials and discounts. The Back to School Project was born.

The Back to School Project involves the delivering of backpacks filled with school supplies to six schools in the area.

Pastor and Marion Stanley shopped for supplies; several members helped fill bags (a card from the church was also placed in each backpack), and Barbara Minder delivered them. Even before she returned home, Barbara received a call from one school expressing appreciation for the gifts.

The project coincided with the Ontario Conference’s Community Services Love and Care Day in early October. Organisers saw it as a good way to let the community know that the church truly cared.

In photo: Dr. Curtis Minder with Maëlle, Pastor and Marion Stanley, Sandra and Isabel Dodds.  

Marion Stanley

Thunder Bay Church is looking for the following members:

Gerald Osmond Burton, Marie-Eve Duval, and Maria Cecilia Manusoc.

If you have any information, please contact Pastor Jim Rieder at: 807-983-2659 or jrieder@tbaytel.net
Bowmanville Church Brings MOPS to Durham Region

The first-ever MOPS (Mothers of Pre-schoolers) program in Durham Region began on September 29, 2011 at Bowmanville Adventist Church. For two hours, four mothers were able to relax, converse, watch demonstrations and hear expert speakers while their children received care from accredited volunteers. The mothers found it so helpful that word began to spread and by the third session of the bi-weekly program, their numbers had doubled. Six of these are from the local community.

MOPS is a Christian-based program that began in Colorado in 1973 with just 8 mothers and their children. Recognizing the feeling of isolation some mothers experience, its primary focus is to provide fellowship and education for mothers of children from newborn to kindergarten. MOPS has since grown to become an international organization, hosting groups in over 30 countries.

Denisa Zita, MOPS program coordinator at Bowmanville Church, is excited to host the first MOPS program in the Durham Region. Speaking to the first group of mothers, she enthusiastically told them: “Here, you’ll experience authentic community, mothering support, personal growth and spiritual hope, all to help you be the best mom possible. As we relax, recharge and refresh, we are making new friends and learning tips on life and motherhood. We have educational videos provided by the MOPS International organisation, expert guest speakers and discussions about everything from diapers to discipline.”

Among the guest speakers was Sharon Ennis of Kanisa Fellowship, a mother of three boys and one girl, Gabrielle, who was born with Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus. She told her story to the mothers and spoke of her recently launched book, Gabby’s Gift—Hope in the Heart of a Child.

MOPS is clearly appreciated and meets a real need. “This is really a treat for me,” says Kalee VanWart, mother of three and new participant of the program. “It’s not easy to find quality programs for moms, especially one that provides childcare at no cost. I’ve already learned a lot, and I know I can share some tips as well. Also, my kids benefit from the social interaction with other children in their age bracket in a safe environment.”

“Our group is growing quickly, and we’ll soon need more volunteers,” says Denisa. “If you enjoy working with young children, please contact us.”

The facilities, toys and treats are generously provided by members of Bowmanville Seventh-day Adventist Church, 2850 Hwy 2, at no charge. MOPS meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month from 9:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m.

For more information, contact Denisa at 905-753-1087, or email her at denisagabriela@hotmail.com.

Check out the MOPS website for the MOPS story and information on how to start your own program at www.mops.org.

Nickolay Velinov Leaves Ontario Conference

Nickolay Velinov is leaving the employment of the Ontario Conference after 4 years. Nick, as he is commonly known, joined the conference staff in April of 2007 and quickly became a valuable member of the Information Technology Department.

Among Nick’s technological skills is his ability to design highly sophisticated websites that are very functional and easy to use. He put this to good use with the conference website and with numerous churches and their websites.

Shortly after arriving at the conference office, Nick was among the pioneers of the move to broadcast major conference events over the Internet. He could often be seen behind a video camera or other broadcast equipment.

For the past two summers, Nick was a fixture at the Pathfinder camporees where he recorded the events and created souvenir DVDs for the campers. “Nick’s time with us is too short,” says Ontario Conference president, Dr. Mansfield Edwards. “He has been a great asset to this conference, and we will surely miss him. We are better because of his time with us. However, we wish Him God’s richest blessings as he moves on.”

Nick will be returning to private industry after his departure at the end of 2011.
News

There’s no stopping the members at Calvin Park (Kingston Church’s local name). They are active in the community and winning souls. They are sensing that with God, they can accomplish great things, and more members are getting involved in outreach. Since July 2011, the church has baptized nine individuals and has been busy making its presence known through the Kingston Fall Fair. The nine baptisms resulted from a Sabbath School visitors’ class and the recent Prophecy Decoded series, September 30-October 29.

Sabbath School Visitors’ Class

The baptism of five new converts, Nenita Talasan, Diane Adamowicz, Sandra Allan, Heather Allan and Wilfred Maynard on July 2, validated the members’ confidence in their pastor’s vision to start a class for visitors in January. The idea was to have a class where visitors were able to ask questions relevant to their level of spiritual growth and development. It became an immediate success as visitors found answers for their questions. Soon after, five attendees decided to commit their lives to God and requested baptism.

Pastor Daviceto Swaby continues to conduct a follow-up with others who attended this evangelistic series with the hope of additional baptisms in the future.

Prophecy Decoded Baptisms

When Kingston Church decided to host the month-long satellite evangelistic series, the purpose was to see people decide to accept Jesus as their Saviour. This was realised when Pastor Swaby baptized David Sadler, Quentin Styger, Ian Taylor and Diana Salagala in one of two baptisms held on October 15 and 29.

As the well-attended series continued, and decisions for baptisms were made, the church learned of a romance that resulted in both baptism and marriage; the value of Ellen White’s books that stimulated an enquiring mind, and how a desire to follow Jesus overcame the fear of being immersed in water. These are stories of David, Quentin, Ian and Diana. They rejoiced at how God led them to Himself and to His church.

Pastor Swaby continues to conduct a follow-up with others who attended this evangelistic series with the hope of additional baptisms in the future.

Kingston Church at the Fair

Kingston Church’s presence at the annual fair, September 15-18, held at Kingston Memorial Centre, was intended to make it more visible in the community. The church had two booths promoting the Seventh-day Adventist Church and its health emphasis.

Working in shifts, volunteers staffed the booths from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. every day, handing out bottles of water, personal water bottles and literature. The literature provided information about the work of the local, national and international church, ADRA, Bible study guides, etc. Young adults from the Canada Youth Challenge also assisted in operating the booths.

Visitors to the booths displayed keen interest in the work of the church. Some even expressed their appreciation that Adventists had added a spiritual tone to the fair. An eleven-year-old boy wanted a Bible so he could learn about the Ten Commandments while a man reached out in his loneliness for reassurance of a loving Saviour.

As visitors visited the health booth, many were impressed with the comprehensive approach Adventists take to the gospel.

Displays from the Ontario Conference Health Ministries Department showed the fat, salt and sugar content in processed food, as well as the dangers of club drugs. A number of pig and beef farmers were especially interested in this booth and took home pamphlets of plant versus animal protein.

The purpose to participate in the fair is already being realized. Shortly after the fair came to an end, Pastor Swaby attended a forum where someone among the fair’s organizers told the forum to approach the Adventist Church to learn more about its approach to stop smoking.

How do the volunteers feel about their experience in witnessing for God? They cannot wait until next year to do it again!

Dorothy Knapp
Cornwall’s PC Café Attracts Local Community

“The firemen are coming!” shouted the excited children, as the fire truck turned into the parking lot. The arrival of the fire truck was just one of the exciting things that took place at PC (Personal Care) Café on October 16, 2011 at Cornwall Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Over 30 people turned out to enjoy PC Café’s services and activities—the fifth since the church began hosting its free community event in October 2010.

While there were new additions, the fire truck was a clear winner with the children as they were allowed to climb aboard and explore. The firemen even demonstrated how quickly they get into their uniforms in preparation for fighting a fire. The firemen even offered the little guys some competition in a brief soccer game.

The adults had their own attractions and opportunities for learning. They benefited from hearing immigration consultant, Lucya Spencer of Ottawa, and senior constable, Gary Leger of Cornwall’s Police Department. Others enjoyed the free foot massages, manicures, and haircuts. The younger children enjoyed colouring and other children’s activities before joining their parents for a healthy free snack.

Attendees received a mini treat bag with encouraging messages and information about their host, Seventh-day Adventists, and samples of strawberry scented soap by JOA Bath and Beauty from Cindy Hardy of Ottawa Adventist Church.

PC Café is held three times yearly and has had the privilege of a visit from the local MP, Mr. Guy Lauzon, in June. It is already paying dividends: The church now has 42 names as contacts; a Muslim couple has attended all five events and even accepted an invitation and attended a worship service on a Sabbath morning; another Muslim gentleman requested information about Adventist beliefs.

The church plans to invite all the names on its PC Café contact list to a specially planned Christmas service.

The next PC Café occurs in February 2012. Don’t miss it for anything!

Danielle Drabik

Nine-Year Old Cydney Donates Prize Money to Church

It was the last thing that Pastor Omar Palmer expected on Sabbath, November 12, 2011. He had just made an appeal to the congregation for donations towards replacing some of the windows at Meadowvale Adventist Church when nine-year old Cydney Morris handed him a note. After a brief moment of surprise, Palmer beamed widely and announced to the congregation that he had just received the first donation—a pledge of twenty dollars from Cydney! To rapturous applause, Palmer went on to explain that Cydney had won first prize in The Royal Canadian Legions’s Remembrance Day literary contest for her region and was donating her winnings.

Later, Palmer explained that when he read the note he thought, “If a child could sense the importance of this, then maybe the members will learn from her.”

By the time Palmer had completed his appeal, Cydney’s example had influenced the congregation to donate more than what was needed.

Cydney explained that as she sat with her mother and heard the appeal, she wanted to help.

“I told my mummy that I wanted to give some money to the church,” she said. “She told me that she was proud of me, so I wrote Pastor Palmer a note and took it to him at the front of the church.”

Cydney’s parents, Nadine and Craig Morris, told Highlights that Cydney learned of the legion’s contest only the day before the deadline for submission. She stayed up late working on her poem and when it seemed that she would not be able to finish it, was sent to bed. However, she was determined to complete it and was up early the next morning and completed it just in time to submit it. A few days later, Cydney learned that her poem, The Pride of Canada, had won first place in the Junior (grades 4-5) category. Winners of the local levels are then judged at the provincial level. Provincial winners are judged at the National Level. Cydney hopes that one day she will be a Provincial and National winner.

Cydney was awarded her $20 on Friday, November 25, 2011.
Scarborough Filipino Church Dedicated on Its 20th Anniversary

Scarborough Filipino Seventh-day Adventist Church celebrated its 20th anniversary on November 12, 2011 with a dedication ceremony.

The event was also a homecoming for a number of both charter and former members.

The dedication of the church building, twenty years after its purchase, was especially significant. It was led by Ontario Conference president, Dr. Mansfield Edwards, during the worship service and included a recommitment of church members. Church members gladly responded to a call by the conference treasurer, Ulysses Guarin, to give financial gifts appropriate to the occasion.

The emerald celebrations continued in the afternoon with a musical concert, when performers from various churches shared their various musical talents. A candle-lighting ceremony, as a symbol of the members’ re-commitment to fulfill their mission: to prepare for and to proclaim Christ’s glorious Second Coming, concluded the afternoon program. It was followed by a fellowship dinner.

“Scarborough Filipino Church Dedicated on Its 20th Anniversary”

You’re Too Nice to Be Lost Forever!”

Facebook Conversation Leads to Conversion

The first thing Melissa Nyoni saw as she logged on to Facebook was Chris’ comment: “I’m done with this life!”

She had recently ‘friended’ Chris Mckee and was getting to know him through Facebook and responded, “What do you mean? You’re too nice to be lost forever!”

Chris had recently graduated from high school but was at a very low period in his life. He responded to his troubled background by drowning his sorrows in hip-hop, cigarettes, drugs and alcohol. In the Hamilton region, he was known as “12 Gauge” because his lifestyle and lyrical style were similar to that of the late rapper, Big Pun.

Chris had always felt that there had to be more to life than what he saw, so he began exploring different religions. Although raised as a Catholic, he felt disconnected from Catholicism and turned to Islam. As a Muslim, he was convinced that his regular prayers and good works would appease his conscience but soon realised that he could not find any peace. From his dark pit, he expressed his hopelessness to Melissa on Facebook.

When Melissa, a high school pupil herself, read Chris’ cry for help, she told Him about Jesus Christ. She took time to encourage him and even promised to help him find a job to pay off some debts, with one stipulation—that he attend church with her. He agreed.

When Chris first walked into Hamilton East Adventist Church, he said, “I was surprised, I was one of the few white dudes I saw there! The amazing thing is, when I set foot inside the sanctuary, I instantly felt like all of my burdens were lifted. I still faced struggles, and it seemed impossible for me to quit smoking weed and cigarettes, but I soon realised that I needed Jesus to fight this battle for me, in order for me to succeed.”

Chris was baptized in August after Hamilton East’s Internet evangelistic meetings, along with seven other new converts, Sade Mitchell, Sisi Ncube, Marvelous Chanza, Vuno Phuri, Raneiri Pecotti and Julius Samuels. As a result of those Internet meetings, Bible studies via MSN and Facebook, as well as other traditional means of witnessing, the church has another group of candidates being prepared for a December baptism to conclude its Year of Youth Evangelism. God is so good!

Church pastor, Mirthell Mitchell, a keen user of Internet evangelism, is proud of Melissa and how she eagerly shared Christ’s love.

“As Christian youth,” he said, “we must be ever-ready to share Christ with others as Melissa was on that day.”
Carl Ottley, a self-described ‘prodigal’, was among eighteen persons baptized during two baptismal services on October 15th and 29th, 2011 as Meadowvale Adventist Church celebrates a bumper year of forty-three baptisms.

As the sun broke through the clouds and the fog rolled off the cool autumn waters of the lake, Pastor Peter Caran baptized Aydan Lalonde and Donald Walters. After being baptized, each was asked why he had chosen to serve Christ.

Aydan responded, “Is there any other choice?” Donald said, “The Lord has been so good to me. I just want to serve Him.”

Church members shared their joy by presenting Aydan and Donald with new Bibles to commemorate this important event.

Ernie Markosky

‘Prodigal’ Among Eighteen Baptized as Meadowvale Church Celebrates Record Year for Baptisms

Joslyn Bryant celebrates his 100th birthday on September 11, 2011 with his church, family and friends. Joslyn is in good health and attends church every Sabbath. Long life seems to be fairly common at Scarborough Adventist Church. Joslyn is the second member at Scarborough Church to celebrate a 100 years in 2011. Brother Bryant credits his longevity to living a simple life and his faith and trust in God.

Brother Joslyn Bryant

Ontario Highlights Advertisements Policy

- The Ontario Conference does not endorse any products or services advertised in Ontario Highlights and does not assume any liability or responsibility for the advertisements.
- Advertisements are accepted on a first-come first-served basis, available space, and at the discretion of the editor.
- The same advert will not be accepted for consecutive issues.
- Full payment must accompany submission of the advert.
- The price is for one issue only.
- The advert submitted must be photo ready.

‘Prodigal’ Among Eighteen Baptized as Meadowvale Church Celebrates Record Year for Baptisms

Carl Ottley, a self-described ‘prodigal’, was among eighteen persons baptized during two baptismal services on October 15th and 29th, 2011 as Meadowvale Adventist Church celebrates a bumper year of forty-three baptisms.

Carl grew up under the influence of Seventh-day Adventists grandparents. However, once he reached his later teen years, he began his prodigal journey and strayed from what he had learned. After spending years away from God and even questioning the existence and power of God, Carl’s life felt empty. He sensed that he could find meaning for his life in religion and began to study various religions and denominations within Christianity. The Holy Spirit led him to Meadowvale Church, and he was soon engaged in Bible studies with its pastor, Omar Palmer.

“It seems as if God was giving me hints all along to remind me that He is there,” admits Carl. His baptism occurred at the conclusion of the church’s Revelation of Life and Hope evangelistic series.

The two-week evangelistic series, led by Pastor Omar Palmer, was a significant part of the church’s new evangelistic strategy. After baptizing 13 individuals in 2010, an improvement from the previous year, the church determined that a new approach was needed in order to reach a goal of baptizing at least 25 individuals in 2011. The strategy was to hold monthly ongoing weekend evangelistic meetings and then to hold the two week series as a culmination. By the end of October, through the dedicated work of members, Bible instructor Hopeton Blake, and Pastor Palmer, the church had baptized 43 converts.

Last year, Pastor Palmer introduced the theme Each-Reach to an eager membership at Meadowvale. Although a simple slogan, it quickly became a central focus for the church. In 2011, the theme’s emphasis was: Each-Reach: Equip, Empower and Engage, and the members committed themselves to only use local resources, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in their evangelistic efforts.

In 2012, the theme of Each-Reach could very well be modified to read Each-REACH as the church considers embracing the strategic plans of the Ontario Conference. What is certain, however, is that Meadowvale’s members, having recognised that it is possible to reach and baptize 43 people in one year, are already expecting God to do far more than what He did through them in 2011.

Jaqui Frampton
Another factor in the anticipated further growth of Bible study among our young people is the introduction in 2012 of the Pathfinder Bible Experience (PBE). This modified version of Bible Bowl should add to the joy of getting to know the Lord through a study of the Bible. Bible Bowl is on fire in Ontario!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Pre Junior</th>
<th>Junior</th>
<th>Senior</th>
<th>Young</th>
<th>Adult</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chamption</td>
<td>Mt. Zion</td>
<td>Brampton (team 1)</td>
<td>Brampton</td>
<td>Brampton (team 1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Runner up</td>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>Brampton (team 2)</td>
<td>Mt. Zion</td>
<td>Mt. Zion</td>
<td>Willowdale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Runner up</td>
<td>Meadowvale</td>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>Malton (new team)</td>
<td>Tor. Central</td>
<td>Brampton (team 2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Brampton Church Makes Bible Bowl History**

For all your video and editing needs

Be sure to obtain Perfect Images’ Canadian and Caribbean nature DVD (available January 2, 2012)

Contact info:
Email: info@perfectimageproduction.ca
www.perfectimageproduction.ca
647-278-4995

Dr. Mansfield Edwards’ “Discover The Power” Evangelistic Sermons

One of North America’s most outstanding preachers, Pastor Edwards speaks relevantly to contemporary issues useful for individual or group use.

Available at the Adventist Book Centre in Oshawa, 905-579-2311.

Part of the proceeds will go to Ontario camp meeting development fund.

**Service you Deserve from Someone you can Trust!**

Sherene Cole-Watson
CIP, CRM, CAIB, LLQP
Insurance Broker

Direct Line: 647.800.3074
sherene@optionsforinsurance.com
www.OptionsForInsurance.com

“Your experienced insurance professional since 1989”

Customized **INSURANCE** Solutions
Specialist in Small Business Operations

- Contractors & Tradesmen
- Salons, Barbershops & Spas
- Restaurants & Fast Food Establishments
- Retail Stores & Offices

I can assist with ALL lines of Insurance

**BUSINESS  AUTO  PROPERTY  LIFE  DISABILITY**

Unison Insurance & Financial Services Inc.
103-2077 Dundas St. Mississauga, On L4X 1M2

Office: 905.624.5300

**Sunset Times January 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>January</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>27</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>5.06</td>
<td>5.15</td>
<td>5.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingston</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>5.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>5.05</td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>5.21</td>
<td>5.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ottawa</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>5.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS Marie</td>
<td>5.05</td>
<td>5.14</td>
<td>5.23</td>
<td>5.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudbury</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>5.01</td>
<td>5.10</td>
<td>5.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Bay</td>
<td>5.18</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>5.36</td>
<td>5.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timmins</td>
<td>4.46</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>5.04</td>
<td>5.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>5.03</td>
<td>5.12</td>
<td>5.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>5.15</td>
<td>5.22</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td>5.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>