Worship
Responding to God’s Worthiness
Beyond Clean Shoes and Cooked Food

I t’s hard admitting that I’m wrong. Conversation with others suggests that I’m not alone. We will defend our position with every ounce of our strength. Even when our argument cannot be reasonably substantiated, we resort to emotion or appeal to fear to shore up our crumbling position. I think it’s a pride thing. When we have invested so much time and effort into a position, we have really invested ourselves in it. To have our position challenged or to admit error becomes very personal. A challenge to our idea, belief or practice is perceived as an attack on our very personhood and on our worth. So I really don’t want to admit that I’m wrong. I’ve been wondering if I have been wrong about the Preparation Day and its use to prepare for the Sabbath. As with many religious practices, not much thought is given to why we do what we do. We simply do so because that’s what we were taught—learned behaviour. We do not pray nor seek the Holy Spirit’s guidance as to how to live as Christians. We accept what was given. So, what have I been wrong about? I think that I’ve been wrong about the purpose of Friday, the Preparation Day. Maybe not really wrong, but I’d been placing emphasis on one area to the neglect of what I believe to be the most important. Having been raised in a Sabbath-keeping home, I learned that the Preparation Day was to prepare for the Sabbath. The house was to be cleaned; food for the Sabbath cooked and stored; church clothes cleaned, ironed and laid out; shoes polished and bath taken—and all before sunset on Friday evening! Fine in the summer, when the sun sets late, but a real challenge in winter and early sunset! Common Adventist practice, right? Absolutely.

Then I began wondering why all the preparation for the Sabbath did not carry over into more meaningful worship. Why did our worship services seem so lifeless? There seemed little sense of the joy of being in God’s presence. Yes, there was joy at seeing friends, but the worship experience that satisfies our desire for meaning and purpose in our lives, the comfort we receive to calm our troubled lives, was often missing. When the worship service was over, there was little sense that worshippers had drawn strength from the well of God’s resources to face the difficulties of the week. Often, people only spoke about the service being good if the preacher was entertaining. High days at church were more about a special event or awards being given out than about God. Then it hit me. The preparation is not simply to be a physical preparation in order to have all our work complete before the Sabbath begins. It’s not even about receiving the sacred hours of the Sabbath. It has to do with the purpose of the Sabbath—to experience the eternal rest with God through the symbolism of the Sabbath. It is a weekly experience of the redeemed coming together to worship God as how we will worship Him when He comes again and makes all things new. It’s our anticipation of what it will be like when there is no more sin, when the earth is filled with God’s righteousness and the redeemed sing the song of Moses and the Lamb. I believe that the Preparation Day is primarily for spiritual preparation. Even if the house is clean and the food is prepared, if spiritual preparation has not taken place, how can we worship? Do we go to the sanctuary with heavy hearts, hoping that our burdens will be lightened? Are we able to sing praises to God when we have unconfessed sins, or we have not forgiven our brother or our sister? Are we surprised when we exit the sanctuary at the end of the service feeling unsatisfied? Yes, the services are sometimes in need of better preparation, organisation and leadership. However, when we are spiritually prepared to worship God, our state of being, our appreciation for God and His glory, our worship is not determined by others. The richness of our corporate worship experience on a Sabbath morning, or at any time, will always be determined by the spiritual preparation we individually make during the week, and especially so on the Preparation Day. It is a preparation that invokes the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives. It passionately calls on God to fill us with His presence and to create in us a desire for Him and for His righteousness. It involves, among other things, repentance, seeking forgiveness and forgiving others, restitution of what was taken, and a genuine attempt for reconciliation of broken relationships.

If we are to experience the profound joy of corporate worship, remember, preparation is more than just clean shoes and cooked food.

Halsey Peat, Editor
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Letters to the Editor

RE: REACH Ontario

Dear Editor,

I wonder why the Ontario Conference continues giving evangelistic funds to my church for a crusade every year. Last year we reaped zero. Nothing has changed, and we’re off to do it again.

I have been watching Vimeo clips from the North American Division, and I realize that it’s the outside of the box thinking that works. I wish I could make the seniors in my church, including my pastor, realize we don’t have a strategy, and we’re not ready.

Why don’t we offer the community what it needs? In our case—free ESL classes, Job Search group with free workshops, Senior’s weekly/monthly café are just a few ideas. So far, our best evangelistic effort has been VBS. We have more kids from the community coming to VBS than our own kids. Now, our church wants to cut the VBS budget!

My church will die if it continues doing the same thing. Our young adults (ages 20-35) are non-existent! The earliteens are just itching to leave. The average age in our church is in the late 60’s—and no one thinks it’s a problem! There are very few babies or Kindergartens. The primary class has just ten kids—most brought to church by their grandparents. After a while, these stay home with their parents.

At the end of the day, isn’t the pastor accountable to the Conference? Shouldn’t there be more direction from the Conference? Before they are cut an evangelism cheque, maybe they should be asked about their objectives, strategies and evaluation.

REACH is a great initiative, but how do you get your pastors to follow the guideline you have set when they don’t see anything wrong with what they have been doing for the last 30+years. Where is the accountability or reprimand if they’re not doing what they are supposed to do?

I don’t know how to change things, but I know we can’t continue doing the same thing each year.

MS, Scarborough, Ontario

Viviendo La Esperanza

18 al 25 de Octubre del 2014

Con Pastor Robert Costa

Para mayor informacion relacionado a la campaña, visite www.viviendolaesperanza.com

“Esta Escrito” con el Pastor Robert Costa
Sabados 10: 30 a.m.
TLN Canales 28, 35, 780 y Canal Bell Satelite
Repeticion a la 1:30 p.m. por Cable Rogers Canal 783

“Esta Escrito” y “Temas De Reflexion”
Domingos 1:00 p.m.
TLN Canal 780
“How Could They Call That Worship?”
Responding to God’s Worthiness

There was no doubt about her sincerity. She was also very passionate as she engaged me in conversation about worship.

I was visiting her church, and she took the opportunity to speak with me. She shared her disappointment as she described an experience at a church worship service whilst visiting another country. She then asked the question, “How could they call that worship?”

Having agreed with her opinion regarding some aspects of what she described, we engaged in further dialogue. She challenged me to ensure that our churches’ worship here in Ontario would not be allowed to ‘deteriorate’ to the level she experienced abroad.

When I asked her to share with me her understanding of what worship is, she paused for a few moments and, with a half-smile on her face, said, “It’s harder to explain than I thought, but you know what I mean. It is singing and praying and reading the Scripture.”

I am happy she felt comfortable sharing. Obviously, she rightly desires the highest quality of worship in her church. However, I suspect that the challenge she had defining worship is not unique to her. The purpose of this article is to reflect on the matter of worship.

How significant is an understanding of this subject? What exactly is worship?

A cursory look at the Three Angels Messages (Revelation 14:6-12) will reflect the multiple occurrence of the word worship. In God’s last message, He intentionally emphasized its importance. Ellen White warns, “An enemy is at work to destroy our faith in the sacredness of Christian worship.” ST 496

Franklin M.Segler, a former professor of Pastoral Ministry at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, in his text Christian Worship, says, “When we worship, we are declaring God’s worth.”

Nathan Bierma, in his study on ‘worship’ and its profound meaning, discovered it to mean ‘worshipful service’; ‘noble employment’ or ‘honourable work’ in Middle English. This spoke to the appropriate treatment of someone of worth.

So ‘worthiness’ is a key concept when it comes to worship. It is an act of affirming God’s worth. Worship is our declaration that God is worthy.

This is what the angels, the elders and the living creatures around the throne of God in Revelation model for us as they sing, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honour and glory and blessing!” Rev.5:12 (KJV).

This is the only appropriate response to the One who is infinitely worthy. It is no wonder that the very next verse points us to the response, “And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying; Blessing and honour and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever! Then the four living creatures said, ‘Amen.’” Rev.5:13,14 (NKJV).

As I consider this example of heavenly praise, I cannot help but conclude that God must feel insulted by our mediocre worship. What worth do we ascribe to God by the oftentimes unfocussed, insincere worship we offer? We must be determined to restore the focus on the worthiness of God during our worship services.

It seems to me that we have allowed a misconception to creep into our congregational gatherings. Increasingly, I have observed that congregants perceive themselves as the audience and those on the platform the ones who perform to their satisfaction. This is contrary to the worship described in Revelation. In the Bible passages above, God is the only audience. As creatures, we are to be worshippers, in essence, declaring what He is worth to us.

The deeper question is why do we attend congregational gatherings weekly? I pray that it is more than the preservation of a tradition. Ellen White cautioned, “A mere form of Christianity is not of the least value. It is destitute of saving power, having in it no reformatory energy. A religion which is confined to Sabbath worship emits no rays of light to others” (ST 339.2).

It is critical that we take a careful look at what we offer to God as worship today. It is very clear that a proper understanding and expression of worship is vital to whether God accepts our worship or not. There is such a thing as unacceptable worship, as is clarified by the stirring statement of Jesus,

“But in vain they do worship Me…” Matt. 15:9 (KJV)

Jesus, describing true worshippers, says they “Worship Him in Spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). Worship in the Spirit actually means that true worship is internal. This is in the heart or the spirit of the worshipper. This is the kind of worship that in truth admits that God is worthy, and in Spirit is determined to return God to His rightful place in our lives.

In the first book of the Bible, Adam and Eve make an attempt to be ‘the ones who were worthy’, attempting to take God’s place, by yielding to Satan’s invitation to make them ‘as gods’. In the last book of the Bible, the angels and elders say to God, “You are worthy.” God is in His rightful place, and we are in ours. This is a part of the theology of restoration. We submit to God’s rightful place in our lives.

Kathleen Smith, in her book Stilling the Storm, describes congregational worship as our “weekly practice at not being God.” David prayed, “Teach me your way, O LORD and, I will walk in your truth: Give me an undivided heart, that I may worship your name.” Psalm 86:11

I believe God would be excited to hear this kind of prayer more often. He knows that a divided heart is not able to worship Him sincerely.

Spirit and truth, the heart or attitude of the worshipper, as well as the actual theological beliefs together determine the quality of our worship.
‘Love the Lord Your God with All YOUR Heart’

As I travel across Ontario, I have the privilege of meeting wonderful people and hearing about their journey with the Lord and His church.

*Randy, Alice, Anna and Tom are four passionate individuals who kindly answered three questions I posed:

1. **What do you like most about your church?**
2. **What frustrates you most about your church?**
3. **What connects you most to God?**

Randy, a musician, serves as a greeter and a member of the social committee for the church he has attended for many years in Western Ontario. He responded,

Q1. “I love that there are so many different cultures and ethnic groups represented in our church.”
Q2. “Sometimes, the worship here feels superficial, like a rote programme. We don’t tap into our rich diversity here. It seems that our worship is much the same from week to week. We mostly sing the same style of songs and our order of service has remained unchanged. We don’t take the time to get to know each other.”
Q3. “I love praise and worship through singing. That is when I experience God in a deep way, and He touches me. It blesses me when I connect with other believers in a personal way and can share my experiences.”

Alice is a life-long member of a small church in a city of 35,000 in North Eastern Ontario. Her attendance over the last two years has become increasingly sporadic. She serves as Sabbath School teacher and has been an elder. She responded,

Q1. “I love that it hasn’t changed much over the years. It feels like home, and I know what to expect from week to week.”
Q2. “I don’t understand why people are constantly trying to change things around here. Why can’t people be happy to leave things the way they are? I’ve stopped attending those weeks when the youth change up the service.”
Q3. “I love when our pastor gets into the Word; I enjoy a good structured Bible study, and I love to research the content of the message from the handouts given week to week. I love the stillness that comes from our time of prayer.”

Anna attends a downtown church located for the past fifteen years in the heart of a city of 150,000 in Southern Ontario. Anna, who is a deaconess and community outreach coordinator, gave a different response from those above,

Q1. “I love that we are downtown where the people are. We have an incredible mission field right at our doorstep. I believe that God has placed our congregation here for a purpose: to reach out to those in need and bring hope to the down and out.”
Q2. “We seem to talk quite a bit about reaching out to those around us, but very little actually takes place. Our worship is vibrant, and our pastor’s messages are uplifting, but we are just not impacting our community.”
Q3. “I feel most connected to God when I am engaged on a mission and connected to people. My heart is most blessed when I am part of a team that provides clothing and food to our neighbours in need.”

Tom has been very active in a large church in Central Ontario. Having served in different ministries, including that of an elder, he presently serves as the leader of the audio visual production team. Tom responded,

Q1. “I love that our congregation is blessed with young professionals and other individuals who are gifted with many talents.”
Q2. “We seldom try new things. Our order of service is stagnant and our level of excellence is poor. We have all we need to be innovative, fresh and appealing. We could be doing so much more with the gifts and talents that the Lord has entrusted to our congregation.”
Q3. “I love exploring new ways to bring an old story to life. I feel most connected to God when my experience with Him is fresh and exciting.”

These are four members whose priorities in worship and how they best connect to God and His church vary. Which of the four is most correct? Each of us will answer that question from a personal bent that resonates greater with one than the others. The true and only answer is, “all of them”. There are Randys, Alices, Annas and Toms in every congregation. The
health of the congregation will only be strong if all four responses to worship are present. It is when one or more are missing that imbalance occurs.

Unfortunately, some members no longer attend because they feel they don’t get anything out of the corporate worship event. There’s no question, the current worship restlessness continues to divide the churches of all denominations.

Evangelical author, Dan Kimball, in his book, Emerging Church, describes a similar restlessness that highlights the need to evaluate what is happening in many churches today. He observes, “Weekend worship services are becoming a definite issue for emerging generations. They wonder if coming together to worship really only consists of a few songs and a central focus on preaching. They feel more and more uncomfortable with the way many worship services profile one or two male-only leaders up front. They are wondering why there is hardly (if any at all) participation from the people in the congregation.”

Jim Belcher, in his book, Deep Church, observes another type of restlessness described by emerging writers:

Worship in the traditional church does not speak to the culture around it. Using music and traditions that are hundreds of years old, making no attempt to speak to the present culture and setting a posture that is against the world, traditional churches have become incapable of reaching the culture for God. The traditional church is not being faithful to the biblical call to worship before the nations. There simply is no way traditionalists can effectively communicate the message of Christianity to a postmodern world.

Marva J. Dawn, in Reaching Out without Dumbing Down: A Theology of Worship for This Urgent Time, asks the questions that lay at the heart of this challenge: “Can we find some way to prevent discussions about worship styles from becoming fierce and bitter battles waged between two entrenched camps? Can we instead find common criteria by which to assess what we are doing in worship so that we can bring together opposing sides of various arguments, so that we can truly be the church as we talk together about our worship practices?” For the sake of the Kingdom, the answers must be yes. The time for revival and transformation of worship has come.

In Matthew 22:37, Jesus was asked a question, “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” His response was very direct, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind.” Jesus was very clear on at least three points: 1. Jesus requires us to love Him with our ‘all’. 2. The heart, soul and mind represent the totality of humanity. 3. When Jesus used the word, “your”, He implied that we are to love God as only we can. In other words, because we are each created unique, we can offer to God a very special and unique bent in the way we respond to Him with our entire being.

This speaks to our planning of the gathered worship service. As leaders, we must plan to engage each of the four individuals above. We must be intentional to include elements that allow each one the freedom to express his or her individual response to God. One size/style does not fit all. Most of all, we need a church that is unified where members will encounter an experience with God and with each other; where the teaching of the Word is rich and deep; where the challenge is presented and acted upon to apply that which is taught; and lastly, where creativity is encouraged and celebrated.

Ellen White provides a solemn challenge that is as relevant today as the day she shared it,

“Is it not your duty to put some skill and study and planning into the matter of conducting religious meetings—how they shall be conducted so as to do the greatest amount of good, and leave the very best impression upon all who attend?...God is displeased with your lifeless manner in his house, your sleepy, indifferent ways of conducting religious worship. You need to bear in mind that you attend divine service to meet with God, to be refreshed, comforted, blessed, not to do a duty imposed upon you. {RH, April 14, 1885 par. 9}

Worship is for everyone. Plan services so that everyone can fully participate in worship.

4. The Review and Herald; The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald; Review and Herald., 2002

Dave Schwinghammer, Stewardship and Worship Director
Prayer As a Response to God’s Glory

As with all true worship, the most meaningful and fulfilling experience, when it comes to worshipping God through prayer, is realised when prayer is a response to who God is.

This was Isaiah’s experience when he caught a vision of God’s glory, recorded in Isaiah 6:1-8:

Isaiah saw a heavenly scene so majestic, so otherworldly and so fantastic that he could not contain it. It overwhelmed him, and he fell to the ground in complete fear. The glory of God, coupled with Isaiah’s own sense of his sinfulness and unworthiness in God’s presence, filled him with awe. He could hardly catch his breath. He felt an impending doom sweeping over him. Yet, when God told him that his sins had been atoned for, and he was forgiven (v7), his fear was replaced by the willingness to gratefully serve God.

To truly worship God, whether private or corporate, we must also catch a glimpse of God’s glory and of His presence. It will cause us to immediately recognize our own unworthiness and our utter sinfulness, but it will also give us an acute awareness of God’s unlimited power.

Prayer 101

This is the basis for prayer–God’s majesty, His holiness, His perfection and His absolute power, and the recognition of our sinful rebellion. We know that we don’t just commit acts of sin, but we are actually sinful and even our good deeds are tainted with sin. So in our prayers, like the publican in the parable in Luke 18: 10-14, we approach the Holy One with awe, acknowledge our state of sin and ask for mercy. We ask for nothing more. This is prayer 101! If our prayers are not based on these factors: God’s holiness, the recognition of our sinful condition, and our desperate need for His mercy, then we’re not praying!

The person who offers the prayer in worship has both a daunting responsibility and a wonderful privilege. It is daunting because he or she is a sinner who approaches the Most High God on behalf of other sinners. It is a privilege because he or she is the one who actually approaches God and becomes our spokesperson in worship. He or she offers our verbal worship, praise and thanksgiving.

Can you imagine the type of spiritual preparation needed? Perhaps more than what is needed to deliver the sermon. Hence the congregation must be praying for the one interceding!

With the requisite spiritual preparation needed to offer prayer in worship, it is not wise to suddenly lay hands on someone to pray. On the other hand, all of us should approach corporate worship having made preparation in case we are needed to pray. Even if we do not get the opportunity to pray, our hopes and desires and needs would have been given to the one who is officiating.
we’re going to derive much more from the service than what we would normally receive because of our personal spiritual preparation.

How Do We Pray?

Very few of us have been taught to pray in worship. We listen to others and simply copy what they say. However, a good example of an intercessory prayer is found in Daniel 9. You may need to first read it before continuing reading what follows.

He begins in verse 4 with adoration and praise, speaking to God of His glory and attributes. He continues doing so in verses 7, 9, and 14. He calls God righteous, merciful and forgiving.

This is a good way to begin an intercessory prayer. Since our vision of the Holy One, the King of the universe, is full of God’s majesty, our prayers should reflect our awe, our amazement as to who He is. We love Him for it. This is adoration, telling Him how much we love Him. In our prayers, we recite how wonderful and marvellous God is. It fixes our attention squarely on the majesty of God.

Praise is another way of offering thanks. In our prayers, we recite what God has done for us and we thank Him. This is what Daniel does in verses 9 and 15, stating how God brought Israel out of Egypt.

Recognition of our sinfulness is very important. In verses 5, 8, and 10, Daniel confesses his and Israel’s sin, ‘We have sinned and done wrong’.

Daniel includes himself among the sinners, even though he is faithful to God. So, in corporate prayers, we use ‘we’ not ‘I’. We reserve ‘I’ for our personal prayers.

Verse 19 identifies another key area of the intercessory prayer; namely, repentance and seeking forgiveness. He says, ‘Lord, listen! Lord, forgive! Lord, hear and act!’

Finally, (verses 10 and 17) he intercedes, supplicating God on behalf of the people. He asks God to turn His anger away from them and to hear his prayer on behalf of the people.

Another example is that of the Lord’s Prayer. Look for the same components.

From the example above, the components for an intercessory prayer could be: Adoration, Praise/Thanksgiving, Confession, Repentance, and Intercession/Supplication.

These components may be used as a guide to prevent rambling, repetition, sermonizing and unending prayers.

The Prayer May Be Structured Along These Components:

1. Adoration – God, you are wonderful!
2. Praise/Thanksgiving – We praise You for Your marvellous love/deeds/provisions, etc.
3. Confession – we are sinful, undeserving.
4. Repentance – We are sorry for our rebellion and the grief it causes.
5. Intercession – Please forgive us. Give us Your mercy, heal us, restore us.

6. Commitment – May Your Spirit draw us to You so that we experience You in our lives.

It does not have to be long. Keep it simple. You have caught a vision of God’s glory, and you are speaking to Him. Your prayer is a crucial aspect of the worship the body of Christ offers to Him. Offer it as worship.

Halsey Peat,
Communications and PARL Director
Today’s children are the by-product of yesterday’s parenting. This can be seen in society where many of our young people have not been educated with regards to the dangers of social media. One example is that of sexting.

Many parents are unfamiliar with the word sexting and have even tried to correct my spelling of it, believing it is supposed to be texting. They don’t know its meaning and, hence, are oblivious to the dangers and laws regarding sexting.

For those who don’t know, sexting is the use of social media (usually mobile phones) to send sexually explicit messages and images to other people.

Have parents been so busy with life itself that they got lost in a changing world where social media is big business? In fact, one parent actually came to me and proudly boasted about having a Facebook account. I had to smile and point out that our young people are no longer active on Facebook, but have migrated to Whatsapp, Instagram etc. Where was that parent when his or her child or children were engaging their friends on Facebook before moving on to the new social media apps?

Most parents over the age of 50 find it difficult to keep up with the digital age. It appears that many are satisfied with having the latest phone while others have even bought an iPad just to appear fashionable. However, most are not able to use the device at its full potential. For some, it simply serves as a digital Bible and hymn book. Others show some advancement by using it to read and send emails.

However, these tablets, such as iPads, are fully functioning high specification computers with tremendous ability to do things beyond one’s imagination. Our young people are fully aware of this and regularly use them as learning tools at school.

I am saying this because the iY generation (those born in the 1990’s) has grown up with technology. Yet, parents have not kept themselves up to date, resulting in their inability to effectively communicate with their teens. Parents are strangers to their teen’s world, unable to play the games and talk with them about things in which they are deeply engrossed.

In order for parents to be able to better help their teenagers in their development while protecting them from the dangers of social media, they will need to invest more time into that.

**Sexting Dangers**

Parenting must be intentional. We must spend active time with our children. One of the many advantages is that we will discover areas of dangers they face—of which they are totally unaware—including receiving a criminal record, bullying others or becoming a victim of cyber bullying.

There are also dangers of depression and self-harm as a result of social media bullying or sharing too much personal information. Some naively think that the picture or text is only going to ‘my boyfriend’ or ‘my girlfriend’ only to discover that it’s gone public. Sadly, we have heard news reports of tragic outcomes. Clearly this warrants time investment with our children.

Instead of investing time with our children, we usually engage in the knee-jerk reaction of trying to curtail our children’s access to the Internet. We may be successful at home, but only there! They will always find a way to access the Internet elsewhere. Somehow we have to influence them to make good choices. This is our parental responsibility, and it requires co-operation with the Holy Spirit so that we may be better examples for them and to develop closer and honest relationships with them.
There are four primary areas we should focus on:

1 **Identity.** A clear sense of identity is a key to our purpose in life and to having positive self-worth. Our parental role is to help our teenagers learn (especially by our example) to love Jesus and embrace their identity as children of God, created in His image. We must help them discover that as disciples of Jesus, they also have an identity as Seventh-day Adventist teenagers with a great future ahead of them. They need to know the values of the church, its mission and their relationship to it.

Equally important is their identity in belonging to a unique family that God has guided, protected, provided for and has blessed. In sharing the family history, the truth must be told, including where failures have led the family astray and the struggle to return to what God desires for your family. We must teach them that the family and the church are both comprised of real people. Our role is to help them discover their identity, their purpose, and the role they play in the family, the church and in God’s plan of salvation.

2 **Relationships.** Amidst the many changes that take place in his or her mental, social, physical and spiritual life, your teen needs to learn how to love others, be generous and to avoid selfishness. It will not happen because we wish it to be so. Training must begin from the very beginning. Since children learn best by example, we must be their examples. If we are selfish, they will learn selfishness. If we do not love, especially those who are hard to love, we cannot expect them to love. When they see love demonstrated in our homes and in the church, they will not only learn how to love, but they will feel accepted and wanted. Unfortunately, our behaviour often sends a contrary message, and they conclude, “If that is love, I don’t want it.” They walk out on the church as the relationships they see in the church do not reflect the words we speak. We need to be open and honest with them about the struggles of discipleship—power struggles in church, racism, love, sex, etc. We need to be truthful about how we have messed up and that our hope is that they will succeed where we failed. They need to hear from us and learn from our life experiences, not from what we read in a text book. It’s our relationship teaching that will protect them from the many dangers lurking in the future. We need to leave them with the silver spoons of quality relationship and a godly understanding.

3 **Character Formation.**

In the Bible, Joseph and Daniel are correctly used as good examples of young adults with admirable characters: individuals who stood for right, regardless of what others were doing. Helping our children and teenagers develop Christ-like characters is one of the most important responsibilities we have. This involves agreeing (through discussion) on boundaries, discipline, penalties, correction, forgiveness, and encouragement.

While genuine respect for parents is a clear indicator of a developing good character, when your teenager begins to fulfill responsibilities and does what is right without being asked, there is certainty that the lessons are being learned. Such character development can only be realised if we give them opportunities to learn in the home and in the church through responsibilities. This is beneficial for teenagers and also for the church. They develop characters that will help them stand in times of difficulty; the church benefits by having young, strong leaders who, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, will lead the church into the upcoming decades.

4 **Spiritual Mission.** Today’s teens seem to have everything—material possessions, instant communication and fingertip entertainment, but they lack the spiritual dimension. It is our job to work, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, to help them develop spiritually and be led to have a mission in life.

We have seen young people play significant leadership roles in bringing down governments in the Middle East. We have seen how they work without much money, to accomplish the seemingly impossible. When our teenagers possess a spiritual mission, we can expect them to achieve great things.

We can help them develop a personal spiritual mission when we expose them to our personal mission—feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, housing the homeless, visiting the sick, raising money for the poor, being compassionate to the needy, telling others of Christ’s love, giving Bible studies and leading people to Him. Mission is best caught, not taught.

None of this is easy, but would you rather your children and your teens be left to the tutelage of social media and the Internet?

Building a relationship is still possible with your teen. It will require your full cooperation with the Holy Spirit, significant time investment, humility, openness, honesty, willingness to listen and not judge, and genuinely taking a keen interest in the person who is your teenager.

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Steve Thomas, Youth and Young Adults Ministries Director, South England Conference

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www.Facebook.com/adventistontario
Screen Time, Young Children and the Human Touch

There was a time when it was a common thing for young children to be entertained by peek-a-boo games, singing and finger plays when their families went on rides around the country or around the block. A time when most children enjoyed the sound of a parent or caregiver reading their favourite bedtime story at nap or bedtime; when a hug, bottle or pacifier was sufficient to soothe a crying infant or toddler. But things have changed. Parents and caregivers are relying more and more on technology to replace human interaction with children – for playing, learning, and caregiving. Some parents boast that their young children can navigate technological devices with surprising adeptness, but this ability may be to the detriment of the development of other basic skills.

Daily prolonged screen time may also affect a child’s visual and fine motor skill development. The Canadian Pediatric Society recommends no screen time (with television, tablets, cellular phones, etc.) for children up to age two and no television or other media access in their rooms. Furthermore, the Society advises that screen time be limited to less than one hour a day for two to four year old children, and parents and caregivers should be on hand to supervise technology usage. These recommendations are ideal and may be difficult to practise, but the short and long-term benefits are worth the effort. Young children have more opportunities to thrive in an environment where there is more positive, nurturing human contact and less technology time. Additionally, exposing children to books and other educational tools is a preferred alternative to constant reliance on technology for entertainment and soothing.

All would agree that technology in its entirety brings tremendous benefits. We cannot imagine surviving in routine activities of daily living without the most basic wired or wireless device. But even the most valuable tool can be detrimental if misused and/or overused, and children could be the group most affected by the improper use of technology. If they are swaddled in technological gadgetry from infancy, they are in danger of physical, social, and developmental deficits. This is the conclusion of several experts in the area of childhood development. One of these specialists is Dr. Kiti Freier Randall, pediatric neurodevelopmental psychologist, and associate professor of Pediatrics and Psychology at Loma Linda University. Randall notes that for babies and toddlers, the act of TV viewing can be habituating and therefore does not provide the stimulation that parents believe their children are receiving from this activity. She argues that “most patterns of behavior, which are played out throughout life, are learned in infancy by repetitive experiences. The repetition of media viewing then becomes a ‘habit’ and inhibits other important developmental experiences over time (e.g. playing outdoors, sports, engaging in the arts, socializing with peers etc.).” In addition, “all areas of development in the early years grow in the context of relationships. The more time babies and toddlers spend viewing media, the less time they spend interacting with parents or engaging in creative play. It is face-to-face and NOT two dimensional representations that are critical to early infant well-being and neurodevelopment”, she concludes.

God created us to interact with each other, and this is critical for children in all areas of development. When the human bond is intercepted and/or consistently replaced by technology, there is the danger that young children may not be able to create and sustain viable relationships.

Children develop rapidly, and parents and caregivers must make every effort to maximise time with them to foster healthy growth and bonding.

Maria McClean, Children and Health Director
With millions of people attending some sort of weekly worship experience, you would think that the online phenomena of social media would be a natural go-to spot for churches. Well, it’s not—at least, not for many of them.

Few churches have learned how to socially re-engage people so I figured that a few tips on how to do this may be helpful for faith leaders and churches to consider.

**Developing Blog Topics**

Be prepared to talk about the things that interest your community. People will want to know how your congregation approaches difficult topics. Sex, drugs, politics and Hip Hop are safe places to start if you want to get out of the crowd of just talking about familiar Bible stories. Share information on how people can improve their quality of life by meeting the challenges faced by peer groups or demographic.

Use Google’s Keyword Planning Tool to help you identify which keywords have the most relevant traffic. Ensure that you write for the audience you are targeting. Not everyone has graduated from a seminary or even visited a church. They don’t understand ‘church speak’. Here are some topic ideas:


**Publish a Podcast**

Podcasting is super-duper easy for churches to do. You can re-purpose the audio portion of your videos or record fresh audio content. Simply extract the audio portion from a video and save it in a format like MP3. You can also use your smartphone or digital recorder to document the presentations and prepare them for a podcast.

Podcasts are useful for friends of your church if they have missed a service because they can listen while commuting during the week. It is also a reliable way for senior citizens who are shut in to stay connected to religious content from local faith leaders they trust.

If you have never produced a podcast before, you can save some time by learning about the 10 Common Podcasting Mistakes To Avoid by David Bain (www.searchenginepeople.com/blog/10-podcasting-mistakes.html).

**Post Pictures**

The life of the church is more than a weekly sermon. Take pictures of people interacting in small groups, teaching sessions, sporting events and community initiatives. Designate department leaders to take pictures on their digital devices and send images to a central spot. There may be photographers in your congregation who may volunteer and can take higher quality shots that you can use. Put the word out and see what happens. Everyone can send in pictures via Dropbox, TheBox or simply an email address that is only used to receive images.

Remember, seasonal holidays like Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year’s Eve are fantastic times to capture visual content from plays, cantatas, children’s choirs and guest speakers.

Don’t worry about how professional the shot is. The most important thing is that you are consistently sharing the special moments with your social media audience and that you are visually engaging them with fresh content on sites like:

Facebook - Flickr - Instagram - Photobucket - Pinterest

**Conclusion**

No matter the style of your church, the one thing in common is the desire to connect and engage with people. Over time, you will perfect your style and find that your online audience will grow with you, respond to you and share your inspiring ideas.

Richard Picart

Richard works as a Digital Marketing Strategist and Account Director. He is the communications leader for Kanisa Fellowship in Toronto.

The original article was first posted May 22, 2014 on Richard’s blog: http://www.searchenginepeople.com/blog/925-churches-social-media.html#ixzz32qEA7n26
One single word chosen for a theme, yet it summed up the experience of so many at Ontario’s camp meeting.

“When I arrived with my sister and saw ‘One!’ as the theme, I thought it was strange,” said Jackie, visiting from New York, “but I soon sensed a strong unity with all the people there. And with the worship; it was awesome!”

From the children’s programme to the teens’ exciting experience in hall 4 and the vibrant worship of young adults in hall 3, to the rich worship of the adults in hall 5, the sense of unity, of oneness, couldn’t be mistaken.

“Every year I come wondering how the conference will improve on the previous year,” said Eduardo, “and I don’t know how they do it, but somehow it’s like each year is the best ever!”

The theme ‘One!’ as with all themes of recent camp meetings are an outgrowth of the REACH initiative. This year, the emphasis was on Alignment, Church Growth and Evangelism. “We want to see our members,” said Pastor Mansfield Edwards, quoting Ellen White, “act in concert moving forward as one, under the direction of one power, for the accomplishment of one purpose”.

The entire day with its various services was designed to inspire and motivate all worshippers to seek unity with God, with each other and to embrace the one mission God has given them.

It was clear that many were inspired:

“This camp meeting was a breath of fresh air for me,” said Elaine from Etobicoke, “I’ve been praying that we would take the whole matter of unity seriously.”

“If the service at my church could even be a little bit like what I see at camp meeting, I’d most probably be there every week,” said Deshane, speaking of the young adults worship in hall 3. “Right now, it’s kind of dull!”

“It was my very first time to attend Ontario camp meeting,” said Manal, recently arrived from Kuwait. “It was really nice!... I enjoyed the most the singing/praise and worship, especially the evening part.

“I wish it would last two or three days; we would enjoy it more and wouldn’t be tired at the end of the day.”

“I love the genuine joy of this worship team.” (Online chat, speaking about Darryl Garrison and the Hope Church praise team).

Something new was attempted this year in the teens’ service in hall 4: The juniors (age 10-12) joined them. Finding a speaker who would engage both groups was perhaps the most challenging areas for the planners. However, in Pastor Richard Aguileria, they struck gold.

“There were hardly any teens hanging around outside or in the lobby,” said Pastor Edwin Martin, one of the organisers. “They were inside participating in the worship and listening to the speaker.”

In hall 3, Pastor Buster Swoopes from Texas, complemented the well-planned and inspirational worship with powerful, heart-searching messages. Although 2,000 seats had been set out, they were all occupied, and there was standing room only for the young adults.

The 6,000 chairs in hall 5 were nearly all taken. Those standing could have found seats at the distant left of the room if they were willing to walk the distance. They seemed happily content to stand, participate in worship and listen to the

Commissioning and Ordination

The commissioning and ordination service will not only be remembered for its solemnity and for those commissioned and ordained, but also for the outstanding singing by a teachers’ group and also by pastors’ group.

Three teachers, Sarah Mora, Katherine Gurango-Nool and Beverly Mae Solijon were commissioned.

Pastors Kenton Perrin and Bob Winsor were ordained.

Pastor Daniel Stojanovic, executive secretary of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada, preached the message, ‘Leaders According to God’s Heart’.

Prior to the evening meeting, Pastor Mansfield Edwards presented his annual report. Among the many highlights was a presentation of modern day evangelistic pioneers, Michael and Yolaine Kirlew and Lloyd Douglas, who moved to Sioux Lookout in Northern Ontario and have started a group there.

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Pastor Edwards, assisted by Alvin Ram, Planned Giving and Trust Services director, also presented bequests left to Toronto Yugoslavian and Sarnia Adventist Churches and to the Education Department of the Ontario Conference.
Outreach is always at the centre when Thunder Bay Seventh-day Adventist Church plans its annual camp meeting. Camp Meeting 2014, held May 2-4, was clearly an outreach event.

On the opening night, 48 people from the local community joined church members for a musical concert that featured the groups Northern Lights, and Psalms, along with singers and musicians, Jim Rieder, Sweeney, Linda Gillies, Eddy Sundberg, Rose Mahon, Robert Sylvester, and Rose Lafontaine.

The concert was one aspect of the three-fold approach to outreach. The other two were an eight-session health seminar by Dr. Zeno L Charles-Marcel, VP Wildwood Lifestyle Center, Georgia, USA; and worship, with inspiration messages by Pastors Mansfield Edwards and Gary Hodder, Ontario Conference president and executive secretary, respectively.

Dr. Charles-Marcel spoke in-depth concerning the prevention and reversing of high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, arthritis, heart attacks and terminal illness such as cancer. Attendees were able to participate in a health assessment survey and were given personal feedback by a team trained by Dr. Charles-Marcel. The practical approach, including Dr. Charles-Marcel’s answers during a question and answer period, was well received by members of the community. Many indicated that they would attend another health seminar if Dr. Charles-Marcel returned to Thunder Bay again on another occasion.

Copies of Health and Healing Journal and some articles on vital health issues were freely distributed to community guests. On Sunday, Pastor Edwards’ message on God’s compassion, redemption and restoration and Pastor Hodder’s message of God’s amazing grace were both well received by the congregation.

The outreach emphasis of the camp meeting has been supplemented by the mailing of 2,234 copies of the book, The Great Hope, while another 1,500 or more copies have been distributed house-to-house by church members. Since June 8 a video series, Nature’s Way to Better Health, by Dr. Raymond Obomsawin and a health supper club hosted by Evelyn Gregory and the health team, has been held twice monthly at the church. Both will run until August 2014.

People from the community are able to access Dr. Charles-Marcel’s journal, Health and Healing, from the church website.

Emmanuel Perera, Thunder Bay Church Pastor

Over $21,000 Given Away at Camp Meeting

At Camp Meeting 2014, Pastor Mansfield Edwards, accompanied by Alvin Ram, Planned Giving and Trust Services director, gave away $21,000.

Edwards was speaking about the Planned Giving and Trust Services Department during the president’s address when he spoke about the faithfulness of three members who are now resting in Jesus. “These individuals,” he said, “wanted to return a portion of what God had blessed them with to further the work in Ontario by leaving a portion of their estate to the Ontario Conference.” Even though the bequests were given specifically to the Ontario Conference, administration recognized the exemplary ministry from their local churches and voted to share a portion of what was received with them.

Pastor Edwards spoke of the late Katarina Mandic as he called forward Pastor Goran Zivkovic from Toronto Yugoslavian Church and presented him with a cheque for $16,500. He then spoke of the late Sarah Godding as he called forward Pastor Friedrich Stele from Sarnia Church and presented him with a cheque for $5,000. Finally, Pastor Edwards called forward the Ontario Conference Superintendent of Education, Donald MacIntyre, and presented him with an undisclosed amount from the Estate of Richard Keim. Brother Keim had indicated that upon his passing that the funds he was leaving for God’s work were to be used specifically for assisting worthy students attending Adventist schools in Ontario.

If you would like to learn more about how you can make a difference and further God’s work in Ontario with a planned gift, please contact the Ontario Conference Planned Giving and Trust Services Department at 905-571-1022 ext. 206.

Ulysses Guarin presents a cheque to Goran Zivkovic
The Dream

The dream of having our own camp meeting facility is within our reach!

Having purchased 38 acres of land in Oshawa, the Ontario Conference needs your help to enable all Adventists and their friends to experience the joy of multiple-day camp meetings -- in our own facility, right here in Ontario.

However, big dreams require big commitments. In the next issue of the Highlights, you will learn how your donation can make the dream of our own camp meeting facilities come true.
“I’d Rather Go Without Food to Keep My Children in School,”
Says Mother

“...I’d rather go without food to keep my children in school,” she told me.

I was at Windsor Adventist School with a team of evaluators when she was introduced to us as one of the active parents in the PTA. When I learned that she has five children in the school, a sixth at Kingsway College and that she was a single mother, I had to speak with her.

Her testimony was so compelling that it demanded attention, yet she was not seeking any. She told me that she wanted her children to have a Christian education.

Some time ago, shortly before the school year was due to begin, she and her six children arrived in Canada from the United States. Although she did not know anyone in Windsor, she decided to settle there. Her first priority was to find a Christian school. Unaware of any Adventist church in Windsor, she was ready to settle for any good Christian school where her children would be educated in a godly environment. When someone told her of an “excellent Christian elementary school” near to where she lived, she immediately set out to find it. To her pleasant surprise, she discovered that it was a Seventh-day Adventist school set in the grounds of a Seventh-day Adventist Church. “I had no reason to debate,” she said, and without any hesitation, enrolled all five of her elementary-aged children.

She excitedly told me that the person who directed her to the “excellent Christian school” was not an Adventist but had her child attending there. This gave me renewed hope for our schools. Here was someone outside the church who has found so much value in the school that she was quick to recommend it to a stranger. However, it saddens me to think that many Adventist parents are missing the value of what our schools have to offer to our children.

As I eagerly engaged this parent in conversation, I could not help but notice how satisfied she seemed so I asked what the school means to her. “I love it,” she said. “I’ve never made a better decision. I can scarcely afford it, but an alternative is no option.”

She told me that there are some months when she does not know where the money will come from, but she trusts God, and He always provides.

“I fall behind with the fees sometimes, and it gets scary,” she said, “but my children have to get the kind of education that God is pleased with. I just can’t compromise their spirituality for ‘cheap’ education.”

She is full of praise for the teachers and compliments them for the warm, friendly, caring and safe environment they created for the children. She wishes that the school was larger, offered a greater choice of programs and had more teachers, but she is optimistic that a time will come when more parents will understand and appreciate the rich value and importance of giving their children an Adventist Christian education by enrolling their children in the school. “In the meantime,” she said, I will do my best to ensure that my children get a Christian education, even if it takes the last cent from my pockets”.

This left me wondering if, as a parent, you are doing your best to ensure that your child is getting a Christian education where it is available.

Some parents, recognising the value of Adventist Education, refer to it as ‘investing in their children’. This is perhaps one of the most accurate descriptions of what happens when you enrol your child in one of our schools. You are investing in his or her academic, spiritual and social future. How many high schools in Ontario can boast of 98% of their graduates being accepted into a university or college of their first choice? None that we know of, yet Crawford Adventist Academy can. How many children in North America who do not attend Adventist schools remain in the church? Only 32%, compared with 84% of those who attend Adventist schools. The facts speak for themselves.

You can still enrol your child at one of our eight schools (located in Ottawa, Pickering, Toronto (K-12), Brampton, Hamilton, London and Windsor) in time for the new school year on September 3, 2014, and give him or her the advantage of an Adventist education.

For further information on any of our schools, please contact the Office of Education of the Ontario Conference by calling 905-571-1022. If calling from Toronto use 905-686-5757 to save long distance charges.

Don McIntyre, Superintendent of Education
Conference Acquires New School Building in Pickering

On Tuesday, July 29, 2014, the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists took possession of a 15-classroom school in Pickering.

The single-storey former Roman Catholic school, located at 1765 Meadowview Avenue, on nearly three acres of land, was built in 1983. It borders Shadybrook Community Park.

The new building will facilitate the relocation of Crawford Adventist Academy—East Campus, from Agape Temple Church at Fairport Road, Pickering. The school has used the church facilities since its establishment in 2008.

For the past three months, the Ontario Conference with the Toronto Adventist District School Board (TADSB) negotiated with the Durham Catholic District School Board and agreed on the purchase price of $3,700,000.

Pastor Mansfield Edwards, president of the Conference, was very happy to announce news of the acquisition. He told Conference departmental directors, “We have just purchased a new school building in Pickering,” he told them at a monthly meeting. “It’s a fairly modern facility with thirteen classrooms, two kindergarten rooms, one gymnasium, a stage, a library and additional rooms, such as offices and staff rooms. It looks like it will be among one of the best school buildings owned by the church in Canada.”

Wendy Hutchinson, principal of the school, credits the acquisition solely to God. “To God be the glory!” she said. “We moved forward to obtain the school by faith, and He has rewarded our faith. There is so much to do preparing for the new school year, but I am very happy. This is a wonderful way to spread the gospel!”

The TADSB plans to offer a daycare programme to the surrounding community as a feeder to the elementary school. The plan for the daycare is to begin on September 1, 2014 with ten children and growing to thirty by 2016. The daycare will operate between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. An early drop off service may be offered as needed.

A few weeks earlier, as news of the possibility of obtaining the building spread among some churches in the east of the GTA, a number of parents eagerly committed themselves to registering their children in the elementary school should it be purchased. Presently, 60 children are already registered for the new school year. Last year’s registration was 34 pupils. The projection by the TADSB was for 50 pupils for the new school year.

Over the next six years, the TADSB projects that the school will grow to 115 pupils. The school can accommodate 200. To register your child, contact 905-839-0849 or 416-821-9707.

Register Now for the 4th Annual Eastern Ontario Christian Fellowship Retreat September 12-14

Where: Camp IAWAH, Godfrey, Ontario

For whom: University/college students, as well as recent university/college graduates and mature youth.

Theme: “Equilibrium.” As students, often living away from home, we get pulled in many different directions. It’s hard, sometimes, to find balance amongst the turmoil, let alone grow spiritually.

Guest speaker: Pastor Edsel Cadet.

Cost: $75 (including transportation from Ottawa, accommodation, and meals).

Register by August 17, 2014 to secure your place. Late registration is $95 per student before September 7, 2014. E-mail OttawaAdventistYouth@gmail.com for a registration form in the official language of your choice, or register online at https://www.adventistontario.org/Order/EventRegistration4.aspx.

Highlights of the 2013 ACF retreat may be viewed at: http://youtu.be/UMEbMR9pDjc

Adventist Christian Fellowship (ACF) is the official organization for Adventist campus ministry on non-Adventist college and university campuses within the North American Division. ACF is currently a network of over 100 chapters across the North American Division.
The Ontario Conference has taken ownership of the Adventist Book Centre (ABC) located in Oshawa. The decision was made by the Conference Board of Directors on May 25, 2014 to take over ownership after the Pacific Press Publishing Association (PPPA) decided to divest itself of the ABCs across North America. The PPPA, along with the Review and Herald, has had its own share of financial problems and decided to restructure in order to survive. Among the casualties of the restructuring were the loss-making ABCs. Since then, conferences have taken over the ownership of the ABCs in their territories.

“We feel very strongly that literature ministry is very important to the work of the church in Ontario,” says Pastor Gary Hodder, executive secretary of the Ontario Conference, “so we could not sit idly by and see the closure of the ABC.”

Even though the Conference places very high value on the work of the ABC, the decision to take it over was carefully undertaken. A feasibility study was first done by a sub-committee of experienced business personnel before appropriate recommendations were made. It was clear that the assumption of ownership must result in at least a break-even position.

For the past month, a transition committee has been working to facilitate a smooth takeover of running of the ABC. Its work included interviewing and re-hiring former staff that had been terminated by the PPPA during the divesting process. The ABC will cease operation as a PPPA entity on August 15, 2014. Three days later, it will open as an entity of the Ontario Conference, with a new name, ABC Christian Bookstore. “The letters ‘ABC’ will no longer be an acronym,” explained Gary Hodder, “They are being retained because of their familiarity to members. However, the emphasis is on it being a Christian bookstore for community. This will be part of our marketing strategy—to serve the wider community.”

On August 31, 2014, there will be ribbon-cutting ceremony heralding the opening of the ABC Christian Bookstore at 1:30 p.m. at 95 Biesenthal Dr., Oshawa.
There were many familiar faces at this year’s Bible Conference, held by the Ontario Conference at Perth Avenue Seventh-day Adventist Church, May 2-4, 2014. They had so valued last year’s Bible Conference that they simply had to return this year.

Others, hearing of what happened last year, decided to attend and see for themselves. They will most likely be among next year’s familiar faces.

Earla and her husband, George, will most probably attend next year’s Bible Conference. They travelled nearly three hours from Owen Sound and stayed for the entire weekend. “My husband and I greatly enjoyed this weekend,” she said.

Jeff from Toronto Japanese Church could hardly contain his enthusiasm for the weekend. “It was fantastic. I wish it lasted longer,” he said, “there were so many things I could have gone on asking questions about…it was so valuable. I loved it!”

Gloria from Holland Landing added, “The Bible Conference was very good. It opened my eyes to a lot of things that I used to find difficult. Now I can go to my Bible with much ease and deal better with some of the difficult things in the Bible.”

“I got a better view of how to interpret the Bible and not to have just one mind set,” said Carlyle from Perth Avenue Church. “Dr. Thompson made it simple for me to explain it to others.”

The enthusiasm of the attendees was evidenced by so many turning out for the 9:00 a.m. session on Sunday.

Coming from as far as North Shore and Ottawa, many were keen to hear answers to some of the difficult questions asked about the Old Testament God. They were not disappointed, as Dr. Alden Thompson, one of the leading Old Testament scholars in the Adventist Church, expertly opened their understanding of how the Bible was written and revealed the same God who is recognised as the God of love in the New Testament.

Thompson, professor of Biblical Studies at Walla Walla University since 1970, showed little sign of being in his 71st year. Seemingly energised by his love for the Scriptures and being with people, he led attendees through two main areas of focus: Firstly, by providing context and explanations for passages that, upon plain reading, shows God to be an angry despot who declared ethnic cleansing.

“In the Old Testament, we find God adapting Himself to where people are in their understanding, culture and experience,” he said.

Among the many examples he gave was that of the Ten Commandments. Using what he called The Law Pyramid, Thompson noted that the Ten Commandments, as with all Old Testament law, are God’s adaptation to the human condition. In heaven there is only one law principle—Love.

He also made the amazing statement that “there are no problems in the Bible!” He explained, “If readers could see a ‘problem’ from God’s perspective and from the perspective of the people God is seeking to reach, it would make perfectly good sense. Our problem is that we want everything to make sense from our perspective rather than from theirs.”

Secondly, he explained some of the factors contributing to polarisation over church teachings and practices within the church and demonstrated their equal value to the health of the church.

Organisers, Pastors Jakov Bibulovic, Halsey Peat, Theodore Sargeant and Eustace Williams, were very pleased with the Bible Conference and have good reasons to say it was successful.

On Sunday morning, as Halsey Peat brought the conference to a close, he told attendees that as directors travelling throughout the province, he and his colleagues see “little evidence of deep Bible study”. He explained that it is the reason they made the decision to hold Bible Conferences. “We had seen the good results from the School of Evangelism,” he said, “and determined that we needed something that would encourage everyone to spend time studying the deep truths of God’s Word. An annual Bible Conference was the answer.”

Organisers are hoping pastors and local churches will make regular Bible study, distinct from baptismal preparation, a part of local church culture.

No doubt attendees at the 2014 Bible Conference also share in this hope.

For those unable to attend the Bible Conference but would like to obtain the knowledge gained there, the three books (Who Is Afraid of The Old Testament God? Beyond Common Ground and Escape from the Flames) that were part of the registration package are available from the Personal Ministries Department of the Ontario Conference. For your personal copy of any or all three books, please contact Rose Marie Dunn-Kalynko at: rdunn@adventistontario.org or by phone, 905-571-1022, ext. 111.
During July 4-19, 2014, four graduates from the Ontario Conference School of Evangelism (OCSE), along with OCSE director, Pastor Eustace Williams, were the preachers for evangelistic meetings held in five small rural churches in Tuxtla, in the state of Chiapas, Mexico.

By the conclusion of the meetings, 42 persons were baptised.

All four graduates, Leonardo Barbosa (Betel Spanish), Rainford Cornish (N.W. Brampton), Julia Clarke (Philadelphia) and Neil Miller (Kitchener-Waterloo) had pursued the Homiletics (preaching) option when they registered for the OCSE in 2011. Since graduation in 2012, they have done some preaching but had never preached as a solo evangelist for an entire series. What made this event even more significant is that they had very little time to thoroughly prepare and were required to raise all the funds to cover their own expenses.

Williams explained, “Since 2012, when we decided to partner with SHARE Him in evangelism, there had not been any opportunity to do so. However in late April of this year, I received a call inviting us to send five preachers to join with the Pennsylvania Conference to Chiapas, Mexico. Each person I contacted was keen to go and arranged to take vacation time in order to go and preach God’s word. Not only did they have to prepare, but they had to raise funds for the trip. In Julia Clarke’s case, she had asked Vivienne Kirton to accompany her as a singing evangelist. The church held a fund-raising concert for them both.”

Upon their arrival in Mexico on July 2, the team discovered that the venues for the meetings had been changed. Instead of being in the city with its large churches, they were to hold meetings in small, rural churches—the largest has just 50 members. These were totally unprepared for meetings, and the preachers found themselves not only preaching but even planning the meetings a day before they were due to commence.

The challenges were many but by the time the meetings had concluded, the team was praising God.

“This experience has been great;” said Neil Miller who turned down a job offer in the USA to go on the trip. “I still wonder why God gave me this call…at first I was eager to go but as the day drew near, I was getting nervous—and I know I wasn’t the only one…my meetings went well generally. Even with just a membership of 25 members, most came each night and brought visitors with them. Nine people were baptized and a number of new prospects are being worked with….This experience has changed me to go forward by faith; listen to the Word of God and go and do whatever He asks me to do.”

Julia Clarke worked in the same pastoral district and preached at a 50 member church—one of the largest hosting the meetings. During the 19 meetings, the church recorded 61 different visitors. Many returned on numerous occasions. She was equally thankful for her experience:

“I am grateful to Pastor Eustace Williams for orchestrating this mission trip on behalf of the Ontario Conference and for extending me (and others) the opportunity to embark on this life changing experience! I have seen God endow me with a boldness that has called a lost soul into the flock and sealed that decision through the watery grave of baptism…I have sensed a personal transformation. I have seen God take little and do much with me!”

Leo Barbosa, the only Spanish speaker in the team, was overjoyed by his experience:

“To see lives transformed was the best part of all— that someone can make the decision for baptism because of what I
Since March 8, 2014, the Ontario Conference School of Evangelism (OCSE) has launched three new schools for the 2014-2015 class. The launch of schools in Barrie, Ottawa and the Greater Toronto Area is a response to the demand from church members for training in evangelism.

Ontario Conference president, Pastor Mansfield Edwards, was the keynote speaker at the launch at both Barrie and Ottawa East Adventist Churches on March 8 and May 10, respectively.

On May 17, Pastor David Rogers, an OCSE teacher, was the keynote speaker for the Greater Toronto Area school being held at Filipino-Canadian Church.

“Church members are not content to sit in their churches, simply warming pews,” said Pastor Eustace Williams, OCSE director. “They want to finish the work God has given to this church, and they see OCSE as the best way to receive expert training. The signs of the end are ever-increasing, and men and women want to see souls saved for God’s kingdom.”

Williams believes that the testimonies of OCSE graduates of how God is using them is clearly encouraging other members to seek evangelistic training.

The new schools are already in operation, having started in May. Graduation for the 2013-2014 classes will occur:

**August 30, 2014 at Barrie Church, for Northern Ontario**
**September 13, 2014 at Filipino-Canadian, for the GTA**
**September 27, 2014 at Heritage Green, for Southern Ontario.**

For registration information for the OCSE, contact Rose Marie Duun-Kalynko, rdunn@AdventistOntario.org, or tel: 905-571-1022, ext. 111.
On Sunday, June 22, 2014, the Ontario Conference dedicated a new Ford F250 disaster response truck and trailer in a ceremony held at the Conference office in Oshawa.

“We hope that we never have to use these vehicles,” Pastor Theodore Sargeant, Ontario Conference Community Services director, told the nearly 100 guests seated under the tent in front of the building, “but if a disaster strikes, then we are prepared.”

The acquisition of the truck is the result of a partnership between the Ontario Conference and ADRA Canada. Additional funding of $8,000 came from the generosity of church members who share in the concern of those affected by disasters.

“We are extremely happy to acquire the truck,” said Sargeant, “because the trailer is of no use without it.”

A number of dignitaries, including Mayor John Henry of Oshawa; Alain Normand, Emergency Manager for the City of Brampton; James Astleford, ADRA Canada director; Pauline Christian, president of the Black Business and Professional Association; Joyce Jones, SDACC treasurer; and three representatives from the Red Cross of Canada, were present to share in the ceremony and joined the Conference administrators in bringing greetings to the audience.

Pastor Mansfield Edwards, president of the Ontario Conference, in a short message referenced the story of Job’s friends giving him advice when he needed practical help. “We need more than advice to help people in need,” he said. “We must do more—hence the acquisition of the truck and trailer.”

According to Sargeant, a tent will be part of the equipment housed in the trailer in the event of a disaster. It will be used as a shelter to receive people affected by a disaster to determine their immediate needs.

After a short litany led by Pastor Gary Hodder, Conference executive secretary, and a dedicatory prayer by Pastor Joel Nemhbad, Ministerial secretary of the Ontario Conference, Mayor Henry joined Pastors Edwards and Hodder in cutting the ribbon.

A brief tour of the vehicles and equipment followed before everyone headed off to the refreshment tent.
In the autumn of 1971, I was about 12 years old when a Christian missionary came to my school in Phnom Penh, Cambodia and distributed Bibles. It was the first time that I heard God's message and I was excited. Although I was too young to understand the meaning of the Scriptures, I felt an attachment to the Bible.

Years later, my curiosity led me to join an Adventist Bible study group. Although I still didn't fully understand this new religion, I felt very happy among them. I remember enjoying the hymn, “Give me oil in my lamp, keep me burning”.

My faith in Christ began growing, and I wanted to learn more about the Bible. However, in 1975, the Khmer Rouge took over Cambodia and banned all religious belief. They forced us to study their communist ideology and persecuted those who believed in other religions. My family was among those persecuted.

Escape to Thailand

By the time the Vietnamese invaded Cambodia in 1979, I was an orphan. Later, I met and married my wife, Seam Ngo. A year later, we escaped to Thailand and were put in the Khao I Dang refugee camp where I discovered that the Adventists visited the camp. Somehow God kept calling me back no matter where I went.

In Khao I Dang, I was able to resume Bible studies, and I remember being able to recite the words of the hymn “This World Is Not My Home”. It re-ignited my soul with joy and hope in a spiritual life.

A new home in Canada

Upon arrival as refugees in Toronto, we didn't know anyone and didn't even know where to find an Adventist Church. We were greeted by representatives of the New Apostolic Church, and we attended their church every Wednesday and Sunday. While adjusting to a new country and building our life in Canada, I lost touch with the Adventist Church.

In Spring of 2010, my wife met a Cambodian woman who turned out to be an Adventist. She invited us to a Cambodian New Year gathering at her church. We were very touched by the hospitality and warm welcome of the members. Pastor Sereivudh Ly preached a sermon about the soon coming of Jesus and showed clips of some of the signs of the end, such as the tsunami that hit Japan. We were really inspired.

My wife and I were very touched, and we wanted to know more about God. From that day, we continued attending the church and prayed for God to work in our hearts. Satan tried his best to pull us away from God, but our Heavenly Father never let us go.

After all those years since I had my first Bible study, my wife and I were ready and accepted Christ as our Saviour. We were baptized by Pastor Ly, along with Sosidet Seng and Kenha Saut on July 12, 2014. They too have testimonies.

Near North Churches Join Together for Prayer Conference

On Sabbath, May 17, 2014, the churches of Near North Ontario gathered together at Barrie Adventist Church for the region's first prayer conference in recent years.

A committee, led by Gloria Lindo, organised a day of inspiring worship, biblical lessons on prayer, drama presentations and, of course, plenty of time for prayer.

“The prayer conference,” explained host pastor, Jagos Ivanovic, “is just one of the joined activities we have committed ourselves to sharing in as a region.” He informed the congregation that the region will hold joint events at least once each year.

A number of pastors from the regions led in the presentations. Pastor Eustace Williams, Ontario Conference Prayer Ministries co-ordinator, delivered the midday service message.

The region’s pastors were also very active serving lunch to everyone who remained after the midday service.

Gloria Lindo was effusive in her appreciation to visitors and to the planning committee for its hard work.
invited local people to her home to eat. She is known for stopping alongside the road and for sitting in the ditch to encourage and uplift those in it. Additionally, she has fully engaged herself in supporting the indigenous worldwide cause for social justice and awareness of issues affecting the quality of life for them.

“I chose to be a positive conduit for change in the lives of those some in society have forgotten,” she said. “Although, at the time I was engaging in these efforts, all I saw was the great need for an extra set of sincere helping hands.”

The award clearly means a great deal to Yolaine. “It signifies the community’s welcome and acceptance of my life commitment to the betterment of the First Nations locally and regionally,” she said.

According to Yolaine, her present life-work began taking shape after her re-baptism in 2005. She committed her life to work and walk beside God’s people generationally. Her husband, Michael, shared her commitment and wanted to do more than occupy seats in a congregation. They wanted to use their lives as young adults to build God’s kingdom through a daily ministry of Christian living.

It is clear that the way they live with Christ is intentional. Working beside First Nations in Sioux Lookout is dualfold for Yolaine. She says that it is first, deeply spiritual, as she sees each person in her path as a brother or sister. Second, she is acquainted with personal grief so her compassion toward each person is from the core of her being.

Having recognised this, she offered herself to God to be used for His glory and for the good of herself and for the First Nation community in Sioux Lookout.

Yolaine attributes the award to what God has done for her life in Sioux Lookout, and she is greatly encouraged to humbly continue serving by His grace.

Since 2012, a new church plant with five families has been started in Sioux Lookout. Another medical doctor, Lloyd Douglas, has been appointed by the Ontario Conference to lead the group.

On May 1, 2014, Lac Suel First Nation honoured Yolaine Kirlew with a Quilt of Honour at its annual gala at Frenchman’s Head, Lac Suel, in Sioux Lookout.

Yolaine, a Seventh-day Adventist, was one of seven women from three communities (Whitefish Bay, Kejick Bay & Frenchman’s Head) that make up the community of Lac Suel in Northern Ontario, two and a half hours north of Thunder Bay.

The community honoured the women for their consistent, life-long commitment to build up the lives of others through their spheres of influence. Honourees are usually older First Nation women yet, Yolaine, who is a much younger woman, was included among them, having only lived in the community since 2006. She is also the first non-First Nation recipient of the award.

However, in the few years since Kirlew and her husband, Dr. Michael Kirlew, relocated from Ottawa to Sioux Lookout, she has committed her life to improving the life of the people in her community. She began by volunteering at the local school for lunch duty then lobbied for Cadets and fostered First Nation children. In the first few years, when her family was the only Adventist family in the community, she shared God’s love with children through Bible class and Vacation Bible School and became a counsellor to the downtrodden. Along with her husband, Michael, Yolaine opened their home to the sick and afflicted, shared her time, talents and resources, and

Lac Suel First Nation Honour
Adventist Woman

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Bowmanville’s ‘Jungle Safari’ Attracts Nearly Seventy Community Children

Bowmanville Adventist Church’s ‘Jungle Safari’ Vacation Bible School, held July 14-18, exceeded organisers’ expectation by attracting over eighty children of which nearly seventy were from the community.

The VBS is part of the church’s family-oriented vision and during its planning stage, team leader, Denisa Zita, hoped to build on previous year’s VBS successes.

Once again, she asked the congregation to pray in order to reach the target of 50 children. The church rallied behind her by distributing flyers, volunteering and praying for those leading and attending VBS.

Preparing to use the VBS program, “Jungle Safari: Where kids explore the nature of God,” volunteers learned jungle-themed praise songs, decorated each room of the church with jungle foliage, vines, and animals, and designed t-shirts for children and volunteers in the same jungle theme. Members prepared lessons or appealing craft ideas for each age group. Over thirty-five volunteers gave their time.

Responding to advertisements placed by the church in the local newspaper and on Kijiji, many families registered early. However, it soon became apparent that most of the pre-registered children were under the age of six. A call went out to pray for older children to attend, specifically those aged 8-12.

On Monday morning, July 14, the opening day, team leaders were energized, ready to introduce their children to their loving God. How many would show up? As registration continued, the numbers gradually increased. By the end of registration, eighty children had signed up—nearly thirty of them aged 8-12!

Of the eighty children who turned up, six were from the host church, and eight more were from other Adventist churches. Nearly seventy were from the community!

By the end of the week, many parents expressed interest in attending children’s church in August and in attending the church’s MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) programs. A number of children were begging their parents to allow them to join Adventurers in the fall. The overwhelming response was so positive, parents wanted to make sure they would be kept updated on all future children’s programs.

As follow-up to its VBS success, Bowmanville Church will be hosting a summer fun-day at Cedar Park Resort for the VBS children, as well as starting Little Arrows Adventurer Club in the fall. Invitations to monthly children’s church programs will also go to these families. With help from the Ontario Conference Evangelism Subsidy, this small church in Bowmanville was able to use their VBS program to bless the families of eighty children, as well as carry on MOPS and health ministry outreach.

Carys Cao

New Address for Zimbabwean Company

From September 13, GTA Zimbabwe Company will worship at Burlington East Presbyterian Church, 505 Walkers Line, Burlington, Ontario.

Directions from Toronto: QEW west to Walkers Line.
South on Walkers for 2.0 km. Church is on the left.

From Hamilton: 403 to QEW east, exit on Walkers Line.
South on Walkers line 2.0 km. Church is on the left.
Every Sunday, members of Lincoln Pioneer Seventh-day Adventist Church give away Christian literature at their booth at one of the main flea markets in St. Catharines. People are usually surprised to find a booth where goods are given away, and they don't have to buy anything. Their curiosity piqued; they are introduced to literature ranging from last day events to practical living such as how to deal with anger.

Some of the most popular books given away were The Great Controversy and the practical self-help books. The Revelation DVDs by Amazing Facts have also been well received. Since running the booth over the past seven months, over 1200 books have been given away.

Randy Krijlklus, who has been helping with the event, says that it has been a real blessing to the public. He noticed a genuine interest in last-day events and the book of Revelation.

On one occasion, a minister from a different denomination came into the booth, noticed the books and took several, including Ten Commandments Twice Removed. A couple of weeks later, he and his wife returned. She pointed to a copy of the book and asked if it was the same book from which he was preaching. She picked up The Great Controversy and the Desire of Ages.

A special thanks to Randy Krijklus, Sylvia Kolic, Craig Haslam and Landon Teranski who have helped with operating the booth.

Please pray that God will continue to bless this endeavor.

Ron Teranski, Lincoln Pioneer Pastor

Living Word’s Small Group Ministry Successfully Completes Outreach Challenges

Completing three challenges, Living Word Christian Fellowship’s small group ministry collected 3,150 pounds of non-perishable food items for Hamilton’s food bank, easily surpassing last year’s goal of 2,018 pounds.

Living Word’s vision is to make a difference in the big city of Hamilton. It is realising this vision through its small groups (locally known as “Roots”) ministry. The groups meet regularly throughout the year on a weekly basis for spiritual fellowship, nourishment and community service—an integral part of its “Roots”.

For the first 10-week session, each group was given a $100 bill and a challenge to multiply it by accomplishing an act of kindness for someone outside of its immediate community.

For the next session, the second challenge was to help a single mother within its immediate community.

The last session and challenge involved the greatest effort. It required a corporate effort to support the Neighbour-to-Neighbour Community Centre, the only local food bank servicing the Hamilton Mountain area. Each group distributed a total of 1,500 bags, pre-printed with church logo and instructions for the collection of non-perishable food items.

“What is neat about doing this throughout our small groups,” says Pastor Francis Douville, “is that we touch every part of our city around the neighbourhoods of our host homes for small groups. Each neighbourhood becomes the groups’ evangelistic field and gives ownership to our members.”

On June 21st, the church was closed on Sabbath (as they do four times yearly), and members met in small groups in homes and lifted up the church and their community in prayer. After lunch, the groups ventured out into their neighbourhoods to collect the bags that had been distributed on the previous Wednesday. By the time they brought the food to Neighbour-to-Neighbour Community Centre, they had acquired 3,150 pounds of food!

Anslim Rodney, a leader for a group in the neighbouring City of Brantford, was ecstatic. “I’m so pumped,” he said. “When can we do this again?” His group delivered every bag to 250 homes with a knock on the door and a kind request to fill the bag to be picked up that Saturday afternoon.

Both young and old participated and boldly knocked on the doors of those who may have forgotten to leave their bags outside their door.

“We plan to make this an annual event,” says Pastor Douville. “It creates a network with our local food bank and allows us to show our neighbours that we care.”

“So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone ...” Galatians 6:10 (ESV).

Francis Douville, Pastor, Living Word Christian Fellowship
Madoc Company Hosts Liberty Magazine Editor in Religious Freedom Event

On Sabbath, May 10, 2014, Madoc Seventh-day Adventist Company hosted “Religious Freedom in Canada: Don’t Take It for Granted”.

The day-long community-driven event was held at the Wesleyan and Free Methodist Church, in conjunction with Liberty magazine, the SDACC and the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Over 250 invitations had been sent to lawyers, numerous faith groups, mayors, reeves, councilors and organisations within the area to listen to Lincoln Steed, editor of Liberty magazine, and Barry Bussey, VP Legal Affairs of the Canadian Council of Christian Charities.

Both speakers presented current information on religious liberty in Canada and the world. As they shared disturbing news of people who, in some areas of the world, do not have religious freedom and are being persecuted, it became evident that Canadians should not take their freedom for granted. They concluded that without constant vigilance, our rights and freedoms, including freedom of religion in Canada, could be undermined or even lost.


As editor of the 108 year-old Liberty magazine, Steed has travelled extensively promoting temperance and religious liberty issues. His recent travels have taken him to Laos, Myanmar, Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Ambon, Indonesia, a scene of violent religious conflict. Bussey has previously worked for the International Religious Liberty Association and was its liaison at the United Nations in New York and Geneva. His work there gave him a keen world view in the discussion.

The church hosted a complimentary vegetarian meal for all guests and members. The church also gave out over 100 copies of The Great Controversy and other pieces of literature.

Robert Putt, pastor of Madoc Company, was enthusiastic about the response of the community to the event and recommends this form of community outreach as a good way of relating to people.

On Sunday morning, May 11, Steed spoke to a group of Religious Liberty leaders and members at College Park Adventist Church in Oshawa. His topic, Religious Liberty and Bible Prophecy: Freedom Come, Freedom Go, stimulated a lively question and answer period following the presentation.

Also present were Grace Mackintosh and Halsey Peat, PARL directors of the SDACC and Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, respectively.

Robert Putt, Pastor, Belleville Church and Madoc Company
Saying Goodbye and Welcome

It’s always with sadness that we see workers leaving to work elsewhere or retiring because their services have been greatly valued. Four teachers, Lisa Clarke, Verlaine Linrud, Manuela Terencio and Teresa VanWart, have left to serve elsewhere; Kathleen Mitchell and Marsha Williams are moving into retirement. One pastor, Patrick Jacques, has also left. Finally, Gerald Goulet, having served as camp ranger for twelve years at camp Frenda has retired.

Teachers

Lisa Clarke is moving to British Columbia, having served as a teacher since 1999. Until recently, Lisa was the principal/junior and senior kindergarten teacher at Grandview Adventist Academy in Mount Hope, near Hamilton. Lisa worked for the Ontario Conference for 15 years. In the British Columbia Conference, she will be the Curriculum coordinator/teacher mentor.

Verlaine Linrud has also worked for the Ontario Conference for 15 years. The first 12 of those years were spent at Grandview Adventist Academy, before transferring to Crawford Adventist Academy as the grade 3 teacher in 2011. Verlaine has accepted a call to the Oregon Conference where she will join her husband, former executive secretary of the Ontario Conference, Pastor Dan Linrud.

Manuela Terencio’s love for teaching is only superseded by her love for her grandchildren. After 20 years of teaching in the Ontario Conference she has resigned to spend more time with them.

All 20 years were spent at Peel Adventist School. In 1996, Manuela was appointed to the position of principal, a position she served in for thirteen years.

Theresa VanWart completed just one year in Ontario, serving until recently as principal of Peel Adventist School. She has moved to Alberta where she will serve as principal for the (Jk-12) Coralwood Academy in Edmonton, Alberta.

Retirement

Kathleen Mitchell has decided to retire from a life-long dedication to teaching.

Since 1977, she has taught in a number of schools in Ontario, including Paris, Sarnia and Grand Valley. As teaching principal at Grandview Adventist Academy, Kathleen was known for her dedication to academic excellence and working long hours on behalf of Adventist education. She says that teaching is a “never ending, ever changing life experience” and considers it a privilege to have been an Adventist educator, shaping the lives of young minds that were entrusted to her.

Kathleen has four children: Victoria, Amber, Sheri and Hugh John. After 23 years of service in Ontario, she can now give time to her hobbies of gardening, cooking, baking, crafts, floral arranging, reading and swimming.

After 34 years of dedicated service to education in Ontario, Marsha Williams moved into retirement at the end of the school year in June.

She began her service in 1970 at Toronto Junior Academy (now Crawford Adventist Academy) where she tried modelling the example of Jesus by mirroring His acceptance, forgiveness, gentleness and love to the pupils.

Recently, Marsha was the junior and senior kindergarten teacher at College Park Elementary School.

Pastors

Patrick Jacques has left the Ontario Conference to attend Fuller Theological Seminary in the USA where he will pursue graduate studies. Patrick recently completed a year as an associate pastor at Apple Creek Adventist Church and his eighth year since commencing ministerial internship at Toronto
East. Much liked and respected, Jacques also served at Toronto West. He was ordained in 2012. His last Sabbath was on July 26, 2014.

**Camp Frenda Ranger**

**Gerald Goulet**, Camp Frenda ranger, has retired after twelve years. He and his wife, Bonnie, have moved to Alberta to be closer to their children and grandchildren.

Camp director, Pastor Glenn DeSilva says, “Gerald and Bonnie will be sorely missed. Gerald built or renovated literally half of the buildings on site. In fact, he left his mark on every part of the camp. Often his smiling face was the first to greet campers upon their arrival. It’s impossible to know how one influences others in this life, but Gerald and Bonnie blessed thousands in the course of their camp ministry.”

**Welcome!**

With the departure of Gerald Goulet, we welcome Phil Potter as a new camp ranger. Phil was the head elder at the Orillia Church and brings years of experience as a Muskoka area contractor. Originally from Toronto, he moved to Thunder Bay to continue his post-secondary education in Aviation. While in Thunder Bay, he accepted the Advent message and met his wife Lisa. They have four children named: Noah, Eden, Joshua, and Luke.

We are also very happy to welcome two returning pastors, four new pastors, and four teachers.

Returning to Ontario as pastor of Harmony Adventist Church/Toronto Italian Company is Bill Santos. Until recently, Bill was the speaker/director for It Is Written Canada, a position he held for nearly ten years. Harmony will be familiar to Santos since it was from there he left to join It Is Written in January 2004. His appointment was made at the Ontario Conference Board of Directors meeting on July 27, 2014.

Harmony worships at Wellsprings Worship Centre on Centre Avenue in North York.

Recently ordained Kenton Perrin returns from the seminary and takes up his new role as associate pastor at Philadelphia Adventist Church.

Both Santos and Perrin will take up their new responsibilities on September 1, 2014.

New to Ontario are three pastors, Wallin O’Connor, Kirk Dunchie and Junior Garcia. Unless stated, they will also assume their new responsibilities on September 1, 2014.

**Kirk Dunchie** was born and raised in the Greater Toronto Area. An ordained elder at Toronto West Adventist Church and a graduate of Kingsway College, Kirk attended Northern Caribbean University in Jamaica.

Kirk will begin pastoral internship as an assistant pastor at Apple Creek on October 1, 2014. **Junior Garcia** is the new assistant pastor at Windsor and Windsor Spanish Adventist Churches. He begins his internship with Pastor Marian Kossovan.

Junior was born in Nicaragua, but was raised in Toronto. He attended and graduated from Cuba Adventist Theological Seminary, and upon his return to Canada has volunteered his time in between Toronto Spanish and Bet-El Spanish Adventist Churches.

He and his wife, Rosmery, are excited to begin this new era of their lives.

**Wallin O’Connor** was born in Edmonton and raised in Toronto where he was a member of Philadelphia Adventist Church.

He attended Canadian University College, graduating with a B.A. in Theology, with emphasis on Biblical Languages. He served in Alberta as youth pastor in Calgary Garden Road Adventist Church for three years before going to the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary where he completed a Master of Divinity degree in December 2012.

Wallin leaves his roles as pastor of Calgary Cornerstone Community Church, associate pastor of Garden Road Church and the newly formed Sudanese Company to become an associate pastor at Apple Creek Adventist Church.

He was ordained in July 2013 and, with his wife, Suzanne, is looking forward to serving in Ontario.
New Teachers

Four new teachers, Jassmae Allen, Ellen Bannis and Adelia Duncan, will take up positions left vacant at Grandview Adventist Academy.

Jassmae Allen, a product of Adventist education herself, returns home to Ontario from Red River Valley Junior Academy in Winnipeg, Manitoba. She will be teaching grades 4/5.

Ellen Bannis is the new principal at Grandview. Her wide experience in education comes from the U.K., Hong Kong and Ontario. It ranges from elementary through to adult education.

Adelia Duncan is the new junior and senior kindergarten teacher at Grandview.

A graduate of Ryerson Polytechnic University, she has devoted herself to early childhood education both at work and at Hamilton Mountain and Heritage Green Adventist Churches. Berkel Williams will be returning to Crawford Adventist Academy after an extended study leave. He will be teaching Chemistry and Biology.

Pastoral Transfers

On July 27, 2014, the Ontario Conference Board of Directors voted the transfers of the following pastors to take place on September 1, 2014:

- Joseph Amankwah from Philadelphia to Heritage Ghanaian.
- Kwame Brobbey from the associate position to lead pastor at Toronto Ghanaian.
- Joseph Bulgin from Ruth to Ajax.
- Donville Cooper from Kendalwood associate to lead pastor at Salem.
- Rupert Gray from Ajax and Salem to Toronto Central as associate.
- Leonard Northe, associate from Toronto Central to associate at Downsview.
- Damson Oppong from Toronto Ghanaian to Ruth.

Kingsway College, a Seventh-day Adventist boarding and day high school, is now accepting applications for the 2014-2015 school year!

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