“In Spirit and in Truth,” Reflecting on Adventist Worship

Women’s Ordination: A Solution in 2015?
Editorial

Who Is My Friend?

I felt as if I had been struck by an object or by lightning. The realisation was so clear that I wondered why I had not previously noticed it. I had just walked our first child to school. As she entered the building, I engaged in my daily conversation with some of the other parents. That’s when I realised that this was the closest I interacted with others who were not Seventh-day Adventists!

As a pastor I worked among Adventists, worshipped and socialised with them. Yes, I gave Bible studies to people who were not Adventists, but they were often on their way to becoming one.

What good was I to anyone if I did not move in circles where I could influence someone to turn to God? I met with people all the time whilst shopping and greeting neighbours, but casual acquaintances do not count as friendship.

Eventually, my wife and I intentionally began socialising with another couple who also had a child in our daughter’s class. It did not take long before we were spending time together. A friendship blossomed and grew.

Most of us have heard that the longer people remain Adventists, the less non-Adventist friends they have. How many do you have? Yes, you may have work colleagues, but are they your friends? Do you socialise with them away from work? Do you visit each other in your homes?

It is unlikely that many reading this will be able to say that they have close friends who are not Adventists. This leaves only a few who do. It’s only natural that our friends are Adventists because our faith is central to us. Consequently, we spend time with those who share our faith—worshipping, Sabbath School discussions, committee meetings, potluck meals, picnics, and other religious and social activities. Our children make friends at church, and some attend our schools before heading off to Adventist colleges and universities. Our world is likely to be the Adventist world. It’s as if we live in a different dimension from others around us, insulated from them.

As a youngster growing in church, I repeatedly heard that as Adventists we were to be in the world but not of it. True, but I think too many of us took it to mean that we should isolate ourselves from people in case they somehow contaminate us. Sometimes I wonder if some of those who taught us were unsure of whether their faith could withstand mixing with the so-called ‘ungodly’. Did fear determine their attitude, and consequently ours, towards people outside the church?

I raise the question of fear because I’ve noticed a tendency (at least in some of the churches I’ve been acquainted with over the years) to isolate ourselves from even considering some of the questions that are most prominent in society—social justice, gender issues, sexuality and poverty, to name a few. Are we fearful that if we engage in these discussions that they will somehow corrupt us or cause us to lose our distinctiveness?

Perhaps we fear the response of others if we let our voices be heard on these and other issues. So we withdraw further into our church community, away from the world.

When Jesus commanded us to be the light of the world, the salt of the earth and a city set on a hill, He was speaking about complete engagement with people who do not know Him and who are desperately in need of His salvation.

We need to resist the temptation to look to our local church to engage with the community; personal engagement is what’s needed.

We begin by simply conversing with people and taking an interest in them. We must not view people only as targets for baptism, and if they are unresponsive, discard them and move on to others. No, we must show genuine interest in them. Genuine, caring interest is most often attractive and well-received. Listening and learning diminish preconceived ideas and judgmental attitudes. They help us earn respect, acceptance, friendship and trust.

Respect is also earned as we model the teachings of Jesus. Most people, especially young adults, will not readily accept an invitation to church. However, they will most likely accept an invitation to join us in a community project to help others. They will respect and admire us if we’re actually living out the teachings of Jesus—to feed the hungry, to visit the imprisoned, to clothe the naked and to visit the sick.

We cannot influence anyone from inside the church walls. The people who do not know Jesus are outside. Jesus lived and walked among people. He connected with them where they were. We must do the same—with colleagues, people we meet at the park or during our commute by public transportation. Wherever we meet others, we have opportunities to connect with them. Remember, their view of God will be greatly influenced by how we treat them.

Jesus prayed, “My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you will protect them from the evil one” John 17:15 (NIV).

Halsey Peat
Editor
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find the following statement by Ellen G. White very troubling, as should every Seventh-day Adventist worshipper.

“We do not obtain a hundredth part of the blessings we should obtain from assembling together to worship God.” (Testimonies Vol. 6, Pg. 362).

The statement was written well over a hundred years ago. In Ministry Magazine, July 1957, Roy Allan Anderson expressed his concerns regarding the then-evolving Evangelical worship service.

“All too often the spirit of worship was absent. There was emotion, to be sure—and sometimes emotion aplenty—but a consciousness of the presence of God seemed to be neither fostered nor achieved. The preacher was paramount. In fact the sermon was about the only thing in the whole service that really mattered. If one arrived on time for the sermon, he scarcely considered himself late because the hymns, prayers, Scripture reading and responses that preceded the sermon were only “preliminaries” anyhow. Even the closing hymn and benediction were not important, judging by the large number of people who, as soon as the closing hymn was announced, began to make a hasty exit. This unholy procedure is still evident in a few places, even in some Adventist congregations. What a tragic evidence of the lack of genuine worship!”

I am alarmed at how his comment so accurately describes some of our Adventist worship services today, 57 years later. Something is wrong and beckons for urgent attention. Both White’s and Anderson’s comments should cause us to stop and
reconsider what we have been doing. We must ask, “What have we been missing? What have we been doing wrong? What do we need to do differently? What perspectives on worship do we need to consider, refresh or abandon?”

Ellen White shared these frightening counsels, “Unless correct ideas of true worship and true reverence are impressed upon the people, there will be a growing tendency to place the sacred and eternal on a level with common things and those professing the truth will be an offense to God and a disgrace to religion.” – 5T, p.500

She states that, “An enemy has been at work to destroy our faith in the sacredness of Christian worship.” (ibid: p, 496). On the same page, she writes, “The moral taste of the worshippers in God’s holy sanctuary must be elevated, refined and sanctified.”

It seems to me that worship, this most vital component of the Christian culture, has been beckoning for urgent attention. “Take away Christian worship,” said James White, “and it is hard to conceive of Christianity as long enduring.”

Looking back in the history of Adventism, it is interesting to note that we only began giving serious consideration to worship in the last forty years, beginning in 1967, when Norval Pease wrote, And Worship Him. This was the first major text on worship in the church. It was followed in 1984 by C. Raymond Holmes’ Sing a New Song.

C. Warren Becker, reviewing Sing a New Song in Ministry Magazine, October 1988, insightfully declared, “Sing a New Song is only the second book written that deals with worship by and for Adventists. Considering the value of worship in the life of the church and the obvious need for more beautiful, meaningful services in most Adventist churches, it would seem that the subject is not being given the priority it deserves. This lack of concern for practical and effective worship could be a strong contributor to the Laodicean condition of the church.”

Our Adventist approach to worship seems to have been unbalanced. As such, we have scores of books on the day of worship but only two books on the way of worship.

In an effort to address the need for a greater attention to worship, our church hosted, in 1989, an International Worship Conference in Portland, Oregon. It was planned with the intention of launching a new emphasis on the importance of worship for the Adventist Christian. Four years later, 1993, there was a second Worship Conference in Riverside, California. All these were hosted in an effort to return worship to its rightful place in the Adventist Christian experience.

The justification for these two conferences was clear and very specific. The issue of worship had been identified by many Adventists as the issue for the 1990s. It was considered as a topic whose time had come. The dynamic subject of worship is an integral part of our identity and will continue to stimulate discussion. This discussion has outlived the 1990s and must be intentionally kept in focus until Jesus comes again.

Franklin M. Segler, author of a number of books on worship, states that, “When we worship, we are declaring God’s worth.”

Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology agrees with Webster’s dictionary in defining worship as, “to adore, esteem, worthy or reverence”. However, Baker’s dictionary admits that defining worship is a little more difficult because it is more than an attitude and an act. Both the Old and New Testaments admit the possibility of false worship usually associated with idolatry, such as in Deuteronomy 7:3-6 or Mark 7:7, which elicited a sobering statement from Jesus. “In vain do they worship me…” He also said, “All true worshippers must… worship Him in Spirit and in truth.” John 4: 23-24

The meaning is clear: True worship takes place on the inside, which is in the heart or the spirit of the worshipper as expressed in Psalm 45:1. However, worshipping in spirit is only part of worship. We are also to worship “in truth”. This connects the spirit of worship with the truth—the theology and the heart of the worshipper determine the quality of his or her worship experience.

Dr. George Knight once shared a profound observation having experienced flying over the Amazon River. He spoke of the fact that some one thousand miles from the ocean, the Rio Negro joins the great Amazon River. The Amazon flows at a good clip, is wide and brown; the Rio Negro is clear with a blackish tint, hence its name. The rivers merge, but for miles, they run side by side. Two streams but one river. Like spirit and truth—two currents in worship but one in purpose.

“Although God dwells not in temples made with hands, yet He honours with His presence the assemblies of His people. He has promised that when they come together to seek Him, to acknowledge their sins, and to pray for one another, He will meet them by His Spirit. But those who assemble to worship Him should put away every evil thing. Unless they worship Him in spirit and in truth and in the beauty of holiness, their coming together will be of no avail.” Prophets and Kings, p. 50

The time has come for us to examine what we offer God as worship, both personally and congregationally.

(To be continued)
Dear Editor,

I’ve just read your editorial, “Diverging Pathways”, in Ontario Highlights, Winter 2013, and it struck a chord with me. Our 12-year old daughter recently preached for a Sabbath service at our local church. Baptized just last year, she’s very passionate about God and spreading God’s message. We try our best to nurture her enthusiasm.

However, after the sermon, she was immediately handed a note by a male member of the congregation with the Bible verse, 1 Cor. 14: 34-35, that speaks about women [wives] keeping silent in church.

While his foolish and inconsiderate action does not reflect the opinions of the rest of the congregation, it was intended to discourage and silence a young child, a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, who is entitled to use her voice to give glory and praise to God.

In order to encourage our youth to stay in the church, we need to stop this ungodly behaviour towards our young people -- especially our girls. This is clearly one of the reasons, as your editorial suggests, we need to ‘worry’ and be more concerned about the things that are causing our young people to get discouraged and leave the church.

Our young people are the future of the Seventh-day Adventist Church – and if they do not see this as their home, they will continue to diverge. Too much focus is on what young people are wearing and the style of music they use for praise. Maybe we need to give attention to Jesus’ warning in Matthew 18:6, to those who cause children to stumble.

I, too, pray for the hope that you write about. I pray for the young people who have turned from God and left the church as a result of behaviours such as what that person did. I also pray for their parents.

It’s time to stop this and all forms of bullying from taking place in God’s church.

Nadine Morris, Port Elgin

‘The Woes of a Constituency Meeting’

Dear Pastor Peat,

Thank you for having the conviction to write your article regarding the constituency meeting in the winter edition of the Ontario Highlights.

As a delegate to the meeting and as a Board of Directors member for the past eight years, I found your article insightful and very accurate.

You certainly expressed my frustrations as a board member and a delegate.

I was not aware of the number of individuals that repeated as members of the nominating committee, but your point is well taken. We should have a mechanism to change the membership of this committee. We do have a tendency to vote in the most vocal, most popular, the ones that we know, or the ones that can best put forward our agenda. This can certainly skew the efforts and intent of the whole exercise.

The one issue above all that really concerned me is the fact that the nominating committee seems to do its business in a vacuum. As a board member I was aware of some of the directors who were not performing and in fact bordered on incompetent. I could not believe what I was hearing when the nominating committee came back with a report recommending that they be re-elected again.

I was reluctant to refer back these names, believing that the committee had the benefit of hearing from the president on their performance. I assumed that he was willing to work with the individuals even though I knew from private conversations that significant performances difficulties were ongoing. I also felt challenged by the fact that if we did refer back, then I would be limited to two minutes to make my point. This is difficult and somewhat intimidating.

Another strange phenomenon was that every name referred back was subsequently withdrawn. This certainly reduced the confidence of the constituency members in the competency of the committee. How could the committee review the names, arrive at a conclusion that this person was the best for the job, and then upon a challenge withdraw the name? Certainly something was wrong with the process.

Your suggestion on reviewing the performance and searching for the best individual to fit the portfolio makes good sense. Although this will take longer it should give us a better administration for the future.

The changes to the bylaws also should be more open. Why not publish the changes in the Ontario Highlights at least 9 months before the meeting, and invite comments? This exercise will give us an informed constituency that has had all their concerns noted beforehand which should make for shorter discussions on this tedious and time-consuming part of the meeting.

Once again, thank you for starting the discussion. I only hope that it will improve the process.

Fred Girvan, Toronto
With current debate surrounding women's ordination abounding in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, it may sound strange, but the Seventh-day Adventist Church does not have a theology of ordination. Yet, for years, it has operated as if it has, restricting ordination of deacons, elders and pastors to men.

The absence of a clearly defined theology of ordination meant that those who were supportive of or against the ordination of women in local leadership engaged in counter-arguments. The arguments became more strident and intense when more women began preparing for pastoral ministry in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Over the following twenty-five years, the calls for women to be ordained as pastors increased. However, battle lines were clearly drawn as activists from both sides of the argument pushed to secure their positions as the church's position. Without the benefit of a theology of ordination, delegates to General Conferences of 1985 – 2005, either rejected women's ordination or asked for further studies to be undertaken. In some cases, as in 1995, it was decided that ordination would not be placed on the agenda. Meanwhile, the church maintained its practice of only ordaining men to pastoral ministry.

At the 2010 session in Minneapolis, after repeated requests to elect more women to top church positions, the church vowed to investigate the biblical theology behind its tradition of ordination. A pledge was made to spend the next five years studying the subject.

Over the past 60 years, various committees have studied the subject of women's ordination, but this was the first time a committee was tasked to study the subject of ordination itself and not simply women's ordination. It was commissioned to arrive at a consensus on as many points as possible.

The Theology of Ordination Study Committee (TOSC) has over 100 members representing both genders from each division, church leaders, theologians, pastors and laity. The committee represents a broad spectrum of members, including some who have publicly voiced their support of or against women's ordination.

It will meet approximately four times, concluding its work in June 2014. It will provide as much complete information on its assigned topic to be reviewed by the General Conference administration in June 2014, and then the complete report provided to the General Conference Executive Committee will be reviewed and discussed at the 2014 Annual Council. The 2014 Annual Council will decide on any items to be referred to the 2015 General Conference Session.

Essentially, the TOSC will develop a comprehensive agenda on the subject of ordination and its implications for practices in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, including the subject of ordination of women to the gospel ministry.

It will strive for consensus, but in areas where consensus is not obtained, it will focus will be on potential solutions that support the message, mission, and unity of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

For the first time, the church is seeking a theology of ordination on which it will base its practice of ordination.

Whilst the TOSC was working, there was activity elsewhere. Each division also had its own study committee. They completed their work and reported to the TOSC at the end of November 13, 2013. The reports caused a major stir because they represent the official positions of the thirteen divisions, suggesting how they will vote if the matter is placed on the agenda at General Conference session in 2015.

By the time all the reports were in, it was clear that five divisions voted in favour of ordination of women within their divisions, without requiring other divisions to do so. Four are completely against women's ordination whilst four divisions - though not in favour of ordaining women within their divisions - are willing to accept the decision of the world-wide church.

Activists from both sides of the argument quickly seized on the reports and interpreted them to support their positions. Those in support of women's ordination claim that nine out of thirteen divisions would accept a proposal, allowing divisions that are ready to proceed with the ordination of women. Those against women's ordination countered, saying that only five divisions are in support of it. The other eight are not.
Among the divisions that are clearly against the ordination of women to pastoral ministry are the East Central African, Euro-Asian, South American, and the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean. The East Central Division says, ‘not yet’, but the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division says that ordination should also be withheld from women elders.

The Inter-American Division was among five that did not arrive at a conclusive statement. Its statement summarises its position, “There is no explicit mandate in the Bible for the ordination of women to church leadership, yet there is no command against the same….The Inter-American Division is willing to accept the ecclesiastical decision taken by the [Seventh-day Adventist Church] in plenary session.”

The North American Division (NAD) is one of five divisions that support the ordination of women to the gospel ministry. In 2012 three unions in North America voted that they would ordain suitable candidates to the gospel ministry ‘without regard to gender’.

The decision of the Pacific, Columbia and Mid-American Unions to approve or support (Mid-American Union) the ordination of women was not without sharp criticism. The General Conference leadership was quick to point out that they were acting out of step with the world church. Their action was termed ‘rebellion’ by some. Prior to the actions of the union, the G.C. president, Ted Wilson, in at least one instance, even counselled the delegates to vote against the proposed action.

Shortly after the decisions taken by the three unions, some conferences within their territories began ordaining women to the gospel ministry.

In 2013, the Southeastern California Conference took the historic (some argue, rebellious) step of electing its first female president. The General Conference has not recognised the action.

A number of unions in North America issued statements regarding their support of women in ministry but concluded that they will wait upon the decision of the General Conference in 2015 before making any decision to ordain women. The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada, along with others, has not made any statement.

Since the election of the first woman president of a conference in 2013, it appears that most divisions and unions are awaiting the recommendation of the TOSC to the General Conference Executive Committee in June and to the Annual Council in November. However, it will be the vote of the delegates to the 2015 General Conference session that will determine whether the current practice is continued or not. A theology of ordination will be in place.

Meanwhile, most church members remain unconcerned. Perhaps they are more concerned with issues, such as homosexuality, that are already touching their congregations, and they do not know how to respond to it.

Halsey Peat

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**Revival and transformation**
Connecting with God through public and personal worship

**Education for discipleship**
Every youth and adult learning, growing, and becoming more like Christ

**Alignment within the church**
Connecting effectively within our diverse church family

**Community outreach and evangelism**
Connecting with our communities—sharing hope and wholeness

**Healthy leadership and management**
God’s stewards, insisting on personal and church-wide excellence
Adventist congregations in Ontario are gradually becoming aware that something powerful is taking place across the province. As they learn about R.E.A.C.H. the acronym representing the core values of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, there is a growing excitement about the direction their church is taking.

“Individual churches are not only beginning to sense its value,” Halsey Peat told members of the Ontario Conference REACH committee, of which he is the chairperson; “those that have embraced it are already celebrating its value. Members know exactly what their churches are attempting to do in both long and short terms. There is a clear sense of direction, and how they will get there.”

In an earlier meeting, Ontario Conference president, Pastor Mansfield Edwards, affirmed that R.E.A.C.H. is “not a passing fad but a clear philosophy that will determine the direction and operation of the conference for the foreseeable future”.

He noted that over the past 18 months, the conference has strongly promoted the values of Revival and Transformation. It has provided opportunities for pastors and teachers to renew their spiritual experience and reflect on their call to pastoral or teaching ministry. It has further encouraged them to seek the journaling and witnessing.

The Ontario Conference is convinced that only Spirit-led and Spirit-dependent pastors, teachers and local church leaders can lead the church in Ontario to true revival and transformed lives. It is operating on the principle that members whose lives are transformed by the Holy Spirit are those who make local churches places of love and acceptance. They truly appreciate God’s saving power and are motivated to share the gospel with others. They live as disciples of Jesus and find their joy in leading others to also become His disciples.

While still implementing its strategies to help the church experience revival and transformation, the present emphasis of the Ontario Conference is that of the second and third letters of the acronym, Education for Discipleship, and Alignment within the Church.

Department directors of the conference have been transitioning from working only within and for their respective departments to working in alignment. They meet regularly to see how their departments are able to collaborate to achieve the goals and objectives of the conference. They have moved away from competing for dates and resources to joining resources to ensure that what they do will glorify God.

Churches that have embraced REACH are also seeing a similar change to their way of operation. Board meetings reflect a more cooperative atmosphere, and departmental rivalry and fierce competition for dates are beginning to fade. Departments are learning to align themselves to reach the clear objectives of the congregation.

Camp Meeting 2014 with its theme, ‘One!’ will reflect the plan of the conference to emphasize alignment.

The shortly-to-be-announced Ontario Adventist Ministries Convention to be held in November this year is another strategy of the conference in both areas of alignment and discipleship.

The ministries convention is the joint venture of all ministries of the Ontario Conference to provide training to help church leaders, members and pastors lead their churches to become centres for discipleship. It promises to be one of the most innovative strategies organised by the conference in many years. As the church boldly moves forward in preparation for the kingdom of God, the ministries convention is clearly an event that everyone will want to attend.

As churches move forward with R.E.A.C.H. the Ontario Conference is trying to determine where along the process each church has reached. Pastors will shortly provide the relevant update to the conference. What will the update say about your church?

R.E.A.C.H. was launched in Ontario in 2012 and voted by delegates at the 2013 constituency meeting as the official programme for all churches within the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.
Camille’s arrival into the world on December 16 was received by joyous parents and two sets of jubilant grandparents as if she were the first baby to be born. In a sense she was, because Camille is David’s and Morrisa’s first child and the first grandchild of both sets of grandparents. As far as they were concerned she is, by far, the best thing that had ever happened to them. It’s a similar experience for most new parents and grandparents.

When we become parents, sometimes a strange but unfortunate thing happens. We rightly assume a parenting role, but in doing so, we sometimes forget that we are still the same imperfect individuals who, before the birth, had no realistic concept of what it means to parent a child. While birth does not immediately change that reality, we find ourselves assuming a parental role, based on what we’ve observed, as if it has. It’s as if we’re drawn into a parenting realm that automatically bestows a mantle on us. In a serious way, this parental mantle is unfortunate. It’s unfortunate because it is as if, by the birth of the child, we have been transformed into perfection. We often forget that we are still humans with faults, individuals with personal limitations and real people with genuine feelings. By forgetting the reality of our own imperfections, it frequently causes us to act as if our parental responsibility involves doing better than what we are able to do.

To assume a role of being perfect parents can become a terrible burden. It is challenging to maintain consistency in our feelings, continually loving, unconditionally accepting, tolerant, fair, congenial, selfless, and, above all, not repeating our parents’ mistakes. As understandable and admirable as these intentions are, their weight often results in less, rather than more, effective parenting skills.

Three Qualities of Effective Parents

Among other qualities necessary for effective parenting, the following three are crucial:

1. Effective parents recognise their imperfections. They know they don’t have to be perfect, but they rely on the Holy Spirit to make up the difference in their human shortfalls through His love.
2. Effective parents place God first in their relationship and depend on Him. They base their relationship squarely on a God-dependency existence. They celebrate God’s grace and His love. This keeps them humble, and they learn to model grace to their children.
3. Effective parents model discipleship. The real crux of Christian parenting is giving your child a heart for God. God has given parents the responsibility of communicating His love to their children. We are to build little Christians through modelling what it means to be a disciple, in the same way that Lois and Eunice modelled sincere faith to Timothy (2Tim 1:5). Children learn best by example.
According to Paul Lewis, author of the book, 40 Ways to Teach Your Child Values, the real goal for parents is to take our children through three stages of learning:

Stage 1. Acquiring knowledge – teach them information about God by studying the Bible with them daily. The Sabbath School lesson is a good source, along with reading them Bible stories.

Stage 2. Learning personal application of Bible truths -- relating these teachings to their everyday life challenges.

Stage 3. Acquiring wisdom -- a pattern of seeing from God’s point of view in seeking solutions and making choices from the perspective of pleasing God.

New parents, like David and Morissa, need to take a personal inventory of themselves. They need to ask themselves very real questions regarding their relationship with God before they can transfer values and disciple their child.

Questions deserving answers from parents who desire to be effective:

1. Is my/our spiritual life worth imitating?
2. Do I/we have a genuine appetite for spiritual things, or are prayer, Bible study, and church activities merely rote or optional habits?
3. Is my/our discipline of my/our child creating in him or her, a balanced respect for authority that will help the child willingly respond to God’s authority?
4. Do I/we take my/our child to the Scriptures to discuss his or her problems, positive character traits being acquired, world events that concern the child, or questions about life?

5. When my child comes to me with needs, is my natural response to harmonise prayer and action? Does he or she first see me take problems before God?

Psychological studies indicated that 85% of our children’s adult personality is formed by their sixth birthday. Our best chance for success is to love and discipline our children effectively through the above three stages during the crucial first six years of their lives. David and Morissa, like all our young parents, will have quite a lot of work to do with Camille in the coming six years. However, they know that this assignment is achievable; as in Proverbs 22:6, God promises to give Camille a heart for Him.

Sources
1. The Bible

Pearly Dason, Canadian Winner of NAD Scholarship

Congratulations to Willowdale Church’s Pearly Dason, the only Canadian recipient of one of the five Women’s Ministries scholarships awarded this year from the North American Division.

The scholarship awards are based on academic achievement, financial needs, and community outreach.

Pearly has nearly completed her junior year at Canadian University College (CUC) where she is pursuing a degree in Biology.

“Science has always been an interest of mine,” says Pearly, “and I knew without a doubt that my future lies within this subject.”

A graduate of Crawford Adventist Academy, Pearly said, “Going to Crawford Adventist Academy greatly impacted my spiritual life, even though I didn’t know it while I was there.”

After attending the week of prayer in her grade 10 year, she was convicted of her need for God. She read a small devotional book, The True Vine, by Andrew Murray. “This book,” she says, “explained God in a way that stuck with me and made sense.” She began to believe that God truly loved her and would take her through any hardships.

After Bible studies with Pastor Larry Milliken, she was baptized on May 16, 2009 at her home church, Willowdale, in Ontario.

Her college life has not been without financial struggles, and she works at CUC to augment her fees. She was thrilled when she received the call from the Ontario Conference Women’s Ministries director, Joan Rogers, informing her of her scholarship success. She disclosed that she had been on her knees the night before asking the Lord for a financial blessing, and He did just that.

God will also come through for you. If you are a female member of an Adventist church in Ontario attending a college or university, you are invited to apply for scholarship consideration from the North American Division. Please check our website for an application form and required documentation, and send your completed application to the attention of Joan Rogers, director of Women’s Ministries, Ontario Conference, before September 10, 2014.
“Every Member Should Enrol in the Ontario Conference School of Evangelism,”
Says Graduate

“I think every member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ontario should enrol in the Ontario Conference School of Evangelism,” said Keith Williams, shortly before commencing his sermon at Mt. Olive Adventist Church last October. He spoke with a newly-found confidence gained from his experience as a student in the Ontario Conference School of Evangelism (OCSE).

“I would encourage anyone who has the calling of the Holy Spirit for lay evangelism to enrol as soon as possible in this programme, as there are so many learning opportunities at such minimal cost,” He said.

A former Pentecostal, Williams heard of the OCSE shortly after becoming a member of Mt. Olive Adventist Church. Thinking that such a programme would cost thousands of dollars, he was discouraged, but upon learning that it was only $200.00, he immediately enrolled and has not looked back.

Williams is just one of many who are experiencing a remarkable shift in church life – a move from being a spectator at church to becoming involved in ministry activities and soul winning.

Linton Haughton, first elder of Ottawa East Church, and Drucilla Antoine are experiencing the joy of leading souls to Christ as a result of the motivation and expertise gained through the school. Seeing seven people with whom they had studied the Bible being baptised was a remarkable and fulfilling experience for them. Haughton has since been joined by his wife, Paulette, and they are currently conducting weekly Bible studies. “Since attending the school,” he said, “I can now better appreciate the more practical work of the church, such as visitation, Bible studies, and the preparation and delivery of sermons.”

Cheryl Bailey was among the first graduates and she is busy working for God. She has personally studied with and led three souls to the Lord through baptism. The school also helped her discover a gift of preaching.

“The school has equipped me and given me the courage and confidence to stand before people and preach,” she says.

Upon her graduation, Cheryl and her husband, Delton, felt a need to attend a church where they could put their training to use. Oakville, with just five people regularly attending, seemed the right fit, but there was talk of the church closing. She is currently providing leadership there, and the church now has over 30 people attending regularly.

Cheryl is in demand for her preaching and teaching gifts and has received invitations to preach in a number of churches between Niagara Falls and Barrie.

Vera Hurlock from Ruth Church simply loved the course, How to Give Bible Studies and Gain Decisions. It has helped her lead fourteen souls to baptism. She is currently studying with a family of four. Which pastor would not like to have a valiant soldier as her in his/her congregation?

Jason Ontegi’s passion for evangelism has resulted in a new group in the Jane and Finch area. Shortly after graduation, he made his living room into a Bible study centre. After a few weeks of receiving people into his home for weekly studies, the group became so large that he had to rent a place in the community. The group is now holding Sabbath services.

Why a School of Evangelism?

The OCSE is an outgrowth and extension of evangelistic training programmes as Maranatha and Festival of the Laity. While these had a degree of effectiveness, they were limited to a weekend, and their location in the GTA made access difficult for those living in other locations.

The School of Evangelism, on the other hand, provides consistent long-term training, covers a wider range of subjects, carries practical requirements, and is held in various regions of the province.

Since March of 2011, the OCSE has run five schools in London, Kitchener-Waterloo, Toronto (2) and Ottawa,
outlined in Matt. 28:19-20 and Matt. 9:35-38; and by helping the church in Ontario to embrace the truth of the priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:2-12, NKJV).

Since the inception of the OCSE, other conferences are recognising the great value of a school of evangelism and have either launched or are planning to launch similar schools. Among these are Bermuda, the South England Conference in the U.K. as well as Alberta and British Columbia.

In Ontario, the OCSE will continue to help God’s people identify the gifts given to them by the Holy Spirit. By God’s grace, it will help them develop and use their gifts for the expansion of God’s eternal kingdom by working for the salvation of others.

Have you registered for the next course?

Eustace Williams
OCSE Director

graduating nearly 250 people. There are currently four schools being held in Heritage Green (Southern Ontario), Toronto, the far north (Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie, Elliott Lake, North Bay, etc.), and Barrie (the near north churches) with 120 students.

New OCSE Schools for 2014-2015

Plans are well under way for new schools for 2014-2015. Both Toronto and Ottawa will be hosting schools. It is very likely that a brand new school will be held for East Central Ontario (Oshawa, Whitby, Bowmanville, Cobourg, etc.).

The extensive training takes place one Sunday each month over a 13-month period. Major emphasis is placed on the eight-hour course How to Give Bible Studies and Gain Decisions. However, other relevant courses include, among others, Bible Doctrines, Church History, Hermeneutics (how to interpret and understand scripture), World Religions, and Understanding the Secular Mind. Most of these are six-hour courses.

The OCSE is clearly fulfilling two major biblical mandates by preparing God’s people to live and preach the gospel as He describes himself as the “least likely person one would expect to be a witness to the educated and wealthy”.

When you meet the Scarborough Church member, you have to agree with him. Gilbert Record is a retired literature evangelist (he says, ‘colporteur’) who is far from being wealthy, and his education is from the ‘university of experience’. He is not among the leading candidates for GQ, the fashionable magazine for men, but no one ever told him that he is not able to witness to the wealthy and educated. So, he does.

With a confident smile that reaches his eyes and betrays a keen intelligence, Record has a simple strategy. “I offer them books,” he says. “The wealthy and educated are unaccustomed to getting anything for free. Whenever anyone approaches them, it’s usually to obtain something from them. But we are all human, and we all like free things. Just because they have lots of things does not change anything. So, I offer them a free book—either Steps to Christ or The Marked Bible.”

Record always carries a few copies of both books wherever he goes and looks for opportunities to share them with professional people. The hospital is one of his favourite places because of the sheer number of professionals who work there.

“I offer them the book as a free gift on the condition that they read it,” he says. “If they cannot promise to read it, then I tell them they can purchase it from me. Most of the time, they take it and promise to read it.”

He recently shared an account of a pastor who, visiting someone in a hospital, came across someone reading The Marked Bible. A brief conversation with the person revealed it as one of Record’s gifts. According to the pastor, the person said he was enjoying the book.

Record is convinced that this is the ministry God has given him. It is nothing new. He has been engaged in witnessing to the professional classes for the past ten years after he realised that the churches he knew were not reaching the well-educated and wealthy.

“It’s amazing how they respond to me,” he says. “Maybe they think that I’m some sort of novelty because people like me are not their usual company, so they stop and are often willing to converse with me for a while. I know that it’s the work of the Holy Spirit.”

“I cannot tell if anyone has been baptised through this ministry,” he says, “but that’s really not my business. My job is to sow the seed. Someone else will do the cultivating, and the Holy Spirit will produce the crop.”

He says that he will perform the ministry for as long as God gives him strength to do so and provides him with the books. As a retiree, he is dependent on donations of the books, but he is confident that God will always direct him to people who share his vision to reach out to the educated and wealthy.

Anyone interested in donating Steps to Christ or The Marked Bible to be used by Gilbert Record may contact the editor, hpea@adventistontario.org.
“One!”
(John 17:20-23)
Camp Meeting 2014

A single word ‘One!’--is the theme for this year’s camp meeting at the International Centre, Mississauga, on June 28.

The theme, based on Jesus’ prayer in John 17:20-23, in line with the REACH initiative, reflects the Ontario Conference’s objective of a transformed church living in alignment with God, with each other and for His purpose.

Each segment of the day will emphasize a different aspect of Jesus’ prayer for oneness.

The theme will also be the focus of the messages from the speakers, Daniel Jackson, Buster Swoopes, Mansfield Edwards, Donna Jackson and Richard Aguilera.

Daniel Jackson is the president of the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists (NAD). He is well-known to members in Ontario, having served as pastor of Willowdale Adventist Church, and later as president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada, with headquarters in Oshawa, Ontario. Jackson was elected to the NAD in 2010 at the General Conference session in Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

He will be the preacher for the expected 6,000 adults in Hall 5.

Donna Jackson is the leader of the Ministerial Spouses Association of the NAD and wife of Daniel. Formerly, she was the Family and Women’s Ministries director of the Ontario Conference. She will be one of the speakers during the Ordination and Commissioning Service in Hall 5.

Mansfield Edwards is president of the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Buster Swoopes is the pastor for two churches in Houston, Texas, and the coach of a budding church plant. A graduate of Southwestern University and the Seventh-day Adventist Seminary, Swoopes’ two main passions are to plant churches and to see people begin a relationship with Jesus and mature into His disciples. Swoopes will be the preacher for youth and young adults in Hall 3.

Hall 3 is best accessed through Entrance 3 from Derry Road.

Juniors to Join Earliteens

For the first time, juniors will leave the traditional children’s programme and be part of the teens’ programme in Hall 4. The junior and earliteen programme will feature Richard Aguilera as its preacher.

Aguilera, president of One Mustard Seed Inc, is well-known in Adventist circles in the United States for using a variety of creative methods to help young people know God better.

Among these are some dynamic, high energy events designed to reach both children and adults with a goal of helping everyone understand the difference between creation and evolution.

Hall 4 may be accessed through Entrance 4.

Registration for Juniors

Even though juniors will be with the teens, registration will still be necessary. It will take place at entrances to the hall. Parents or guardians are responsible for registering their children.

Children’s Programme

There will be a programme for children ages 3-9, in the Aviation Ballroom (A, B and C).

Programmes for cradle roll, kindergarten and primary children will be offered in rooms A, B, and C, respectively. Parents and guardians are reminded that each room is limited to a certain number of children so it is best to arrive early or on time for the start of Sabbath School. It is unlikely that there will be room for children arriving after 11:15 a.m.
The cradle roll programme will only run until 12:30 p.m. During the evening, there will only be programmes for kindergarten and primary.

Parents, please be aware that due to the risk of food allergies, no snacks will be provided for the children. Parents are responsible for providing refreshments for their own children.

Access to the Aviation Ballroom is through Entrance 5, the same entrance used to access Hall 5.

**Early Morning Prayer and Praise**

Since its inception in 2012, the prayer and praise service at 8:00 a.m. has proved very popular with hundreds of church members and their friends.

There is no doubt that for this camp meeting many others will want to join them for the first time and experience what they have been hearing about.

The service will be held in Hall 5.

**Meals**

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

Please note that the Centre does not allow any food in any of the halls at the centre. All members are asked to picnic by their cars or at one of the local public parks (Wildwood Park, 3430 Derry Road East at the corner of Derry Road and Goreway Drive; Humberwood Park at Rexdale Boulevard and Humberwood Boulevard).

**Exiting the Centre by Car**

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

**Live Broadcast**

Camp meeting will again be broadcast live via the Internet at: www.adventistontario.org in both high and standard definitions. Both adults and young adults services will be available for viewing.

**School of Evangelism Graduates to Feature at Southern Ontario Regional Camp Meeting, June 6 – 7, 2014**

Ontario Conference School of Evangelism (OCSE) graduates will be among the lay preachers at Southern Ontario’s regional camp meeting, June 6-7, 2014, at Norfolk County Fair Grounds in Simcoe.

“We have decided to embrace the theme, ‘Priesthood of all Believers,”’ says Pastor Darryl Blahovich, chairperson of the planning committee, “so with that in mind, we are featuring a number of lay preachers from the southern region.”

According to Blahovich, these preachers will replace the yearly well-known guest speakers. He says that the committee is confident that they will expose campers to “solid, biblical preaching”. It is something that campers can really look forward to.

Pastor Eustace Williams, director for the OCSE, was happy to hear of Southern Ontario’s plans. “This is a significant move by the leaders in Southern Ontario,” he said. “They are truly validating the gifts God has given to their members and recognising their training. It is exemplary, and I sincerely pray that pastors and leaders in other regions will embrace the priesthood of all believers. I plan to be there to give my support.”

The camp programme commences on Friday evening at 7:00 with a consecration service at the nearby Simcoe Seventh-day Adventist Church. The all-day Sabbath programme will be held at the fairground, 172 South Drive, Simcoe, N3Y 1G6.

Activities and worship services will be available for children, youth and adults in separate buildings.

Southern Ontario regional camp meeting usually attracts over a thousand people, including children.
With the first-ever SEEDs Conference held in Ontario, February 28 – March 3, 2014, organisers are hoping that the church-planting training event will quickly take root and grow more congregations.

The two-part conference, held at Downsview Seventh-day Adventist Church in Toronto, attracted over a hundred participants on Friday night and hundreds more on Sabbath. For the second part, nearly forty pastors were trained as coaches on Sunday and on Monday. They will be instrumental to churches as they engage in planting new congregations.

SEEDS Ontario brought together six church planters and coaches, many of whom are involved in the annual SEEDS Conference held at Andrews University. Led by Tom Evans, associate director for planting, coaching, and Natural Church Development (NCD) for the North American Division’s Evangelism Institute, they all share a passion for planting new churches and growing God’s kingdom.

The conference was designed to be both inspirational and practical. The presenters’ passion was clearly inspirational as they shared their experience of taking the leap to plant new congregations, overcoming fear of failure, resistance by the mother church and then witnessing the power of the Holy Spirit as both the church plant and the mother church grew in membership.

The presence of pastors and members together attending a church planting weekend event indicated that evangelism is foremost in the thinking of the Adventist Church in Ontario. The idea of planting new congregations and seeing them grow clearly appeals to a significant number of members.

“If we are ever to be used by God to finish the work, we must diversify the methods we use to evangelise, and church planting is definitely one of those ways.”

Pastor Frankie Lazarus, who is currently leading his church at Malton in a church plant in Bolton, Caledon, found the conference helpful, and it re-affirmed that the elders of his church, who had never attended a SEEDS Conference, were already doing much of what was presented.

On Friday evening, Tom Evans clearly outlined the challenges faced by church planters. One of the greatest is the default state of most churches to resist church plants.

“They are fearful of losing members to the new plant,” he said. “They also fear loss of finance and ministry leaders, so they resist all efforts to plant new congregations.”

He went on to show how most churches can be led towards birthing new congregations.

The annual SEEDS Conference was first launched in the North American Division at Andrews University in 1995. It was the Division’s response to a report revealing that more churches closed than opened in 1995. It is designed to inspire and teach pastors, church leaders and members how to plant
On Sunday, April 6, 2014, Adventist Community Services, under the leadership of Pastor Theodore Sargeant, hosted a meeting for all major disaster responders and social services agencies in Simcoe County at Barrie Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Nearly 70 people attended, including directors or representatives from Community Connection, 211 Central East Ontario, VCARS, The Salvation Army, North Simcoe Victim Crisis Services, Canadian Red Cross, St. John’s Ambulance and Adventist Disaster Response.

According to Sargeant, director of Adventist Community Services, the day-long meeting was the first of its kind in the region and possibly in Ontario. It was designed to clearly identify how the different agencies may work together in the event of a disaster in the region.

“We clearly defined our roles and identified gaps that needed filling,” he said.

“When a disaster strikes, the immediate result is usually chaos. So we determined how to minimize chaos by carefully planning how we can work together and ensuring that nothing is left undone.”

Doriano Dario Calvano, program supervisor for the County of Simcoe’s Social and Community Services Division, was thankful for the opportunity to participate.

“Many of the presentations reconnected me to the vital supports we all can collectively provide to individuals and families impacted at times of an emergency,” he said.

Ken Smith, coordinator of Georgian CSIM Team, was equally appreciative.

“It was a truly enjoyable experience to be able to share and connect,” he said. “I’m so thankful to have been included and able to share the entire day. Special thanks to the congregation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Barrie for its hospitality.”

Ontario Conference president, Pastor Mansfield Edwards, who set the tone for the day with an inspirational devotion, later commented, “I am proud to be part of conference that has taken the initiative to create such a powerful alliance of responders. I firmly believe that in the near future the name Seventh-day Adventists will be positively associated with helping people”.

As a direct result of the meeting, the Adventist Community Services Disaster Response (ACSDR) has been seen as a viable partner in disaster response, and is being embraced and accepted by other disaster response organisations. Sargeant reports that on April 16, ACSDR was invited by the Red Cross to participate in a province-wide planning in preparation for spring flooding.

Presently, ACSDR provides expertise in management of in-kind donations and Crisis Care Chaplaincy.

“Seeds,” Continued from page 16

ew congregations. It is universally understood that healthy churches multiply and grow as they are divided. In most cases, both the plant and mother church see an increase in membership that was not present before the birth of the new church plant. SEEDS exist for this purpose.

“In far too many cases, when new congregations come into existence, it is the result of a split in the congregation because of conflict,” says Pastor Jakov Bibulovic, Church Growth and Evangelism director for the Ontario Conference. “For many years, these groups remain small and ineffective because they were not planted according to biblical principles.

We want to see healthy church plants coming out of healthy congregations. We believe SEEDS Ontario will make a huge difference in our evangelistic work in Ontario.”

According to Bibulovic, members can now look forward to an annual SEEDS Ontario during the last weekend of March. Conferences for 2015 and 2016 have already been announced.

As a result of SEEDS 2014, 54 members and 40 pastors committed themselves to lead church plants. A further 80 members are committed to be part of planting groups.

Church planting is the life blood of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and SEEDS Ontario has firmly taken root.
On Monday, March 10, 2014, Enid Davis was laid to rest at Glen Oaks Memorial Gardens, Oakville, following a funeral service at Mississauga Adventist Church.

It was not a huge funeral service. There were plenty of seats available in the church because not too many people knew her. However, her mourners included Pastors Mansfield Edwards and Gary Hodder, the Ontario Conference president and executive secretary, respectively, conference departmental directors and a significant number of pastors and Bible instructors. They were present to celebrate the life of the most outstanding church planter in the history of the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Enid Davis, a woman of diminutive stature, was a giant among church planters and current disciples. From the moment she was baptized in 1970 at Harlesden Adventist Church in London, England, she had a passion for souls. She enthusiastically shared her faith with all those with whom she came in contact and eagerly grasped every opportunity she got to study the Bible.

Arriving in Toronto in 1971, she lost none of her passion for souls. In no time she became known in her local church, Toronto East, as an ardent disciple of Christ.

She eagerly volunteered in evangelistic series, revivals and seminars. She enrolled people in Bible correspondence courses, gave Bible studies to people, visited people who needed care and ministered to their physical needs. Her own home was an oasis of Christian hospitality for others.

The Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists subsequently provided her with a stipend for her continued unselfish labour of love.

Among her notable achievements was her dedication to planting new churches where there was no Adventist presence. She did not seek the comfort of evangelising within her own ethnic community. Instead, she confounded the experts who promoted the concept of people working within their own ethnicity by reaching across cultures. This she did, sometimes at great sacrifice.

Dr. Fitzroy Maitland, who gave the homily at the funeral service, vividly remembers her work. “Sister Davis was a model of her Master—a suffering servant. Nothing was too much to give up for God’s cause,” he says. “At her own personal sacrifice—blood, sweat, tears and money—she spent more than three decades going on foot or by public transport, knocking on doors in various towns and villages— from Waterloo to Cobourg—with her magazines and her Bible, sharing God’s love and showing to all who would listen, a better way of life.”

People from diverse ethnic backgrounds responded to her love and accepted Jesus as their Saviour. She played a leading role in planting eleven new congregations, nine of which are still active. Cobourg, Hanover, Maranatha (later merged with Faith to form Hope Adventist Church), Lindsay, Midland, Milton, Oakville and Waterloo, can all look back and see Enid Davis at their birth.

She sought no reward but the joy of seeing people accept Jesus as their Saviour and become part of God’s church.

“Her mission was always to win one more for the Kingdom of God,” says Maitland.

Pastor Mansfield Edwards, president of the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, spoke glowingly of Davis’ exemplary work.

“I arrived in Ontario years after Sister Davis was active in church planting,” he said, “but the result of her labour is here for everyone to see. I am full of admiration for her. Her love for people and for their salvation is the kind of love that I wish that every member in our conference possessed. I’m convinced that if we had just one hundred Enid Davis, the work of God could be finished in Ontario. We thank God for her!”

Davis spent the last stages of her life at Heritage Green residential care home. She was lovingly cared for at this facility until her death on Friday, February 21, 2014.

Dr. Maitland concluded his homily of her with the words, “Her work is finished. She has laid down the weapons of her warfare, but her influence will live on to the end of time. We look forward to a glorious reunion in the kingdom. Fought. Finished. Faithful.”

In honour of Enid Davis’ work, the Ontario Conference has established the Enid Davis’ Fund to assist church planters.
Upon his release from Warkworth prison near Brighton on January 30, 2014, Joe Barnes described being shot in the back three times by police in London as “the best thing that ever happened to him.” It prevented his escape and ensured his imprisonment where he met Jesus.

Joe’s introduction to the teachings of the Adventist Church came as he watched Doug Batchelor preach on television. His interest grew, and he was soon participating in Bible studies at the prison, led by Elder Eustace Williams, Ontario Conference Prison Ministries director, Glendon Robinson, Moses Henry and Pastor Rob Putt. As Joe came to know Jesus as His Saviour, he could hardly wait for his baptism. He was baptised by Pastor Putt on June 30, 2013, in a service at the prison. Belleville Adventist Church gladly received him into membership.

Joe visited the conference headquarters when Pastor Putt stopped there on his way to taking him to his new home in Sudbury. Pastor Williams gladly introduced Joe to the directors and staff who warmly welcomed him. Williams also presented him with a study Bible from the Prison Ministries department.

Joe later told Pastor Putt that he was overwhelmed by the demonstration of love and support from everyone—Belleville Church and the Ontario Conference Prison Ministries Department.

Now that Joe has settled into his new life, he is very excited about living it with Jesus and his church family. He has a great support network in Sudbury with Ray and Jeannie Mongrain and others from the congregation who are engaged in prison ministry.

If you would like to know more about prison ministry, contact your local leader or email Pastor Eustace Williams at ewilliams@adventistontairo.org

“I was in prison, and you came to visit me.” Matthew 25:36 NIV
Sam Greer, ‘The No-Breakage’ Mover, Retires

Sam Greer, the Ontario Conference mover, has parked his tractor trailer for the last time. After nearly thirty years of moving the belongings of church employees, students and others across North America, he retired on April 1, 2014.

As Sam moves into retirement, he can proudly look back knowing that he was an exception in the removal business—he developed a system of loading the trailer without breaking anything!

“Other movers refused to believe me,” he told the directors and staff of the Ontario Conference at a farewell dinner on April 15. “They said it is impossible because something always gets broken! ‘Not with my system,’ I told them.”

Among Sam’s numerous memories since his 1985 employment by the Ontario Conference is his very first trip. “I moved Pastor Wayne Martin from the Quebec Conference to Ontario,” he recalls, “and being my first time, it was really a learning experience.”

Since then, he has travelled to every state and province in North America with the exception of the Northwest Territories. He is known in almost every conference having ferried their employees’ possessions from one location to another. On more than one occasion, he was faced with life-threatening moments. “In such moments,” he said, “It was only the Lord who delivered me.”

Pastor Mansfield Edwards, Ontario Conference president, describes Sam as an ambassador for the Conference, and thanked him for his many years of service. He also thanked him on behalf of many students of Canadian University College who asked him to express their appreciation to Sam for his great help to them.

Pastor Gary Hodder, Ontario Conference executive secretary, spoke of Sam’s winsome personality and strong work ethic. “It’s been a joy to have known you in this capacity,” he said.

Now that Sam is retired, his travelling will be somewhat curtailed. He says that he plans to begin by attacking the list his wife, Gloria, gave him of jobs to be done around the house.

Pastor Jiwan Moon Leaves Ontario for the General Conference

Pastor Jiwan Moon will shortly be leaving Ontario for Maryland, USA, where he will take up his new position as associate youth director at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

The appointment was made at the spring meeting of the General Conference Executive Committee in March.

Moon is pastor of Harmony Adventist Church and the Italian Company in the Greater Toronto Area. He is new to Harmony, having only been transferred there five months ago after an 11-year ministry at Kitchener-Waterloo. He started pastoral ministry in Ontario at Toronto Korean Adventist Church in 1999 and was ordained in 2003.

Pastor Mansfield Edwards, president of the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, spoke glowingly of Moon.

“Jiwan has faithfully served this conference for 15 years and has thoroughly equipped himself to serve in this area of his specialisation,” he said. “We are poorer for his leaving, but the world-wide church is richer for it. We pray that God will richly bless him and his family as they re-locate to Maryland.”
Moon is the first-known pastor in Ontario to be appointed directly from a church to the highest organisation of the church without having first served at a conference, union or division level. However, for many years he has been known for his keen interest in working with youth and young adults and has equipped himself academically to do so. He holds a Master’s degree in Youth Ministry and, in February, successfully completed his work for his Doctor of Ministry degree, also in Youth Ministry.

In his new position at the General Conference, Moon will be responsible for Public Campus Ministries. He will be the first person to serve in this capacity since the position was only created at the Spring Council in response to a recommendation of a committee comprising representatives from the Education, Chaplaincy, Youth Ministries and Health Ministries departments of the General Conference.

While the Seventh-day Adventist Church has operated ministries for its own educational institution for many years, little has been done for public campuses. Only five conferences in North America have appointed someone for this ministry. In Ontario, Adam Bujak was the first person to serve in this field. He was followed by Cyril Millett whose motivational skills encouraged pastors in university towns to become engaged in campus ministry. His successor, Gerardo Oudri, is working to ensure that there is an active and supportive fellowship for Adventist students and their friends at every university in Ontario.

Jiwan, his wife, Jessica, and their three daughters, Hannah (7), Rebecca (4) and Isabella (3), are likely to leave Ontario in the summer.

The Ontario Conference is pleased to welcome three new pastors and their families to Ontario.

Christopher Johnson is a recent theology graduate of Canadian University College. A Jamaican by birth, Chris grew up in Toronto where he and his family attended Willowdale Adventist Church.

Chris’ education and careers have taken him from the travel and tourist industry to being a manager in telecommunications. After graduation, he returned to Ontario where he has been very busy preaching in churches, holding evangelistic meetings and holding seminars.

Chris was installed as the new pastor of Sudbury Adventist Church on April 19, 2014. He and his wife, Diana, have two sons, Malik (16) and Jaden (12).

Cheong Min Kim is the new pastor of Central Toronto Korean Adventist Group.

Formerly lead pastor at Moonsan Church in South Korea, Cheong Min brings a strong and diverse background in pastoral ministry to a congregation that is eager to grow.

Cheong Min has studied in Korea, the Philippines, and in the USA. Studying in the USA helped him develop his English language skills, and he was among the official translators at the 2010 General Conference in Atlanta.

While Cheong Min’s ministry has primarily been in South Korea, he also served a Korean congregation in the USA.

Pastor Kim, his wife, Kwang He, and their daughters, Lina (14) and Yeeun (10) have been warmly received by the Central Toronto Korean congregation. He was installed on Sabbath, April 12, 2014.

He replaces Pastor Kyung Sik Kim who recently retired.

Josue Manigat, a native of Haiti, has been living in Ottawa since 1995. Both he and his wife, Eveline, come from strong Christian families, and they have dedicated their lives to serving God.

They have been very active in the life of Ottawa French Church where Josue has served in numerous offices, including that of elder. Eveline’s love for children and youth is evidenced by her time spent in Children’s Ministries, Youth and Pathfinder departments.

While Josue’s professional training in education and political science gave him a meaningful career, he has long felt called to pastoral ministry. He subsequently pursued and obtained a Master of Divinity degree from the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary in 2008.

Pastor Manigat assumed his new responsibilities as assistant pastor serving the French district in Ottawa on March 1, 2014.

He and Eveline have one adult daughter, Rose-N, and two teenaged children, Karl and Gabriel.
Eight years ago, at their home in Ottawa, Michael and Yolaine Kirlew had hardly heard of Sioux Lookout, yet they were convicted that it was where God wanted them to go as missionaries.

Three hundred and eighty three kilometres Northwest of Thunder Bay, Sioux Lookout, a municipality of 5,600, now hosts the newest church plant in Northern Ontario. A group of five families have become the core of what they believe will be the first Adventist Church between Thunder Bay and Winnipeg.

The group, led by Bible instructor Lloyd Douglas and Yolaine Kirlew, meets regularly for worship, Bible study, fellowship, and for planning its evangelistic strategies.

Yolaine is the Personal Ministries leader and also has responsibility for Native Ministries. She is aptly suited for this role since she and her physician husband Michael, from the moment they relocated nearly eight years ago, have devoted themselves to work among and for the First Nations who make up 50% of the population.

“In the early days, there was no visible Adventist presence,” says Yolaine. “We met one family of recent converts and then another family came up here to work. By God’s grace we have been able to come together.”

Two years ago, in answer to prayers, Lloyd Douglas, also a physician, and his wife, Lisa, also relocated to Sioux Lookout and was appointed as leader of the group.

In late March 2014, Pastor Jakov Bibulovic, Ontario Conference Evangelism, Church Growth and Church Planting director, made the 1800 km journey from Toronto and experienced, first hand, the exuberance of the new group.

“Reading global mission stories was always fun, and I often dreamt of being part of a mission trip,” he said, “but it never crossed my mind that I would be able to meet missionaries in action in Ontario.”

Accompanied by Thunder Bay Church pastor, Emmanuel Perera, he listened to the stories and testimonies of the Adventist families.

“It was cold up there,” he said, “but their stories, energy and passion warmed our hearts. Later, when Lloyd introduced us to the First Nations chief and the native school principal, it was evident that sincere friendship and mutual trust was present.”

Last year, the group conducted a successful Vacation Bible School and has since run a weekly one.

This summer, with assistance of the youth department and other departments of the Ontario Conference, the group plans to coordinate VBS programs in three native communities. Yolaine and Lloyd are working closely with the native community leaders to make it possible.

Known as ‘the hub of the north,’ Sioux Lookout connects 29 remote northern communities to health care and essential services. It is the prayer of the group that it will soon be known as ‘the Adventist Hub of the North.’

Various areas of Ontario are clearly mission fields. Missionaries, prayers, resources, money and time are needed to share the gospel with the residents of those areas.

The Ontario Conference is committed to support the work in Northern Ontario.

Jakov Bibulovic, Director
Evangelism/Church Planting & Church Growth
Ottawa Adventist School had its spring week of prayer during March 24-28, 2014, and it was amazing! The theme for the week was Power Lab: Discovering Jesus’ Miraculous Power. Each day, pupils led out in worship, Bible readings, music and all the preaching. Pupils from kindergarten all the way to grade 7 preached about how Jesus healed the lepers, gave sight to the blind man; gave Peter courage to walk on water; how Jesus conquered the grave, and how He left the Holy Spirit to help us. Children, ages 6 and above, practiced to deliver their sermons and to honour the Lord through worship. When given the opportunity, children can share the gospel message and bless those around them. Pupils also had fun with their daily challenges, a learning game that pointed to the overall message of being thankful in all areas of life, no matter the circumstances. Daily, pupils and teachers participated in object lessons that correlated with the sermon. They played with slime, water and even learnt lessons from the glow worm.

We thank all the students and teachers for making another week of prayer a true blessing!

Pastor Liz Pule

“Adventists Walk the Health Talk,”
Says Local Newspaper

“Adventists Walk the Health Talk,” wrote Scott Dunn in the The Owen Sound Times on Sunday, March 16, 2014. Dunn had covered the 17th annual Owen Sound Health Fair the previous day and stopped at one of the 85 booths, where he met Erika Bruggemann, Erin Hepburn and Shirley Baird volunteering at the booth hosted by Owen Sound Seventh-day Adventist Church.

He observed visitors to the booth fill out a brief questionnaire and, after the data was fed into a computer, saw that they received a comparison of their “health age” to their calendar age.

“People were then shown their ‘potential health age,’ he said, “that is, how young they could be if they followed seven recommended health practices: regular aerobic exercise, limit snacking on junk foods, maintain a healthy weight, don’t smoke, get seven to eight hours of sleep daily and don’t drink or do so moderately.”

He soon learned from the volunteers that Adventists tend to live 10 to 12 years longer and began aging about 20-30 years later than people who did not follow healthy lifestyle taught by Adventists.

His column clearly noted other healthful practices of Adventists, including vegetarianism, no-smoking, no alcoholic beverages, an active lifestyle and concluded that Adventists ‘walk the talk.’

Pastor Doug Pollington, minister at Owen Sound Adventist Church, was clearly happy with the team from his church. “We have an excellent team,” he said. “I’m proud of how our volunteers handled themselves. I am grateful to them and in particular to Erika who is a dynamo in leading our church to be active in the community.”

Owen Sound Adventist Church has had a booth at the community fair for nearly as many years as the fair has been held. The church usually hosts a follow-up event. This year a cooking school, “Back to Basics”, was held on May 4, 2014 at the church building at 122442 Grey Road South, Owen Sound.
From Papua New Guinea to Baptism in Cochrane, Ontario

On April 5, 2014, the entire Koiengu family was baptised, eighteen months after arriving in Cochrane from Papua New Guinea.

Almost a year earlier, having survived their first Northern Ontario winter, family members, Georgina and her daughter, Theonilda, met Bible instructor, Alison Down. They were planning to walk 3km to their home with groceries when Alison offered to take them in her car.

Grateful for the ride, mother and daughter chatted amiably with Alison, only to discover that Georgina and Alison shared a love for gardening. Consequently, Alison invited her to participate in the Community Garden Project, supported by Cochrane Seventh-day Adventist Group.

A few days later, on the way to work in the garden, Alison mentioned to Georgina that she was an Adventist Bible instructor. Immediately, Georgina grabbed Alison's wrist and cried out, “I love the seventh day!” Although her family was Roman Catholic, they had ceased attending and were worshipping at home. Eric, her husband, had even visited an Adventist Church in Papua New Guinea.

Georgina and her family visited the Cochrane Branch Sabbath School the following Sabbath and continued attending on successive Sabbaths. In no time they were involved in the life of the church family.

By July 2013, the entire family, Eric, Georgina, and their four children (Max, Theonilda, Felix, and Eric Jr.) were having Bible studies with Alison. They all decided to be baptised together.

On the day before their baptism, Northern Ontario was inundated with a major snow storm. The snow prevented Pastor Philip Lee from the Timmins congregation from travelling to Cochrane on Sabbath morning, and the family was disappointed. However, by the afternoon, the roads could be safely navigated and Pastor Lee was able to be there and gladly immersed the entire family that afternoon.

The Cochrane congregation believes that God allowed the Koiengu family to move from Papua New Guinea to Cochrane to join them and to participate in the work God has assigned each disciple.

Alison Down
Bible instructor, Cochrane & area

Parry Sound Church Acquires Its Own Building

For many years, the church had rented space from other denominations, so to worship God in their own building filled them with joy.

The building is located at 7 Miller Street in the very centre of Parry Sound and is clearly visible to anyone passing by. It is the intention of the church family to make the most of its location for evangelism and for serving the community.

Some years ago, the congregation purchased land with the intention of constructing a church building. However, when the building in the centre of town became available, they sold the land and purchased the building. Some renovation is needed before the formal announcement of an official opening is made. It will be a unique opening ceremony because the property is mortgage-free allowing the congregation to also dedicate the building at the same time.

The leadership of the church is grateful to all members and friends of the church who both prayed for and supported the project. Special mention is made of the persistence of Chester and Iris Halvorson who worked tirelessly to make the dream of the congregation become a reality.

Pastor Carter Stanley

On Sabbath, April 5, 2014, there were many smiles and expressions of appreciation as members of Parry Sound Church met to worship in their own building for the first time.
Living Word Helps Refurbish Food Bank

On December 29, 2013, using $5,000 in materials and labour, carpenter and foreman, Solomon Marcellin, along with a number of volunteers from Living Word Fellowship, helped refurbish the local food bank in Hamilton.

They installed donated shelving and beautiful, new counter-tops in the Neighbour to Neighbour Centre, giving the room a fresh, new look. Denise Arkell, executive director of the centre, was very happy with the result and expressed her gratitude on behalf of the centre.

Outreach projects are a top priority at Living Word Fellowship. Every two years, the church alternates between one project out of the country and one local project. It was not a difficult task to make the Neighbour to Neighbour Centre its 2013/14 local project. The church shares the centre's key values.

One in six families lives in poverty in Hamilton\(^1\), and the centre has been tireless in its mission to alleviate and prevent poverty by supporting at-risk Hamiltonians since 1985.

In 2013, it fed 5,000 people, including 2,000 children; 220 students from 12 Hamilton schools participated in tutoring programs with the help of hundreds of volunteers; 80 Hamiltonians with chronic illnesses received food home-delivery; at Christmas, $300,000 worth of food, toys and gifts were distributed to those in need; 19 community garden locations were maintained across Hamilton Mountain; 304 Hamiltonians avoided utility disconnection and 3,300 Hamilton individuals avoided community counselling.\(^2\)

Living Word Fellowship, one of five Adventist churches in Hamilton, decided to support the centre by donating food and helping to refurbish its facilities.

During the summer of 2013, church members, young and old, held a food drive, and 80 participants collected 2,018 lbs. of food. Later, church volunteers spent their Thanksgiving weekend refurbishing the walls of the food bank with a fresh coat of paint. The installation of shelving and counter tops was the next step in refurbishing the centre. In June 2014, church volunteers will build an angled tray in the food bank to display fresh produce donated by local farmers.

Living Word’s members are anxiously anticipating the next food drive to be held on Fathers’ Day weekend. The church’s goal is to collect 3,000 lbs. of food in 2014 to help towards Neighbour to Neighbour’s goal of one million lbs of food.

Living Word is fully committed to its mission of “really living by connecting people with God”.\(^3\)

\(^{1}\) Statistics published by The Hamilton Spectator, Feb. 13, 2014

\(^{2}\) Davilyn Henderson

Toronto Ukrainian Church Celebrates 85\(^{th}\) Anniversary

On Sabbath, February 22, 2014, Toronto Ukrainian Adventist Church celebrated its eighty-fifth anniversary.

Members turned out in national costume, and the church was decorated to reflect the heritage of its members.

Pastors Mansfield Edwards and Gary Hodder, Ontario Conference president and executive secretary, respectively, accompanied by their wives, were present to worship and to share in the celebrations.

Edwards’ sermon was ably interpreted, and it was evident from the response of the congregation that members were very appreciative of the message.

Music played an important part of the service. The choir, which included the minister, Pastor Aleksandr Kozyarevskiy, rendered a number of well-prepared pieces to the delight of the congregation.

Toronto Ukrainian Seventh-day Adventist Church has a membership of 55. It is located at 900 Sheppard Avenue West and attended by people from both Ukrainian and Russian heritages.
On Sabbath evening, April 26, 2014, members of the Hispanic Adventist Churches in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) held a joint rally at Kingsview Village Adventist Church to launch ‘Harvest Crusade 2014’.

They came together motivated, instructed and challenged by Ontario Conference’s leaders to reach out to the 200,000 Hispanics living in the GTA.

Pastor Mansfield Edwards, Ontario Conference president, challenged the eager congregations to be bold for God and to become useful tools in His hands to reach souls for His kingdom, as they prepare for the autumn evangelistic meeting.

Accompanying the conference president were Pastors Jakov Bibulovic, director for Church Growth and Church Planting; Gerardo Oudri, director for Youth and Young Adults, and Pastor Eustace Williams, director for Personal Ministries.

The meetings, to be held from October 18 to 25, 2014, will be led by Pastor Robert Costa, speaker/director of the Spanish ‘It Is Written’ programme.

Leaders of the Hispanic congregations are praying that every child, youth, and adult among the Hispanic community may hear the Word of God and be convicted of and accept His salvation.

In preparation for the evangelistic series, the Hispanic churches have already begun reaching out to people. Among the various activities they have undertaken are social programmes run by the youths. These always commence with singing, praying, and reflecting on a Bible topic. Shortly after, the social activity begins.

Andres Pavon, a young college student from Colombia, is just one of a number of young adults who was attracted to the social programmes. He said he felt loved, respected and above all, truly welcomed, and the young people made him feel appreciated as Jesus would have done it.

Andres soon began attending church and two young adults, Adriana and Julian, studied the Word of God with him. He was recently baptized and is now an active member of the Adventist Hispanic Group in Brampton.

The churches will meet for another rally on June 14, when Pastor Robert Costa will be present for a day of motivation, training and assessment of the preparations being made for the great evangelistic crusade.

Pastor Daniel Sánchez

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Shortly after 3:30 p.m., Sabbath, March 15, 2014, Parkdale Company became the 126th church in the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Friends swelled the congregation to over a hundred people as Pastors Mansfield Edwards and Gary Hodder, Ontario Conference president and executive secretary, respectively, led the newest church in worship and through the organisation ceremony.

Being organised into a church was a very emotional moment for many of the members, especially those who started the group nine years ago. It was the fulfilment of a dream that went years beyond nine years.

Nearly four decades earlier, God inspired a group of Adventists from Harvie Street Church (now Toronto West Adventist Church) to plant a church in Parkdale, Toronto. After renting worship facilities on Dundas Street West, the small group eagerly shared the gospel of Jesus to the predominantly Eastern European community of Parkdale. The group grew and some years later moved to Etobicoke and became Bethel Adventist Church. Today, Bethel is a thriving church of nearly two hundred members.

However, the dream of returning to evangelize Parkdale continued to burn in the hearts of some Bethel members.

In 2005, under the leadership of Pastor Vincent Lue, a group from Bethel Church set out to plant another church in Parkdale. From its inception, the new Parkdale group involved itself in the community. Presently, it operates a regular visitation ministry to nursing and group homes. Also, in association with Touch of Love, it ministers to the homeless and poor.

The group received Company status in 2007. Conference officials also presented a cheque as a gift to the newly formed church. It was received by its pastor and treasurer, Pastor Nepthaly Dorzilme and Colin Jardine, respectively.

Also present at the ceremony were Pastors Jakov Bibulovic, Ontario Conference director for Evangelism and Church Growth, Joel Nembhard, Ministerial secretary and Godfrey Beresford of Touch of Love.

Invitation:
If you know of any unchurched friends or family or former Adventists living in Parkdale, please do not hesitate to invite them to visit Parkdale Church (King St. Parkdale United Church, 171 Dunn Ave, Toronto) or best yet, invite them to attend Parkdale with you one Sabbath. --Editor
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